

MATOULA TOMARA-SIDERIS
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Egyptiot Greeks in Egyptian industry 1945-1963

The final glimmer



EGYPTIOT GREEKS IN EGYPTIAN INDUSTRY
(1945-1963)

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Αιγυπτιώτες Έλληνες στην αιγυπτιακή βιομηχανία, 1945-1963. Η τελευταία αναλαμπή

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Matoula Tomara-Sideris
Sameh Ellaboody

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Athens 2025

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Prologue



The present study continues and expands upon the research programme ‘Greek Diaspora and Benefaction,’ which I have carried out for twenty-five years as part of my academic work.

It has three distinct features:

First, through methods of historical science it examines the presence of the Greek community in Egyptian industry during the post-war period up until nationalisation (1945-1963). This period represents the end of the Greeks’ distinctive presence in Egypt. Our research shows that no other comprehensive academic studies have been conducted on this topic.

Second, it makes extensive use of previously unexplored Egyptian state archives and other sources in Arabic. The use of these sources proves essential for our understanding of both the era and Greek-owned industry in Egypt, as it moves beyond the dual limitations of a community-centred and a Greek-centric perspective of history.

Third, the analysis of the material drawn from Arabic-language sources, as well as broader aspects of the phenomenon, was also conducted in collaboration with Sameh Ellaboudy, who completed his doctoral dissertation under my supervision at Panteion University and defended it in 2022. His dissertation is titled ‘Representing the Departure of Greeks from Egypt – A Comparative Analysis of Egyptiot Greek and Egyptian Press.’

This holistic, stereoscopic view clearly reveals aspects of these phenomena that were previously obscure or previously unknown. Many individuals, primarily Egyptiot Greeks, contributed to the collection of material and the reconstruction of the era. I extend my deepest gratitude to them.

I hope that this study will contribute towards a deeper understanding of a crucial aspect of modern Greek history and enhances the self-awareness and collective conscience of the Greek people, qualities that remain invaluable at all times.

27 August 2023

Matoula Tomara-Sideris

Chapter I

Historical Development of the Greek Settlement in Egypt



I.1. Structure of Egyptiot Greeks: Settlement and society

The modern Greek diaspora and the phenomenon of Hellenic communities abroad are key factors in understanding both the formation of modern Hellenism and the development of the Egyptian economy.

The 19th and early 20th centuries marked the era of global expansion of the colonial system, with Western metropolises at its centre. ¹ Its dynamics and contradictions peaked, leading to crises and ultimately the dissolution of this system during what is known as the ‘short twentieth century,’ the period following the First World War that culminated in the complete collapse of colonialism in the final quarter of the twentieth century.

The Hellenic settlement was an integral part of the colonial system and the associated international division of labour. The Greek community in Egypt, centred in Alexandria and Cairo, flourished throughout the 19th and the first third of the 20th century, within the broader framework of colonial expansion. Likewise, as we shall see in this study which focusses particularly on Egypt, it fol-