

Chapter 13

HYPERTROPHY OF INDIVIDUALISM

THE people of Asvestohorion who lived in foreign lands mixed with all the social classes and in an environment that was spiritual and social, maybe lower than their own often, when they distinguished themselves and succeeded, but maybe even higher than their own, from which they received habits and customs completely foreign from those of the old country.

Because of this, we find that many who returned to the old country often looked with indifference and stress at the conditions and customs of the life of the hometown, and that their brief stay left them dissatisfied with the hometown environment.

It is said that a townsman of ours, returned from Roumania, economically well off, having been blessed with good luck. He was dressed in beautiful clothing and walked back and forth in the coffee house conspicuously holding a cane with silver handle, when he was asked by someone why he did not sit down and rest, replied,

"I don't find the man", he said, "with whom I can socialize and talk."

For this reason many left again quickly, without using the capital which they brought back from foreign lands for works here at home. In later years, we find the citizens of Asvestohorion migrating to America to join the first of our countrymen there, Hercules Papakyriakou, who settled in Haverhill, (Massachusetts) and who died in 1952. He donated many times to our schools writing materials for the poor students, furnaces with all their supplies, and after his death

he left in his will one thousand dollars for the needs of our schools for which he was memorialized as a benefactor by our community.

Migrating to join him, our countrymen found all kinds of help. Later he founded there a society of Asvestohorites so as to keep its members in the Orthodox Faith, the national religion, and to remind them of their love for the old country and to encourage their return to it.

Chapter 14

MISMANAGEMENT AND LACK OF SECURITY

THE reasons for emigration from Asvestohorion were not only the paucity of land cultivation and the unprofitability of the sale of lime.

During the Turkish occupation, and particularly during the past century, mismanagement and the lack of security were other reasons for emigration.

As previously mentioned, the inhabitants of Asvestohorion received for many decades some privileges, immunity in most instances during the first years, since the service in the government with its benefits may have helped in saving our land from destruction during the revolutions in Halkis, because nothing of the sort is mentioned except the destruction of the monastery of Saint Panteleemon. However, the general mismanagement and the lack of security everywhere, as well as the existing terrorism forced many not to think

about jobs and occupations in the fatherland, and thus they were forced to emigrate to foreign countries.

According to information from old-timers the terror was induced by the Albanians who were given the job as agricultural guards in the entire region, and who were also thieves who cooperated with the inhabitants of the town of Gialentzic, now called Phyllirion. They called those inhabitants Koinareous who were transplanted from Ikonium of Asia Minor by the Turks to Gialentzic-Insinle and Arsacle. They were really criminals and very dangerous neighbors. They settled in the above towns in order to frighten and intimidate the inhabitants of the neighboring Greek towns whom the Turks feared always of revolutionary uprising.

Along with terrorism there were also easy conversions to Mohammedanism during that period. On our side as referred to by Mr. I. Basdrabelles in his work "Historical Archives of Macedonia," page 553, document 40, that in the year 1790 the minor or young Parthena Anastasia, daughter of Peter, was converted to Mohammedanism, and named Fatima, and later a second mishap occurred when Metros Loles converted to Mohammedanism in the year 1824 and was named Moustaphas.

The town of Gialentzic was destroyed during the First Balkan War by the volunteer Bulgarian army, a few days after the entrance of the Greek army in Salonica. The inhabitants, fearful of the arrival of the Greek army, abandoned the town and fled to Salonica, leaving everything behind.