

Independence Of Greece And The Aftermath Of The Independence

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Before the Ottoman Empire's existence in the Greek lands, Greeks were under the rule of the Eastern Roman Empire (Byzantine Empire) and the terms like 'Hellas' and 'Hellenic' are used to describe their pagan origin which was the city state periods. Greeks were under the Ottoman rule almost for four centuries. They were named as 'Rum' in order to define the Orthodox *millet* in the Ottoman Empire. Although there was no division among the Orthodox *millet* considering the ethnicity, Rums were more privileged from a viewpoint of the influence of the Orthodox Church and of some state departments regarding the foreign affairs since they were skilful in translation.

Despite the fact that some Greeks were getting very rich by courtesy of the trade, Greeks were a peasant society during the Ottoman rule. In short, they were agrarian society like other Balkan peoples. They did not experienced the periods of Renaissance, Reformation, Enlightenment, French Revolution, Industry Revolution and industrialization, which their Western counterparts had already experienced successively, during the Ottoman period or as they named 'Tourkokratia'. In addition to this, conservatism of the Orthodox Church strengthened this isolation.

On the other hand, destruction of aristocracy and expropriation of their lands by the Ottomans provided them opportunity for emergence of a new merchant class. Greeks were so wealthy and rich that the Greek was the lingua franca of the Balkan trade. This merchant class invested in cultural, educational, political and other developments. This was not peculiar to only Rums in the Empire, and other Slavic Balkan Orthodox people had experienced the same process because of the same reasons such as expropriation of aristocrats' lands and so on. Since they were located in very fertile and advantageous lands in the Balkan Peninsula, this made easier the development of trade and access of French Enlightenment ideas into the region.

Besides these developments and changes, maladministration of the Empire and the high rate of taxes stemming from the wars paved the way for the independence movements. Also, the efforts of *Philiki Hetaireia (Association of Friends)* and the support of great powers are another significant contribution, especially Russia at the beginning. Merchants invested in cultural affairs, established foundation schools, sent the young people in order to get education in Europe and invested in printing of many books and newspapers; but Richard Clogg states that these books and newspapers were not read and understood by most of the agrarian and illiterate Greeks¹. Illiteracy was a serious problem like in other Orthodox Balkan nations. Anyway, being Greek was gradually becoming more important than being Orthodox with these developments.² In brief, it could be concluded that merchant class and intellectuals were influential in emergence of Greek consciousness rather than ordinary peasant society.

Young people who were sent to Europe for education did not only met with French Enlightenment ideas and romantic nationalism, but also they saw that how the ancient Greece's language and civilisation influenced the Western thinking. So, Greeks had learned about their *Hellenistic* past. The first Greek nationalists generally inspired from the classical era. In this age, all Balkan romantic nationalists were depending on history and their specific cultures in terms of history.

Constantine Tsoukalas argues that "nations without history can never become real nations."³ Although intellectuals and some merchants were the driving force behind the independence movement, some segments of society like *Phanariots*, local notables, the church were unwilling to

support these kinds of ideas because, they did not want to give up their privileges which were given by the Ottoman rulers. They thought that separation from the Empire meant loss of their privileges.

This inspiration of *Hellenism* was also significant and influential in Greek war of independence. When they revolted against to be independent from the Ottoman Turks, this created a big emotion and agitation in the West. However, another debate started that today's Greeks were not descendants of ancient Greeks and this debate has continued to the present. For instance, one of the writer of Sunday Telegraph in 1994 argued that Greeks are like a *Trojan Horse* in the EC in because of their economic backwardness compared to Western European states.⁴ For example, Greeks are criticized harshly while Spain and Ireland are not criticized as much as Greece because of their economic problems by some EU experts and writers in the current economic crisis in the Eurozone.

The rebellions started in 1821 and it ended in 1829 with their recognition by the Ottoman Empire with the Treaty of Adrianople (Edirne Anlaşması) between the Ottomans and Russians. And, their territories and status were guaranteed by the Treaty of İstanbul in 1832. They were the first millet that gained their independence in the Ottoman Empire. We see the supports and aids of the great powers, Great Britain-Russian Empire and France, for Greeks to get their independence. It is apparent that independent Greece was the result of the European intervention in the region. Greek example is not different from the other Balkan examples that foreign interventions and influences in the region are undisputable features of the Balkans. In my opinion, although they became an independent state after a nearly 400 years of foreign rule, an invisible influence over Greece has been continuing. American bases in their territories, foreign credits and debts from Europe, a dependent economy, a foreign policy dependent on the USA and Europe, discriminatory attitude of Europe towards Greece like to other Balkan states/nations could be good examples to this argument.

Even in their independence war, Western Europeans were surprised when they saw Greeks although they were emotional about Greeks' independence. Europeans could find a few similarities between them and respectful people in Pericles's Athens.⁵ About the relation between Greek (actually 'Helen') civilization and European civilization, Constantine Tsoukalas argues that: *"Not only ancient Greece was considered as the greatest achievement of human history, but Europeans also tended to flatter themselves by discovering their own idealized cultural ancestors in ancient Greece. As a matter of fact, European expansionism and domination was based on the construction and appropriation of the racist myth of an eternally superior and indigenous proto-European civilization, which was clearly distinguishable, ever since its origins, from the inferior and barbaric Orient. This ideological division of the world between civilized/advanced West and backward East passed through the discovery and, ultimately, crystallization of a trans-historical determinism."*⁶

After the independence, process of building the Western-style nation state began and it could be stated that this was the beginning of Europeanization of Greece. In other words, importation of European modernity has started. Before the establishment of a nation state, Greeks were in need to find themselves a hero of the war. They were in search for a hero, myth or epic, and this is also a common characteristic of all Balkan nationalisms. So, *Theodoros Kolokotronis* appeared as the hero of Greek Revolution. They were not only in need of a hero of the war, but also for a king or a dictator; because the country was dominated by the instability. Local notables were problem, too. Since the local assemblies were still continuing to exercise power, we could conclude that Ottoman legacy continued for a period of time. This was something contrary to the process of establishing a new nation state which would be depended on western style institutions.

Because of the stability problem (many groups were competing with each other), civil wars and military interventions occurred in the country. First military intervention happened in September 1843 because of the political instability, but this was not the last. Greece's political life experienced

military interventions and junta regimes several times that was very unfamiliar with Western Europe. This shows that ideas like coming from the same origin or sharing the superior culture of Hellenism was not enough to be European or does not mean having European values. Although there were political parties and deputies in the assembly, party members were competing for their own benefits and status and, the real power holding assembly was the local assemblies. The political parties were French Party, British Party and Russian Party and, they had close relations with these three states' embassies.

In 1844, a constitution was put into force with universal suffrage without women suffrage and liberal parliamentary democracy started with this constitution. Yet, adaptation to the new system was not easy for Greeks; because all these adaptation problems were stemming from the absence of historical background. They founded a representative government, but representative government emerged in the Western Europe as a result of the clashes and confrontations between the upper or middle class and monarchy and, also the emergence of civil society. Like the all Balkan nations, Greeks were unfamiliar with these historical developments.

Political conflicts and disagreements between reformists and traditionalists in this time continued later on like in other Balkan states. For example; the government closed down nearly 2/3 of the monasteries and convents in order to finance the state education between 1833 and 1834, because the church was controlling considerable land and other properties. Disagreements between the state and church have been appeared from time to time in Greek political life even after they are member of the EU. For instance, removal of the religion section from the population wallet in the beginning of 2000s brought about a big tension in society.

In this very complicated atmosphere, the young Bavarian prince came to Greece as a king in order to rule the country. Besides the parties which had close relations with embassies, French Party, British Party and Russian Party, a foreign ruler was the another significant indication to show external influence over the country. Being ruled by the foreign kings continued for a period of time.

Towards The First World War

There were three times more Greeks in the Ottoman territories than in Greece. This situation led the irredentist policies and Megali Idea did become the ideology of the state till the defeat of Smyrna (İzmir) in 1922. Moreover, this was not the unique example in the Balkan Peninsula in nineteenth century. Serbs, Albanians, Romanians and Bulgarians had irredentist policies.

Eleftherios Venizelos was one of the leading supporters of the idea of Megali Idea, actually irredentist policies and irredentist nationalism. Beginning of the 1900s was the age of him. According to him, Greece must expand to Epirus and Macedonia and, Crete and Aegean islands should be annexed to Greece. Because of his irredentist policies, he clashed with King Constantine before the First World War. Before the war began, he made serious constitutional and administrative reforms and created the first truly modern political party in Greece; Liberal Party. He was also responsible for economic and political modernizations.

Balkan Wars was an opportunity in order to implement their irredentist policies with irredentist nationalist ideas with other Balkan states such as Bulgaria, Serbia and so on. As George Voskopoulos claims that 1912-1913 Balkan Wars illustrated the maximalist character of Balkan nationalisms, since, after the First Balkan War and the defeat of the Ottomans by Serbia, Bulgaria and Greece, Bulgaria attempted to secure for itself a greater chunk of the peninsula than the one originally estimated.⁷ Afterwards, they enter in the WW1 and their occupation of Western Anatolia brought about the Turkish victory. The victory of Turkish Independence War is the end of Megali Idea.

Interwar Era

Due to the war, the economy deteriorated and political instabilities increased. After a few years, dictatorship was established under the personality of Pangalos, but it was collapsed in 1926.

During the 1929 economic crisis, political instabilities were still continuing and foreign debt rate was very high. Instead of solving these problems with democratic processes, a new military dictatorship was established under Metaxas in 1936. Military was still continuing to be an indispensable part of political arena.

The Second World War and Civil War

Although all wars affect the countries' political developments, the Second World War (WW2) has distinct effect over Greece that many political confrontations and polarizations are taking root from the WW2 and from the civil war which started in 1944 and ended till the late 1940s.

Greece was already an underdeveloped and backward country compared to industrialized Western Europe and, its modern political institutions were not well established although there were successful modernization attempts and a little progress. Italian and German invasion destroyed many structures and substructures such as roads, railroads, etc. On the other hand, an increasing impressive leftists' influence was observable in the country. In addition to the invasion, civil war brought up between leftists and monarchists. After the end of civil war, its influence over the Greek politics was clear.

At the final stage, leftists were defeated especially by the help of foreign powers like US and Britain and the communist parties were outlawed. Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan were very useful in terms of defeat of communists and reconstruction of the country after the war. Greece was the only non-communist state among the Balkan states during the Cold War era. So, it could be considered as a democratic state which was on the Western, European, side. However, their system was far from the democracy model. It has always different historical background, different economic, social and political structure from the European states, too. In other words, being the ancestors of Western civilization could not prevent the discriminatory attitudes towards them from the western Europeans.

The Cold War Era and the Accession to The EC

Although Greece was not mainly a European state, developments after the Second World War and the civil war were the turning points in Greek history terms of being more close to the West and being a part of it just institutionally.

The first step was NATO, not only for preventing a possible communist threat but also stability in the region and a kind of defence mechanism against its neighbours in a problematic region, the Balkans; since Greek security has always closely linked to Balkan security. Greece was in a search for longstanding security against the threats, especially Turkey. This is why they always see the West as a security and defence provider mechanism rather than a mean to reach high democratic standards. For them, NATO and EU and WEU are European defence and security projects. However, most of the

Greek security analysts and decision makers think that neither NATO nor the EU can provide Greece with security guarantees.⁸

The history would display that the cultural gap between 'zone of poverty and turmoil' and 'zone of peace and prosperity' continues in the post-Cold War era; dissolution of Yugoslavia, ethnic cleansing in Bosnia, Kosovo War and territorial disputes between Greece and Macedonia. Scholars and intellectuals like Maria Todorova defines the Balkans and Balkanisation as being tribal, barbarian, primitive and backward.⁹ M.Todorova also suggests that Balkans is an 'externalisation from within', 'dark side of Europe' or 'Europe's backyard'.¹⁰

Although they see NATO and the EU as security providers, democratic and sometimes economic progress occurred. For example, woman suffrage was adopted when they did become member of NATO in 1952. In that period, American involvement increased rather than Europe. Since NATO was defending democratic and liberal values and freedom which are western/European values, the real Europeanization was being injected to the country gradually.

1952 elections were won by a right wing party Greek Rally which was led by Field-Marshal Alexander Papagos, who did command the government forces in the civil war. Being ruled by right wing parties continued up to 1963. He started economic restructure in the country. The devaluation, loosening of the lid on tight money and exaggerated state control in 1953 did give rise to increase of private enterprise, monetary stability and economic growth. In 1956 elections, Greek Radical Union Party (ERE) which was led by Constantine Karamanlis won. He was one of the leading post war politicians and a strong conservative. Like Papagos, he also tried to rebuild the broken economy. As a conservative figure, he personified all the virtues of the paternal society of the 1950s and 1960s: hard work, austerity, avoidance of rhetoric, dedication to the public good and a degree of authoritarianism to bring about the needed results.¹¹

Despite the fact that he was a conservative political figure, he was the architect of Greece's entrance into the EU (at that time, the EC). In 1959, Greece applied to the European Economic Community. In this year, Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders signed the London Agreement for an independent Cyprus. However this was not the solution. It was the beginning of intractable Cyprus question which has not been solved till today, because ENOSIS idea was coming into Greek political scene. ENOSIS means the unification of island with Greece, which is an irredentist policy.

ENOSIS idea of Greeks even in the mid 20th century shows that Balkan nationalism's characteristics were still very influential in Greek nationalism since ENOSIS was very irredentist and belligerent. Balkan nationalism is always considered with territorial claims and territorial expansionism. Under these circumstances, the Balkans- mostly eastern Orthodox zone and a longstanding zone of turmoil- ought not be isolated eternally and thus driven to complete anarchy and on the contrary, the Balkans should be treated as an integral part of European security from the European perspective.¹² Balkan nationalisms have usually brought about externalisation of minorities, ethnic cleansing and minority problems. Also, war and violence are the only solution.

So, they are backwarded to Western Europe in terms of human rights, peace and stability. In Greek case, ethnic cleansing attempts to Turkish Cypriots are one of the crucial evidence in order to prove their linkages with Balkanisation. In my opinion, Greece was more tolerated by the EU regarding the minority question than other Balkan states. Although Greece is more homogenised state in the Balkans with Bulgaria, it could not get rid of minority and human rights problem.

In 1961, Greece and the EEC did sign association agreement. This association agreement predicts that they will become members in 1984. According to this agreement:

- Custom duties would decrease gradually.

- European identity of the country would be settled on legal institutions.¹³

Centre Union Party of George Papandreou was gradually increasing its votes in the beginning of 1960s. It had a radicalised program and slogans when we consider the Cold War atmosphere. He was against the conservative rule of Karamanlis. George Papandreou won 1963 elections, but he had to focus his energy mostly on the foreign affairs rather than internal affairs since violence between Greek and Turkish Cypriots started in the island.

Although the external events and developments had vital importance for Greece, George Papandreou started a reform program. Important education reforms were put into force in order to renew education system. Moreover, he tried to develop good relations with Eastern Bloc countries. On the other hand, political instability was decreasing because of the confrontation between King Konstantine and George Papandreou. Due to the economic and political crisis, a junta regime was established in 1967. Democracy was undermined again and military intervention was seen as a solution to problems. Military intervention in politics is something very unfamiliar to Western Europe.

Until the collapse of junta regime in 1974, Greece was isolated from the world politics, especially from the West. In order to balance the isolation from the West, they began to follow some policies to reduce tensions between their neighbours in the Balkans. For instance, they resumed diplomatic relations with Albania in 1971 and signed good-neighbourhood treaty with Bulgaria in 1973.¹⁴

There was a consensus as a unique reconciliation between right wing and left wing parties against the military junta between 1967 and 1974 while junta regime was losing its legitimacy slowly. In 1974, Turkey's military intervention in Cyprus accelerated the fall of military dictatorship in Greece. Democracy was restored again under the leadership of Constantine Karamanlis. He returned from Paris to Greece as a *deus ex machina* which means a god able to solve everything.¹⁵ In December, a referendum was hold and monarchy was abolished with the 70 % of the votes. At least, Greece became a republic like its European counterparts. Also, all sides of the new parliament were thinking of the separation of church and state since it was the most conservative institution in Greece.

Discussions of 1975 constitution gave Karamanlis's New Democracy an opportunity to break its ties with conservative past. The status of church of Greece did turn from a state institution to an established church. Orthodoxy remained the creed of majority instead of official religion of the state. Even these are crucial developments and improvements in a Balkan society that language and religion, church, are the inseparable part of national identity. While in opposition, PASOK insisted on the full separation of state and church. Another important step of Karamanlis in order to reduce political tension and very harsh polarization was the legalisation of communist parties. I think that this was important to provide freedom of association and freedom of thought of different ideologies and ideas. Church institution in Greece was the most privileged institution, but this is not compatible with modern liberal state.

Besides these improvements, Ministry of Education and Creed has not been divided into two till today and secularization of the education could not be completed. This was something contrary to modernization, because establishment of modern nation state is paralleled with the separation of church and state in Europe. Modernization is very connected to non-dogmatic secular ideas, secularization and even laicism.

In short, 1975 was really an improvement for Greece in terms of democracy although it was not sufficient, since the civil rights were excluded from the junta constitution and legislative apparatus of state had no authority and intervention over the defence and foreign policy issues. In my opinion, it

is debatable whether it is enough to become a member of the EC in 1981 in very short time after a seven-year military dictatorship.

Foundation of PASOK (Panhellenic Socialist Movement) was one of the major events of 1974 year. Son of George Papandreou, Andreas Papandreou was the founder and leader of PASOK. Gerassimos Moschonas resembles the strategy of PASOK between 1974 and 1985 to the strategy of François Mitterrand in the period 1973-1984.¹⁶ PASOK was more radical than other political parties and developed an anti-Western Third world rhetoric. Andreas Papandreou's radical ideological program was rejecting the entry of Greece into the European Economic Community with very anti imperialistic sense. Greece had already resigned from military wing of NATO to protest Turkey's intervention in Cyprus and, the US and Europe on the ground that they did not do anything against Turkey. Papandreou prosecuted this situation by promising for removing the American bases in Greece and resigning from political wing of NATO, too. He was harshly criticizing government's foreign policies and Karamanlis's efforts to enter into the EEC. *PASOK had also a hard stance against Turkey*¹⁷. These two men, Karamanlis and Andreas Papandreou dominated the post-dictatorship era in Greece. Since Karamanlis focused on foreign policy and external events, economy was getting worsening.

Although New Democracy Party seems to be defending liberal market economy and private enterprise, it made economic decisions which are incompatible with liberal economy. For instance, Karamanlis increased the number of civil servants in public sector and nationalized some banks and other institutions. In addition to, he was more liberal than before. Priority of his foreign policy was the accession to the EC because of the very bad relations with Turkey rather than economic improvement and democratic concerns. It is general concern of all Balkan states to be member of the EU for stability and peace to prevent war, clashes and violent conflicts.

In 1979, Karamanlis signs a treaty of accession to the EU. Both PASOK and KKE (Communist Party of Greece) boycotted the ratification debates in the assembly, though PASOK was becoming more moderate while it was increasing its votes. However, European Commission in Brussels had some suspicious about Greek bureaucracy and economy whether it could compete with European economies.

In 1981, Greece joined the EU which was vital contribution to the modernization and democratization of country. Besides Greece benefited the opportunity of non existence of Copenhagen political criteria, general approach of Europe was that Greece is the part of Western civilization. French president Valeri Giscard D'Estaing said that exclusion of Greece from the European integration is unacceptable.¹⁸ An English representative of foreign affairs in English parliament stated that Europe owes its current political and cultural heritage to Greece while they were voting the accession of Greece. Europeans have a belief that Greece is part of Europe's culture and identity. This is why it is a political decision as well as political atmosphere of the Cold War era. Third word and anti Western rhetoric of Andreas Papandreou accelerated Greece's membership process, too.

The election was hold in the same year and the result was victory of socialist government PASOK. Actually, PASOK was following a successful populist policy by combining socialist and nationalist rhetoric together. While it was in opposition, he claimed that he will:

- resign Greece from NATO,
- resign American bases from Greek soils
- a state-led economy

Instead of implementing anti-Western radical program, Papandreou chose to remain in both in NATO and EC. Socialist identity of party was left. Greece became the most beneficiary state of the EC.

Credits and loans flowed into country, but the dependence of economy on the foreign economies increased. Economy experienced adaptation and absorption of new economic policies problem, because the bureaucracy and public investments were still a high burden on the state. After the membership, liberalisation of economy accelerated but it was not successful. Moreover, foreign debts were increasing.

Because Greek economy was an agrarian based economy like other Balkan states, Greece benefited very much from CAP as well as many other funds of the EC. Maybe this was the reason that Greece is seen as *naughty boy of EU*¹⁹. So, Papandreou said that resignation from the EC would harm the economy in 1984. EU membership can be debated in the Netherlands and refused by Norway, but Greece did not have chance to refuse it. It was the poorest of the member states. However it was the most developed one in the Southern Europe. In terms of liberal economy, privatization of economy did become a general policy in Greek economy and, import rate and inflation increased.

PASOK won 1985 elections and it was not as radical as before. In fact, parties came closer to each other in 1980s. Papandreou wanted to attract private enterprise and private investment. On the other hand, he was borrowing from the abroad in order to satisfy voters' demands instead of producing. However, this accumulation of money made Greece more dependent on the EC. If there was economic growth in Greek economy, it was import based unlike its European industrialized developed counterparts. After Greece joined to the EC, EC became the new source of revenue.

PASOK did not only introduced economic reforms, but also social and cultural reforms in terms of modernization of the country. According to Gerassimos Moschonas, "PASOK is a modern party which contributed to the institutional and cultural modernization of the country".²⁰

- Civil marriage was allowed.
- Divorce was simplified.
- The institution of dowry was abolished.
- Women's situation was improved.
- Some regulations were made to democratise universities.
- Some steps were taken to loosen the centralization of administration and improve cultural life in the rural.
- Adultery was decriminalized legally.

PASOK's approach to the EU was as a 'road of no return' especially after the collapse of the Soviet Union although Macedonia question brought PASOK cack to the nationalistic policies again.²¹ However, there were confrontations between the EC and Greece about the foreign policy issues like the policies towards Poland. On the other hand, relations with Turkey were more dreadful due to the continental shelf problem.

In addition to economic problems and external issues, political instability and political scandals (for exp. Andreas Papandreou's private life) again started in Greece at the end of 1980s. Because a cabinet could not be made, elections were hold several times. Different coalitions were hold and dissolved. Before the election was hold in 1989, PASOK put into force a law of proportional representation to increase its number of deputies. They implemented proportional representation not because of the democratic concerns.

Electoral system is important as well as the elections in terms of more democratic representation and right to be represented. Greece was on the side of Europe politically and institutionally since long time, but there was absorption problem of Western values. Although it holds elections like all

democratic modern states, elections did not exactly provide democracy because of the unfair representation.

The Collapse of Communism (Post-Cold War Era)

Beginning of 1990s was very eventful. Two considerable events deeply affected the Greek politics:

- Maastricht Treaty on the EU was signed.
- Ethnic conflicts, ethnic cleansings, territorial disputes and instability re-emerged after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Richard Clogg states that “Old hostilities did shake the balance in the region”.²²

Greece was not included in re-emergence of instability and chaos in the Balkans, but now Greece was more suspicious about Macedonian irredentism. The idea of a unified Macedonia was associated with irredentist claims against Greece by Greeks, historically.²³ According to Greece, preamble of the Macedonian constitution could be interpreted against territorial claims over Greek territories. So, they call Macedonia as Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) and try to impose on the EU to call Macedonia like that.

Maastricht Treaty on the EU was adopted in 1991. It was ratified by the Greek parliament by all parties except communist parties. Maastricht Treaty established the standards for member states which want to join Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) so that they could abandon their national currencies in favour of euro. Also, in 1992 Greece was invited to become a member of Western European Union (WEU).

After 1993 election, PASOK won and it adopted very nationalist policies against Macedonia. It imposed trade embargo on Macedonia. Other member of EC applied for European Court of Justice since Greece's embargo was not applicable to law of the EC. So, Greece faced a diplomatic isolation especially by its western allies because of its sympathy for Serbs. One of the reasons of historical Greek-Serb friendship was Orthodoxy. This reason shows that Orthodox Church or religion was still influential in Greek thinking as a Balkan state.

In 1996, Andreas Papandreou replaced by Constantine Simitis. Simitis who is responsible for modernization of the party and country wanted to end isolation and implemented decisive policies for Maastricht Treaty in order to join EMU. Modernization of Greece, as in other southern European countries, conceived as the reduction of the distance that separates a country from the more developed societies of the EU.²⁴ Re-orientation to Europe was vital since geostrategic value of Greece in the region had declined with the collapse of communism. The end of the communism also reduce the degree of command economy and, both of the big parties, ND and PASOK, began to support more liberal economic policies.

Contemporary Politics

Greek support for Turkey in Helsinki in 1999 is thought to be relaxation of relations between two hostile countries under the umbrella of the EU. I think that Greece continues irredentist claims over Cyprus and the continental shelf of Turkey in the Aegean Sea.

Greece joined the Economic and Monetary Union of the EU in 2000 although inflation rate of Greek economy was high and economic growth rate was low. Because Greek economy was dependent on foreign economy, it is affected by any international economic crisis easily.

Beginning of 2000s witnessed the clash between Simitis and church over the issue of the removal of religious affiliation from the identity cards. Actually, the clash was between the supporters of Greek Orthodox nationalists, a religion based state, and secular reformists. The Church is still intervening in politics and Greece is not still a secular state although it is a member of EU.

A Comparison: European or Balkan?

It is the contention of this paper that modern Greece is product of Europe, but Europe means foreign intervention which all Balkan states are familiar. Even though Greeks are seen as ancestors of European civilization by Europeans, they are criticized harshly by Europeans especially because of economic reasons, too. For example, criticisms against Greece are harsher than criticisms against Spain and Portugal in current economic crisis.

Greeks are accepted as superior race that advanced Western civilization, culture, philosophy and science. Due to the city states, Greeks are also seen as the provider of other western values like democracy. Even in the official website of the European Union, it is written like that.²⁵ From the independence of Greece, a general sympathy for Greece from Europe was quite observable. One of the important reasons of Greece's early membership of EU was this sympathy rather than reality whether their internal conditions are compatible with European standards. However, most of the Europe sees Greeks as a burden on them and Greece reminds them problem.

Another political reason that accelerated their early membership was the Cold War's political atmosphere in a Soviet dominated region and Papandreou's third world anti-western rhetoric. Greek economy was as developed and industrialized as European economies from the beginning of negotiations of the EEC because of the Ottoman economic legacy as well as political and cultural legacies. Greece was not industrialized and capitalized enough to compete with European economies. It was still an agrarian based economy like other Balkan states. Although Greece made economic reforms like liberalization and privatization, these reforms made economy more dependent on foreign economy and made be import based. Non existence of historical background, industry revolution, was influential over the implementation of economic policies. So, Greece has always faced problems of economic crisis, budgetary deficit, foreign debts and economic austerity policies.

Not only economy was problem in the process of compliance with the EU, but also political reforms were question. Besides the economic perspective, political values of the Europe show that Greece is not a European state. When we say western or European values, major values of being European are rule of law, equality, democratic administration, multi-party system, minority rights, non discrimination against any ethnicity and so on. In my opinion, Greece is more tolerated than any other countries regarding the democratic values. For example, Greece began to implement proportional representation system in 1989 elections, but they did not implement proportional representation system due to the democracy concern like Europeans. It was just because of the interest of the party leaders in order not to lose their votes. Holding elections and being ruled by elected representatives could seem to be democratic, but representation of votes is important as well as elections.

Moreover, military intervention or military dictatorship rule are familiar events in Greek political life. Even though there has no military intervention from the member of the EC, some hearsay about it was published several times in the news or newspaper especially during the crisis times. Even today, this kind of news has been talked because of the economic crisis very recently.

Solving ethnic disputes with ethnic cleansing and violence and exclusion or otherization of the minorities are general policies towards the minorities in the Balkans. And, Balkan nationalism is

always concerned with territorial expansionism (irredentism). To conclude, Greece is no different from its neighbours with Megali Idea and ENOSIS ideas and, situation of Turkish minorities in Western Thrace. They made some reforms for minorities, but still not sufficient according to EU standards.

The major element of modernization is secularization, but Greece is still not a secular state. State and church are not separated from each other although they claim that they are indisputable part of Europe (the civilized modern world). For example, Education and Creed Ministry are not separated. Turkey was not a member of EU, but it established a state which is based on secular institutions just in 1924 with the abolishment of Caliphate. Even the monarchy was abolished in 1975 and republic was founded whereas Turkey became a republic in 1923. Church institution is very strong and integral part of Greek identity like in all Balkan identities with language.

Besides the military, Church sometimes interferes in politics. For instance, religious affiliation from the identity cards did bring about a confrontation between Prime Minister Simitis and archbishop (church). Other than the minority question, EU tries to impose reforms of local administration. Greece should implement local administration reform for more democratic administration and decrease the centralisation in the country.

Greece has not lifted the ban on establishing private university, yet. This is evidence that proves the mentality of anti- privatization in Greece. Civil service is working on primitive methods. EU also imposes that public services and civil servants should be meritocratic.

Today, there is a very crucial economic crisis in Greece that not only their resignation from the EMU is debated by Europeans, but also their resignation from the EU is debated. Some of the criticisms are even pejorative. This is why they see Greece as not an integral part of them. On the other hand, Greeks see Europeans as exploiters of their country when their economy gets worse. Actual events in Greece demonstrate that this opinion has become widespread among Greeks.

Referanslar

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⁵ Clogg, p. 51.

⁶ Tsoukalas, p. 8.

⁷ George Voskopoulos, "Western Europe and the Balkans: A Geo-Cultural Approach of International Relations?", Prague: Perspectives Pub., 2002, p. 31.

⁸ Panayotis Tsakonas and Antonis Tournikiotis, "Greece's Elusive Quest for Security Providers: The Expectations-Reality Gap", Athens: Sage Pub., 2003, p. 302.

⁹ Voskopoulos, p. 33.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Koliopoulos and Veremis, p. 103.

¹² Voskopoulos, p. 37.

¹³ Clogg, p. 189.

¹⁴ F.Stephen Larrabee, "Greece's Balkan Policy in a New Strategic Era", *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, Volume 5, No. 3. London, 2005, p. 406.

¹⁵ Clogg, p. 205.

¹⁶ Gerassimos Moschonas "The Path of Modernisation: PASOK and European Integration", *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, Volume 3, Number 1. London, 2001, p. 11.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Damla Cihangir, "Yunanistan-AB İlişkileri: Yunanistan Avrupa Birliğinin Şımarık Çocuğu Olmaya Devam mı Ediyor", İktisadi Kalkınma Vakfı (İKV). İstanbul, 2010, p. 3.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Moschonas, p. 13.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Clogg, p. 254.

²³ Larrabee, p. 408.

²⁴ Moschonas, p. 21.

²⁵ http://europa.eu/about-eu/countries/member-countries/greece/index_en.htm