

The contribution of Greeks from Eastern Rumelia to the social life of Greece with emphasis on education and culture in the 20th and 21st centuries.

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The aim of the PhD thesis is to study the contribution of the Greeks from Eastern Rumelia to the social life of Greece with emphasis on education and culture in the 20th and 21st centuries. The Eastern Rumelians were expelled from Eastern Rumelia in the first half of the 20th century and settled in Greece. They had a collective identity, the Eastern-Rumelian identity. The act of escaping from their ancestral homes has already been the result of their self-definition as Eastern-Rumelian Greeks. Coming to Greece and losing definitively and irrevocably their place of origin, their identity was transformed. This research took place in all geographic districts where Eastern Rumelians settled. The methodological tools used were personal interview and direct and participatory observation. The conclusions of the PhD thesis were drawn from 167 interviews with thematic analysis. Comparative study, website study, direct observation in many cultural associations from 2014-2016 and participatory observation from 2013 to 2018 were also used. According to the findings of the survey, there is an Eastern-Rumelian collective identity today. It is a strong, ethnological collective identity and it is predominantly linked to culture. There have been and still are important personalities of Eastern Rumelians who contributed and contribute with their actions to the economic and especially to the spiritual and cultural life of Greece, and they promote the historical memory and Eastern-Rumelian culture. The contribution of the associations to the preservation and promotion of the Eastern-Rumelian identity is also important.