Research Article

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Greek refugees and emigrants from former Bizantine Empire in the Kingdom of Poland in the context of the modern migration crisis in Europe

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Abstract: The Ottoman Turks since the mid-fourteenth century led a gradual conquest of Anatolia and the Balkans. It's symbolic culmination was the capture of Constantinople in 1453. In this way, a great population of Orthodox Greeks came under the rule of a Muslim sultan. Many of them decided to escape abroad to avoid robbery, rapes and captivity by the victorious forces. In the following years, when initially gentle policy towards the conquered community began to tighten, another wave of Greek migration emerged outside the Ottoman state. Subsequent groups fled from persecution after successive anti-Turkish uprisings. Of these refugees, the largest group settled in neighboring countries - Moldova, Wallachia and Hungary. People with greater financial or intellectual potential - philosophers, scholars, members of the social elite of the fallen Byzantine Empire - chose exile. They headed for Western culture centers, where they could continue their careers or seek support for their political plans. Merchants and craftsmen, who wanted to use their capital and skills at the crossroads of trade routes in the then Kingdom of Poland, which was in union with the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, also constituted a larger group. Thanks to their unique handicraft skills and trade contacts in the south, many of these Greeks gained a strong position in the new environment. Some of them made a fortune and even obtained noble titles, though many of them lived modestly or even went bankrupt as a result of the actions of their Polish competitors and had to leave the country. The circumstances and effects of Greek migration leaving the Ottoman state show many similarities to the migration of the population during the modern migration crisis in Europe. An analysis of the events from half a thousand years ago may prove useful in building plans to solve the problem of refugees from the Middle East and to root and integrate migrant communities within the European Union.

Keywords: migration; refugee; Middle East; Greeks; Constantinople; Turkey; Poland; Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth; integration; assimilation; trade; Europe.

1 Introduction

For several years we have been witnessing undying conflicts in many countries in the Middle East and in African countries. Civil wars in Syria, Libya and Lebanon, revolutions in many Arab countries, and constant unrest in Iraq and Afghanistan are only those best known to the western public, although the wars in Africa, particularly in Southern Sudan, are equally devastating for local societies. All of these disastrous events are affecting the civilian population and causing a huge humanitarian crisis, further fueled by progressive climate change, drought and crop failure¹. The natural effects of this kind of crisis are waves of refugees fleeing the threat of war, hunger and death. Although most refugees find shelter in neighboring countries, many residents of war and crisis countries are constantly wandering

¹ Elizabeth Bryan, Temesgen T. Deressa, Glwadys A. Gbetibouo, Claudia Ringler, Adaptation to climate change in Ethiopia and South Africa: options and constraints, Environmental science & policy 12 (2009), p. 413–426; Martin Claussen, Victor Brovkin, Andrey Ganopolski, Claudia Kubatzki, Vladimir Petoukhov, Climate change in Northern Africa: The Past is not the future, Climatic Change vol. 57, Kluwer Academic Publishers 2003 p. 99–118.

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far north into the European Union². Motivations for such a distant and dangerous journey are diverse; from the desire to find a completely safe place to live, plan to join relatives who have already arrived in the EU territory, to the desire to improve their material situation³. However, this is not a phenomenon that originated in the 21st century. In fact, forced population migrations are as old as humanity itself. This article presents the phenomenon of migration of many inhabitants of the former Byzantine Empire, which was finally conquered by the Ottoman Turkey in the 15th century. Particular attention will be given to those of Greek origin who came to the territory of the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth, in particular to the lands of the crown of the Polish Kingdom. Observation of their coming and stay in this area in the *longue durée* may enable a new perspective in looking at the current migration crisis in Europe and the Middle East.

2 Discussion and results

The Byzantine Empire in the 15th century was only a shadow of its former power. After the capture of Constantinople by the Latin Crusaders in 1204, the state was on a decline. Despite regaining independence and the return of the imperial Paleologists dynasty to the capital, the weakness of the Byzantines was gradually exploited by external and internal enemies. This led to the fall of subsequent territories, and a gradual conquest by the new hegemon growing in the region - the Ottoman state⁴. For many decades, Europe was shaken by subsequent reports of Turkish conquests and the desperate requests of emperors to Christian rulers for support in containing Muslim pressure. The country mastered a specific sense of the approaching end, which manifests itself in cultural extension to the roots of Byzantine civilization and a kind of decadence⁵. Many Greeks, including high state officials, began to cooperate with the enemy and with their betrayal contributed to the final fall of Constantinople. The capture of the capital by the Turks in 1453 and the death of Emperor Constantine XI marked the actual end of the empire. The following decades brought conquest of the last still independent Greek provinces and islands⁶.

These events caused a mixture of sadness, surprise and horror in all of Europe. Successive popes tried to organize crusades to recapture Constantinople from the hands of „infidels” and to stop their further conquest, but they did not bring the desired effect. The rulers of christian countries were occupied with their own wars and for the most part did not see the need to support the Greeks, who for many previous years presented papal propaganda as schismatics, who repeatedly refused to make a union with the Roman church, despite Constantinople's declarations of reconciliation in exchange for help in fighting the Turks⁷. An exception was the neighboring countries, which were directly affected by the fall of the Byzantine state, and their interests began to be threatened by the imperial policy of the Turkish sultan. There were also Greek refugees within their borders, who often tried to call for intervention of the Christian world⁸.

At this point one should consider who were the Greeks fleeing from Turkish rule and what motivated them to abandon their homes. The conquest of new territories by the Ottoman army was usually associated with robberies, massacres and rape. The exception to this rule were cities and lands that surrendered to the sultan's power without a fight - they could count on a much milder treatment. Both of these scenarios were implemented in the Greek lands, and even in the capital itself, where some districts declared their submission to the conquerors even before the fall of the city⁹. Thanks to this, many Greek Orthodox churches and settlements were saved from being looted by turkish soldiers. Nevertheless, many people were taken prisoner, sold on a slave market, Or sent to the harem of Ottoman nobles. According to some sources, many residents of the Greek province fled from the Turkish invaders to the mountains,

2 Nick Gill, Anthony, Good Asylum Determination in Europe: Ethnographic Perspectives, Palgrave Socio-Legal Studies 2019; Global Trends. Forced Displacement in 2018, UNHCR, Geneva 2019; Liza Schuster, Turning refugees into 'illegal migrants': Afghan asylum seekers in Europe, Ethnic and Racial Studies Volume 34, 2011 - Issue 8: Irregular Migrants: Policy, Politics, Motives and Everyday Lives.

3 The Scaling Fences: Voices of Irregular African Migrants to Europe, UNDP Regional Bureau of Africa 2019; Maggie O'Neill, Tony Spiby, Global Refugees, Exile, Displacement and Belonging, Sociology vol. 37 (1), BSA Publications Ltd, London-Thousand Oaks-New Delhi 2003 p. 7-12

4 Steven Runciman, The Fall of Constantinople, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1965 p. 21-45.

5 Christofer Montague Woodhouse, Modern Greece : a short history, Faber&Faber, London 1991, p. 69-99.

6 Ibidem, p. 69-99.

7 Runciman, op.cit., p. 6-21, 50-53, 192.

8 Johnatan Harris, Greek emigres in the West 1400-1520, Porphyrogenitus Ltd, Camberley 1995

9 Christofer Montague Woodhouse, p. 69-99, Runciman, p. 114-116, 142-146.

where they formed communities living outside the law. Also representatives of the social elite, who did not agree with the advent of new orders or came into conflict with the Turkish administration being introduced in the conquered lands fled abroad. It should be noted however, that while simple people from the lower social strata intended to escape violence and oppression into relatively close regions - hard to reach mountain areas or to neighboring christian countries like Moldova or Hungary, the Greek elite usually wandered much further. In particular, they targeted the Italian states - Venice, Genoa or Rome, that they had close relation before¹⁰. Good examples of this second group can be émigrés like Basilos Bessarion¹¹, Demetrios Chalkokondyles¹² or George of Trebizond¹³, and many other greek scholars and philosophers who influenced the rise of Italian renaissance. Greek intellectuals also migrated to other european countries, from France through Germany to Hungary¹⁴.

In the Kingdom of Poland the news about the fall of Constantinople was a big surprise, just like in other Christian countries. The Polish king, Casimir the Jagiellonian, was called by the pope to gather an army and join the crusade against Turks, but the internal situation in country and ongoing conflict with Teutonic Order made it impossible. Only some volunteer knights gathered and moved to the Balkans, where they took part in the defence of Belgrad¹⁵. The effects of the fall of Constantinople were also discussed by the Lviv city council. Fearful of the great wave of refugees from the areas conquered by the Turks, it ordered that Greeks would be allowed into the city walls only after paying a specific pledge¹⁶. The fact that in the following months and years there was no noticeable number of migrants must have surprised them¹⁷. But why didn't the refugees come?

The answer lies in the policy chosen by the victorious Sultan Mehmed II. As was said earlier, only the settlements and lands that actively resisted Turkish conquest were plundered and some of their residents had been sold to slavery. But in general the situation of greek subjects of the Sultan wasn't that bad. They were taxed by the new administration and gained new obligations and prohibitions. For example Greeks had to wear different clothes than Turks, were not allowed to bear arms, and were forbidden to ring bells in their churches or build higher houses than their turkish neighbours¹⁸. In addition, they enjoyed some autonomy in basic life matters - religion, education or the judiciary. Formal supervision of the lives of Greek subjects was to be exercised by the bishops of the Orthodox Church, which on the one hand ensured freedom of life according to their own customs, but at the same time deprived the population of the right to appeal against the sentences of the local clergy. It should be remembered that the structures of the Orthodox church in the patriarchate of Constantinople were under the control of the Ottoman authorities, which could influence its policy¹⁹. This situation began to change during the reign of Mehmed's successors. Gradually, the policy towards the Greek population began to tighten, its autonomy periodically became increasingly theoretical and the fiscal burden increased. In addition, boys from Greek families were increasingly being incorporated into the turkish janissary corps, which was a particularly hated form of oppression²⁰. These actions caused a growing dissatisfaction in the Greek population, which eventually turned into overt acts of opposition against the Ottoman authorities. Significant for this period is the appearance of the phenomenon of martyrs for the Orthodox faith who died at the hands of the Turkish

10 Johnatan Harris, *Greek emigres in the West 1400-1520*, Porphyrogenitus Ltd, Camberley 1995

11 Jacquilyne E. Martin: *Bessarion: Cardinal Bessarion, mystical theology and spiritual union between East and West*, University of Manitoba 2000, s. 46-47;

12 Aslihan Akisik, *Self and other in the Renaissance: Laonikos Chalkokondyles and late Byzantine intellectuals* Harvard University, ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2013, p. 55-56.

13 John Monfasani *George of Trebizond: A Biography and a Study of His Rhetoric and Logic*, E.J. Brill, Leiden 1976, p. 3-69.

14 Ares Chadzinikolau, *Renesans Grecki 1453-1669*, Scripta Neophilologica Posnaniensia. Vol. 10, Wydział Neofilologii, UAM, Poznań 2009, p. 203-221.

15 J. Długosz, *Annales seu cronicae incliti Regni Poloniae*, Vol. 10, Ed. Krzysztof Buczkowski, Polskie Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Warszawa, 1997, p. 285; Maciej Strykowski, *O początkach, wywodach, dzielnościach, sprawach rycerskich i domowych sławnego narodu litewskiego, żmudzkiego i ruskiego*, Ed. Julia Radziszewska, Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, Warszawa 1978, p. 459-476.

16 *Leopolis triplex czyli kronika miasta Lwowa* in: Józefa Bartłomieja Zimorowicza *Pisma do dziejów Lwowa odnoszące się*, ed. Korneli Heck, Lwów 1899, p. 89

17 Ihor Lylo, *Grecy we Lwowie: zapomniani obywatele*, in: *Orientalia Christiana Cracoviensia* 4 (2012), p. 49-58

18 C. M. Woodhouse, *Modern Greece: a short history*, Faber & Faber Ltd, Chatham 1998, p. 101-105.

19 Ibidem, p. 106-107.

20 Sabrina Joseph, *Communicating Justice: Shari'a Courts and the Christian Community in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Greece*, *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, Vol. 20, Issue 3, 2009, p. 333-350; Kiamran Halil, *The Janissaries - a form of state slavery in ottoman Turkey*, *Mankind Quarterly*; Washington, D.C., vol 16, 1975, p. 117-130.

during a period of growing conflict. Good examples of this are st. George of Kratovo, killed in 1515 and st. Philotea, who died in 1589²¹.

The above-mentioned circumstances led several times to revolts and armed protests against Turkish authorities. The largest of them undoubtedly included uprisings from 1517, 1619 and 1772. They all took place in seemingly favorable circumstances, after the internal or external weakening of the Sultan's power and sometimes at the inspiration of Turkey's external opponents. Unfortunately, all these speeches were eventually suppressed and their participants repressed. It was only they that led to a real increase in the emigration involved in the Greek uprising beyond the borders of the Ottoman state. These population movements can be easily observed, also in Polish historical sources, where in the middle of the sixteenth, seventeenth and mid-end of the seventeenth century, clearly there are more and more people with Greek names. Runaways from the Ottoman state settled mostly in large cities, where they could develop their trade or craft experience. Lviv was their favourite choice, as it was one of the largest and richest cities of the Polish Crown, which at that time was a cultural melting pot, where the Polish, Ruthenian, Lithuanian, Armenian, Jewish and Greek populace were mixed²². The most common profession they practiced was trade, in particular exotic goods: dried fruit, decorations and, above all, wine. It was Greek merchants who contributed to the increase in popularity of sweet southern trunks, called *malmasia* among the Polish population. Originally imported from the Greek areas, they were later replaced by slightly cheaper and simpler wines from Hungary. It is significant that, despite the passage of time, most of the Greek community in Polish cities (besides Lviv also Kraków, Warsaw, Zamość, Kalisz and Poznań) were men. Presumably, they brought the goods from their relatives who remained in the south and returned to them after obtaining a sufficiently large profit. Some of the Hellenes, however, settled permanently in the Polish kingdom, sometimes creating significant fortunes. The best example of this is Constantine Korniakt, who came to Poland from Constantinople and developed a large-scale trade in cotton, *malmasia*, leather and cloth. His property and influence earned him a knighthood, Lviv citizenship and the right to lease customs in Rus. He lent money to King Sigismund August and powerful Polish families, he also became a patron of art and architecture²³.

The career of Georgis Papara was similar, as he probably left the Greek lands with his family after losing the 1619 uprising. Initially, they sheltered in Moldova, where Georgis himself began to trade, and later, as he gathered more capital, he eventually moved to Lviv. From there, he continued his career importing goods from the south and maintaining a wide network of connections on trade routes. This contributed to his involvement in diplomatic activities for the Polish king in relations with the Zaporozhian boots. For these achievements he was ennobled in 1658, although this act caused protests from the local nobles. Acts of ennoblement in the Commonwealth were relatively rare and the nobles postulated to grant them only for war merits, but apparently the diplomatic achievements of the Greek were so important that he managed to maintain his status and granted land goods. The Papara family remained at the Orthodox faith and settled permanently in the vicinity of Lviv²⁴.

Greek immigrants were not just involved in trade. Some of them conducted craft activities in the Polish Kingdom. Skills related to the production of delicate and expensive fabrics were particularly valued. Among the Polish nobility in the 17th and 18th centuries, dresses made of fabrics of oriental origin and pattern were particularly popular, so the production of similar goods on site had to be a profitable undertaking. Greek immigrants like Konstanty from Stamato and Manuel from Corfu, active in the workshop that specialized in this craft, were active in the second half of the 17th century. Polish magnates such as Krzysztof Koniecpolski, who strongly supported the activities of Greek producers, found support and investment capital. Polish students were also admitted to the workshop¹, who later acquired these new, specific skills and made Lviv a center for the production of goldhead. The workshop founded at that time functioned for almost a hundred years²⁵.

²¹ Demetrios J. Constantelos, *Altruistic Suicide or Altruistic Martyrdom? Christian Greek Orthodox Neomartyrs: A Case Study*, *Archives of Suicide Research*, Vol. 8, 2004, Issue 1, p. 57-71.

²² Ihor Lylo, *Grecy we Lwowie: zapomniani obywatele*, *Orientalia Christiana Cracoviensia* 4 (2012), s. p. 49–58; Władysław Łoziński, *Patrycjat i mieszczaństwo lwowskie w XVI i XVII wieku*, *Lwów 1890*, Gubrynowicz i Schmidt, p. 63-75; 194-260.

²³ Ihor Lylo, *Miejsce Greków w kulturze materialnej Rzeczypospolitej w XVI–XVII wieku*, *Przegląd Nauk Historycznych*, vol. 15, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, 2016, p. 189-211.

²⁴ Wiesław Majewski, *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, vol. 25, Polska Akademia Nauk, Kraków 1980, p. 157-159.

²⁵ <http://hellenopolonica.blogspot.com/2015/12/manuel-korfinski-mistrz-tkacki.html>

It is obvious that outstanding individuals, like the merchants and craftsmen described above, always make up only a small percentage of each community. In statistical terms, it can be stated that the Greeks residing in the Commonwealth in the 16th-18th centuries fell into four categories:

1. Merchants temporarily arriving at fairs
2. Merchants who had permanent trade points in the Kingdom of Poland
3. Greeks with municipal law in cities of the Commonwealth
4. Orthodox school teachers and monks teaching Orthodox inhabitants of the country

In addition, the newcomers were divided into several groups by origin. The two most numerous are Graecus de Galata and Graecus de Constantinopoli. They were connected with each other according to the criterion of geographical and state origin, which over time also overlapped with family ties. Greeks from the territories of Moldova constituted a separate group, who were usually a group of trade brokers and sometimes were also involved in criminal proceedings. Moldova and Wallachia were a kind of intermediate station between the Ottoman state and the Commonwealth. Many initially poorer migrants gathered their estates there, thanks to which they could later develop their careers in Lviv, Zamość or Krakow²⁶. By the 18th century Hungary had overtaken this role²⁷.

The main domain of Greek merchants settled in the Polish Kingdom was, as already mentioned, trade in wine, for which they de facto won a monopoly. However, they had to fight for this with Polish merchants as well as with Jewish and Armenian entrepreneurs. This rivalry between merchant nations is interestingly reflected in the local saying: „Where one Greek comes, five Jews cry there. Where one Armenian comes, both Jews and Greeks weep”²⁸. In fact, well-organized and numerous Armenian merchants definitely dominated the Oriental routes and only a relatively narrow specialization could allow the Greeks to strengthen their niche. They defended it very effectively, as evidenced by the case of the Jewish merchant J. Nassi, who in 1567 received from king Sigismund August permission to trade wine in Lviv. This was a dangerous precedent, but the coordinated action of Greek and Armenian merchants led the influential newcomer to imminent bankruptcy²⁹.

The end of the prosperity of the Greek monopoly on wine trade came almost simultaneously with the fall of the Commonwealth. The eighteenth century was very difficult for the cities of the Polish crown, which were plundered by the armies of various countries many times. Various contributions were imposed on them, and epidemics decimated them. This situation disastrously affected the condition of Polish trade and crafts, as a result of which the townspeople began to call more often for the restriction of the rights and privileges of foreign competitors. The Good Order Commission established during the reign of King Stanisław August Poniatowski introduced regulations in individual cities, which forced, inter alia, Greek merchants to legalize their stay by adopting the law of the city in which they conducted their business. This required the purchase of real estate in its area and joining a merchant brotherhood. They also included all restrictions on trade in wine provided for in Polish law, for example a ban on trade in Hungarian and French liquors at the same time. The effect of this regulation was the removal from the royal cities of numerous brokers and seasonal traders who came for a period of several months until the goods were sold out³⁰. Greeks who met all the required conditions usually brought their families to the place and often adopted Polish surnames as well. In cities that did not have a strong Greek minority and a large population of Orthodox believers, such families became Polonized with time. A great example of this is the Zupanos family, which traded in Poznań's wine. After obtaining the right to citizenship, she adopted the surname Żupańscy and was involved in the Polish patriotic movement, while during the partition of the country by neighboring powers the then head of the family - Jan Konstanty Żupański, founded a publishing house and bookstores that published and promoted Polish authors³¹.

The assimilation process was obviously less noticeable in Lviv, where the Greek community was the strongest. Even Greeks with city citizenship and real estate, who lived there with their entire families, kept their identity. It is significant that throughout the period in question, many Greeks engaged in espionage and diplomacy in the Commonwealth,

26 Ihor Lylo, *Grecy we Lwowie: zapomniani obywatele*, in: *Orientalia Christiana Cracoviensia* 4 (2012), p. 49–58.

27 Marcin Mikołajczyk, *Diaspora grecka w Poznaniu w XVIII i XIX wieku*, *Przegląd Archiwalno-Historyczny* vol. 1, Poznań 2014, p.89.

28 Ihor Lylo, *op.cit.*, p. 49.

29 *Ibidem*, p. 53.

30 *Treść ustaw dla miasta J.K.Mci Poznan przez Komisyją J.K. Mci Dobrego Porządku Woj. Poznanskiego w roku 1780 uchwalonych*, P. Dufour, Warszawa, 1781, p. 29-32.

31 *Ibidem*, p. 98.

which was usually associated with attempts to bring about armed conflicts aimed at liberating Constantinople and Greek lands from Ottoman rule.³²

At this point one should consider what conclusions can be drawn from the phenomenon of Greek migration to the Polish Crown in the context of the contemporary refugee and migration crisis. These two social phenomena, although separated by more than five centuries, have some common features that seem to be universal. The exile of the Greeks began with the war that reached their homes. Where the fights were more fierce, numerous prisoners were taken, city residents were murdered and property plundered, hence the fear of Ottoman conquerors in some regions could be greater than in others. The fact that there were no large groups of refugees immediately after the fall of Constantinople suggests that only the people belonging to the elite of the Byzantine society who were afraid of repression or hoped to organize an expedition in Catholic countries that would free the conquered territories from hands Muslims. People from the lower social strata, if they were already running away, probably to their families in other places, or in the mountains, where supposedly many years later there were groups of bandits fighting against the Turkish authorities, the so-called Klephts. Probably some refugees temporarily took shelter also in neighboring countries, especially those that were associated with the Empire culturally and politically, e.g. in Serbia or Trebizond (which, in the following years, also fell prey to Sultan). The mild policy of conquered Greeks used by Mehmed II meant that the situation normalized quickly and the average Greek subject could run a fairly normal and peaceful life without feeling too many changes in his everyday life. It was only the sharpening course of Mehmed's successors that led to increased social tension and, as a consequence, several uprisings that broke out several times. It was only in the aftermath of this unrest and subsequent repression of the rebels that the major waves of Greek migration north and west and the emergence of the great Greek diaspora began. The first target for the refugees were again neighboring countries - Moldova and Hungary, only later, after stabilizing their situation, refugees tried to improve their lives by moving further. The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and in particular the Ruthenian Voivodeship in the Crown of the Polish Kingdom, was an attractive destination because of its acceptance of the Orthodox faith and the strong community of its followers. Combined with the niche they found for their commercial activities, this encouraged many Greeks to seek happiness in the Kingdom of Poland, and some even made stunning careers by breaking into the nobility. Political activities that many of them conducted raised fears about the role that the Greeks could play in the event of a conflict with the neighbors - Turkey, but also with Orthodox Moscow. The presence of the Greeks aroused resentment among the part of society that saw them as competition and a threat to their social position. At a time when the newcomers gradually ceased to be independent buyers who functioned in a new place outside the legal system, but brought their families, purchased real estate and joined the guild system, their presence became increasingly beneficial for the country's economy. Some, living outside large clusters of their kinsmen, quickly assimilated and assumed Polish cultural identity. Others who did not like such relations went on their way, looking for a place to live and trade elsewhere.

The phenomena described here largely reflects what we currently observe on the metastatic routes from the Middle East and Africa to European countries. The emergence of modern means of transport, rapid circulation of information and progressing globalization have meant that migrants are able to travel much further distances than five centuries ago. Invariably, however, the vast majority of those whose homes have been banished by war and religious persecution seek shelter as close as possible to their homeland, as evidenced by the UNHCR reports³³. Because migrations to more distant European countries are more dangerous and expensive, they are often richer or more agile. Migration to rich north countries is usually the result of a well-thought-out decision, requires planning, preparation and risk taking. Countries where relatives already live or a community of immigrants from Muslim countries that are culturally close are already selected as the target. It is not uncommon for men who recognize the route and destination country to be their first trip. They plan to bring families when they set up in a new place. Very similar mechanisms existed among Greek migrants who came to the Commonwealth in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. The main difference between these two situations is the scale of the phenomenon, and a definitely higher level of modern awareness of humanitarian problems. All this is a challenge for European societies, which in the postcolonial context feel the moral obligation to take care of arriving migrants. Nevertheless, just as in the past, the host community has environments that are reluctant

³² Ihor Lylo, *op.cit.*, p. 54.

³³ Global Trends. Forced Displacement in 2018, UNHCR, Geneva 2019.

to newcomers, trying to strive to limit their rights and expel them abroad. There are also many citizens, who oppose any migration from southern countries³⁴.

Although modern science has departed from Hegelian determinism and the recognition of timeless phenomena and laws of social development, certain phenomena taking place in similar circumstances may have similar effects. Will supporting the professional activity of migrants in their respective industries and supporting their cultural assimilation while maintaining their identity enable easier survival of the migration crisis? The answer to this question can only come from responsible decisions of European politicians.

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