

Some of the Greeks at the local level found "freedom" by becoming *Klefts* or rebels, living in the mountains and carrying out raids on the Turks. Some romanticists refer to these rebels as the celebrated brigands who for centuries harassed the wealthy Turks in Robin Hood style. The demotic or *kleftica* songs are more revealing of the life in their time than history itself is. It is of interest to note that these strong holds of *klefts* increased in the decades before the revolution of 1821, but they existed from the time of the Fall of their area to the Turks. Some of them knew nothing else and their genealogical roots were lost in the past generations. They were the ones mainly responsible for the many revolts in the four centuries of occupation. For instance, the strategic and tactical brains of the revolution of 1821, General Theodore Kolokotronis, was the descendant of about 10 generations by that name who lived as rebels in the mountains of Peloponnesos fighting the occupying enemy. No fewer than 84 rebels by that name found violent death by the Turks between the years 1742-1829. In fact, Theodore's grandson, Colonel Kolokotronis, is recorded as the last Kolokotronis to fall for the freedom of Greece in the 1913 Balkan wars.

The areas of Souli and Mani never came under complete control of the Turks. The *Klefts* reigned supreme in these specific areas.

Klefts

from other areas, when vigorously pursued by the Turks, would find safety in these two areas as well as the Ionian Islands, which, more often than not, were under western rule.

Some Greeks gained the confidence of the Turks to be armed and used as sort of militia (*Armatoloi*)

to protect the villages from the *Klefts* and other bandits. At times, these

Armatoloi

worked closely with the *klefts* for the survival of their species. Both the

Klefts

and the *Armatoloi* formed the main source of revolutionary soldiers when the time for revolution came.

With the passing of time, few local Greeks gained the confidence of the regional Turkish bosses and earned many privileges for themselves, in terms of "ownership", collecting taxes and penalties from the ordinary Greeks for the Turkish administration, and managing the affairs of the enslaved Greeks.. This often at the cost of the Greek people, who continued to work the land for the Turks and now for the in-between bosses also, known as the Greek *Kotzabasides* ; who had

become the haves, like the Turks. Thus, these

Kotzabasides

had reasons to oppose the revolution and any disturbance by the enslaved Greeks. The Turkish authorities had, through brutality, via these *Kotzabasides* and though their control of some of the Church leadership, a very asphyxiating control over the Greek population.

When the revolution broke out, the Turks lost all confidence on the *kotzabasides* and the clerics, a fact that eventually forced them to irreversibly join the struggle for independence. The revolutionary hero Papaflessas saw to it, prior to the revolution, that both the *kotzabasides* and any hesitating clergymen had no other alternative any longer, except to join the *Klefts* and fight to the death. They were implicitly implicated by having a common Greek meeting in Arkadia with Papaflessas and other Kleft leaders, which the Turks found out and interpreted it as a collaboration, which was not exactly true. The Turks called the Greek leadership to a meeting of their own, but these Greeks knew what was coming to them and did not go, thus committing themselves to the side of the revolution.

All the items that were outlined above were critical for the eventual success of the revolution, However, without the **Education and Commerce factors**, the desire for freedom could not have been rekindled. They provided the opportunity to cultivate Phil-Hellenes, who proved pivotal after the battle at Navarino. The period of revival for Hellenic Paedeia and commerce reinvigorated the Greek communities throughout Europe and Russia. It was in these communities where the secret organization of Filiki Etairia was born and organized to have over 1000 sworn members by the time the revolution broke out in 1821.

Once the revolution started, Greek appeals to various nations and groups came asking for sympathy, help and recognition. Their appeal to President Monroe of USA, is shown here by their resolution and is, indeed, revealing of their commitment. **From The Resolution:**

"Having formed the resolution to live or die for freedom, we are drawn to you since it is in your

land that liberty has fixed her abode and is respected by you as it was by our Fathers. Hence,

in involving her name, we invoke yours, trusting that in emulating you, we shall emulate our ancestors and be thought worthy of them if we succeed in resembling your achievement.

Though separated from you by mighty oceans, we consider you closer to us than the nations of

our frontiers, and regard you as friends, fellow citizens and brothers, because you are free,

generous, liberal, and a Christian people. Your liberty does not rest on the slavery of other nations, nor your prosperity on their calamities and sufferings.

On the contrary, free and prosperous yourselves, you are desirous that all men should share the same blessings; that all should enjoy these rights to which all by nature

are equally entitled. It is you who(in our day) first proclaimed these rights and it is by your example that Europe receives lessons of justice and learns to renounce her absurd and bloody customs. This glory, Americans, is yours alone and raises you above all nations which have gained a name for liberty and law."