

# When Greeks and Turks Meet

## Interdisciplinary Perspectives on the Relationship Since 1923

*Edited by*  
Vally Lytra



CENTRE FOR HELLENIC STUDIES, KING'S COLLEGE LONDON

# WHEN GREEKS AND TURKS MEET

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Relationship Since 1923

Edited by

Vally Lytra

*Goldsmiths, University of London  
and  
King's College, London*

ASHGATE

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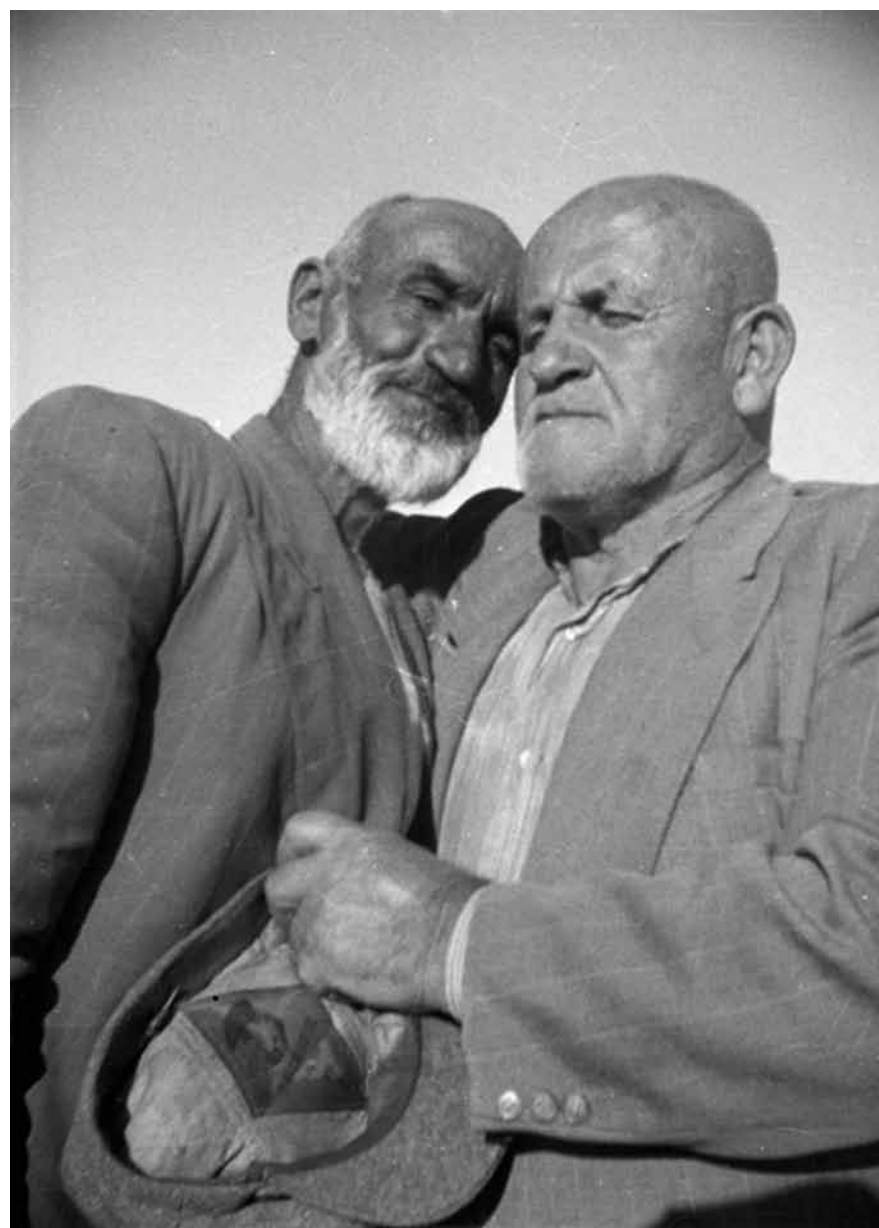
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# Foreword

The appearance of this volume in 2014 marks the first decade of academic cooperation between the Centre for Hellenic Studies at King's College London and the Turkish Studies programme offered by the Department of the Languages and Cultures of the Near and Middle East at SOAS (School of Oriental and African Studies). In 2003, to mark the launch of a new undergraduate degree in Turkish and Modern Greek Studies, taught jointly by our two institutions, constituent parts of the federal University of London, we proposed a series of seminars and public events to which we gave the title *Greek-Turkish Encounters*.

The series was formally inaugurated with an evening of music and poetry readings from Greece and Turkey, held at the Brunei Gallery, SOAS, and attended by the Ambassadors of the two countries in January 2004. It was an occasion of great warmth and brought together established academics, young researchers, current and prospective students from a wide range of disciplines with an interest in some aspect of Greek or Turkish culture, or both. We soon found that the scope for further 'encounters', in London, between these two cultures that historically have so often been seen as opposed to one another, was unlimited. Book launches, seminars and public lectures followed. All were ably administered by Dr Vally Lytra, the ideal person to take on this role having recently completed her PhD at King's, based on her work with bilingual (Greek and Turkish) primary school students at a school in Athens. The work soon turned out to be more demanding than any of us had expected.

Up to the spring of 2013, no fewer than 40 *Greek-Turkish Encounters* had taken place at King's and at SOAS. The present volume has been conceived in the same spirit as the series, and extends into print the space for intercommunal and interdisciplinary dialogue first opened up in the more fluid medium of the seminar room. Many of the contributors have previously taken part in the series. All of the chapters that make up this book represent the latest work by experts in their respective fields, informed by oral dialogue and peer review.

We congratulate the editor and the contributors on achieving such a rich cross-section of current research on Greek-Turkish cultural interactions, and of those interactions themselves, that relate fundamentally to the experience of the peoples of Greece, Turkey, and the divided island of Cyprus. On the evidence presented here, there are many more, and positive, Greek-Turkish encounters to be expected in the future. Indeed,

outlines for future developments, and future research, are prominent among the topics tackled in the pages that follow.

We would like to record our thanks to Dr Vally Lytra for all that she has done both for the original seminar series and in producing the present volume, as well as to all the contributors, and many more who have attended these events and helped illuminate past and future trajectories for these two cultures that, despite so many differences, during the last 90 years have also begun to discover how very much they have in common.

Roderick Beaton, King's College London

Yorgos Dedes, SOAS

Bengisu Rona, SOAS

May 2014

# Acknowledgements

I am indebted to many colleagues, students and friends for all the stimulating conversations we have shared over the past 20 years or so in Greece, Turkey, Cyprus, the UK, the US, Denmark and elsewhere. Our conversations have been instrumental in helping me understand the multifarious meanings as well as the complexities, ambiguities and tensions in the relationships between Greeks and Turks, Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots as these have developed over time and space. I had the privilege to continue these conversations at the *Greek-Turkish Encounters* lecture and events series (see Foreword). I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of the presenters, discussants and participants of the Series – they are too many to thank by name. Their active engagement in discussion and debate on different aspects of the relationship between the peoples of Greece, Turkey and Cyprus animated the *Greek-Turkish Encounters*, transformed our understanding of the relationship and provided the inspiration for this book. I am particularly grateful to my colleagues Judith Herrin, Charlotte Roueché and Chris Williams at King's and Yorgos Dedes and Bengisu Rona at SOAS for their encouragement and continuous support. I would also like to thank the contributors of the volume, some of who had previously presented at the *Greek-Turkish Encounters*, and who engaged in dialogue with me and with each other at various stages of this writing project in order to illuminate different aspects of the relationship. The introduction benefited from critical comments and observations by Roderick Beaton, Yorgos Dedes, Olga Demetriou, Renée Hirschon, Dimitris Kamouzis, Panagiotis Poulos and Bengisu Rona for which I am indebted. All shortcomings are of course mine.

I am most grateful to Roderick Beaton for the close collaboration and guidance from the inception of this writing project. The volume has benefited tremendously from our many off-line and on-line conversations. I would also like to thank John Smedley of Ashgate for his sound advice and patience, and the Centre for Asia Minor Studies and its director Stavros Anestidis for the kind permission to use the image reproduced on the jacket and as the frontispiece of the book. A final word of thanks goes to my family for their constant love and unwavering support in this journey, my parents, Sophia Papaefthymiou-Lytra and Chrysanthos Lytras, my brother, Christos Lytras, my father-in-law, Thanos Massouras, my partner in life, Andreas Massouras, and our shining stars Athan and Sophia, who always remind me what matters most.

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# Notes on Transcription and Translation

For quoted material the Greek and Turkish alphabets have been used except where the discussion requires transliteration for technical reasons or where transliteration of key words is standard practice (e.g. in the case of geographical or identity terms and ideological concepts). Transliteration raises well-known problems to which there is probably no single 'solution' suitable for all the contributors. In general, consistency with regard to the transliteration conventions used by individual contributors has been preferred over imposing a single set of transliteration conventions for all. All quotations and titles in Greek and Turkish are accompanied by a translation in the main text after the original.

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# Introduction

Vally Lytra

## Situating the Relationship: Background

The date 1923 is of particular significance in defining the relationship between Greeks and Turks to the present day. It marked the end of the conflict (1919–22) commonly referred to in Turkish national historiography as the ‘War of Independence’ (*Kurtuluş Savaşı*) and in its Greek counterpart as the ‘Asia Minor Catastrophe’ (*Μικρασιατική Καταστροφή*).<sup>1</sup> The end of the war was sealed by the signing of an international treaty in Lausanne (Treaty of Peace, 24 July 1923). Several months earlier (30 January 1923) the ‘Convention Concerning the Exchange of Greek and Turkish Populations and Protocol’ was signed in Lausanne solidifying the irrevocable and compulsory displacement of about 1.5 million people on both shores of the Aegean (Hirschon 2004a, 3–9).<sup>2</sup> These historic events resulted in the establishment of the modern Turkish Republic, which was officially proclaimed on 29 October 1923 in Ankara, and the inauguration of the Turkish national project.<sup>3</sup> For the Greek side, they determined the country’s national borders with the modern Turkish state and marked the demise of its irredentist aspirations to establish a Greek state that would encompass all ethnic Greeks, articulated in the *Megali Idea* (Great Idea).

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<sup>1</sup> In the early days of the conflict, the war was referred to as the ‘National Struggle’ (*Millî Mücadele*) by the Turkish side. It was waged against the Allied Forces who had occupied Turkey following the defeat of the Central Powers, including the Ottoman Empire in World War I. The Greco-Turkish war was part of this broader conflict.

<sup>2</sup> Hirschon (2004a, 4–5) adds that continuous armed conflict in the region from the Balkan Wars (1912–13) onwards had caused the forced displacement of Muslims and Christians alike well before the compulsory population exchange of 1923.

<sup>3</sup> Fortna (2013, 5) explains that it is only after the establishment of the Turkish Republic that the notion of “‘nation” as ethnically, linguistically and culturally understood’ becomes clearly articulated. It is during that period when the notion of *millet*, understood as ‘a community defined on the basis of common religion’ that previously encompassed other Muslim groups, such as Kurds, Albanians and Circassians, ‘underwent a semantic metamorphosis so as to become coterminous with the “nation”’. See also Aktar (2004) and Özkırımlı and Sofos (2008) for further discussion of the transformation of Turkish nationalism.



In the aftermath of these events, both countries concentrated on constructing independent nation-states with ideally homogeneous populations. Within the context of 'unmixing peoples' (Hirschon 2004a, 4), those who were exempted from the population exchange were assigned minority status and their minority rights were purportedly safeguarded.<sup>4</sup> In effect, by deploying religious affiliation rather than nationality or ethnicity as the defining criterion of identity (Article 1),<sup>5</sup> the Convention stipulated the exception of the 'Greek inhabitants of Constantinople' and the 'Moslem inhabitants of Western Thrace' (Article 2).<sup>6</sup> As several chapters in this volume document, in subsequent years, the fates of those who remained were shaped among other domestic and international factors by the trials and tribulations of Greek-Turkish relations and the Cyprus issue.<sup>7</sup> The Cyprus issue became particularly relevant after 1960 as Ker-Lindsay in Chapter 5 of this volume postulates, doing 'more to poison the relationship between Athens and Ankara than the myriad of other issues'.

The salience of the triadic relationship between the peoples of Greece, Turkey and Cyprus is also manifested in the ways dominant historiographies, premised on ethnic nationalism, have constructed national identities in opposition to one another. Although comparative studies of ethnic nationalism in Greece, Turkey and Cyprus have demonstrated the development of divergent goals and trajectories,<sup>8</sup> they have perpetuated a reading of identities as homogeneous, fixed and

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<sup>4</sup> For a critical assessment of the Lausanne Convention and its effect on minorities, see the chapter by Tsitselikis, also Alexandris (2004), Oran (2004), Yagcioglu (2010) and Akgönül (2008), among others.

<sup>5</sup> Article 1 of the Convention refers to 'the compulsory exchange of Turkish nationals of the Greek Orthodox religion and Greek nationals of the Muslim religion'.

<sup>6</sup> Article 2 further stipulated that only those Greek inhabitants established before 30 October 1918 in the Prefecture of the City of Constantinople were to be exempted. In the Treaty of Peace, the Greek Orthodox inhabitants of Imbros (*Gökçeada*) and Tenedos (*Bozcaada*), two islands near the Dardanelles straits, were also exempted. It is worth noting that the issue of naming, that is, the social categories deployed for the respective minorities, is a complex and highly contentious one. Demetriou (2013), for instance, identifies naming as one of the three pillars around which the Greek state constructed its minority policy, the other two being genealogy (and the understanding of 'race') and the concept of 'state care' which determined the management of resources made available to the minority. For further discussion, see Alexandris (2004), Oran (2004), Örs (2007) and Lytra (2007).

<sup>7</sup> See, for instance, Ozil and Yanardağoglu's diachronic accounts of Greek Orthodox schools and media in Istanbul respectively and the chapter by Dragonas and Frangoudaki on minority education in Western Thrace.

<sup>8</sup> A case in point is that for the Turks the Greeks are not the most significant national 'other'.

bounded.<sup>9</sup> In the case of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot national historiographies in particular, the emphasis has unambiguously been placed on 'the common history, heritage, language, culture and religion with the people of the "motherlands", Turkey and Greece' (Papadakis, Chapter 6), a self-positioning commonly articulated in local conversation by many Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots alike (as is illustrated by Demetriou (Chapter 2) and Charalambous (Chapter 7)).

Inspired by the *Greek-Turkish Encounters* series and the space of intercommunal and interdisciplinary dialogue it created (see Foreword), the present volume draws on a range of disciplinary perspectives, notably history, sociology, anthropology, linguistics, literature, ethnomusicology and international relations, to investigate the relationship between Greeks and Turks as well as between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. It aims to contribute to current critical and comparative approaches to the study of the relationship with the purpose of questioning essentialist representations, stereotypes and dominant myths in order to understand the context and ideology of events, processes and experience. It should be noted here that although the subtitle and the introduction make reference to *the relationship* in the singular, the aim of the editor and contributors is to illustrate that there is not one single relationship but a plurality located and distributed across levels from the personal to the communal, to the national and the transnational. This perspective seeks to illuminate the interconnections between levels, often through a comparative angle, and to illustrate that far from being straightforward these relationships are characterised by nuances, ambiguities, omissions and contradictions. Furthermore, by approaching the different aspects of these relationships through a range of disciplines, the volume hopes to bridge traditional disciplinary boundaries and create a discursive space for dialogue in order to understand, interpret and theorise this relationship from both diachronic and synchronic approaches.

## Defining the Contours of the Relationships

Mainstream historiography of the late Ottoman period has conceptualised the relationship between Greeks and Turks in two ways: on the one hand, it has produced accounts of what Fortna (2013, 6) aptly refers to as 'an overly idealized Ottoman pluralistic past'. This rather romantic view of the past has constructed the relationship between peoples of different linguistic, religious and cultural traditions as unproblematically coexisting side by side.<sup>10</sup> On the

<sup>9</sup> For further discussion, see Kızılyürek (1999), Yildirim (2006), Özkırımlı and Sofos (2008) and Hatay and Papadakis (2012).

<sup>10</sup> As Poulos discusses in his chapter, a manifestation of this nostalgic view has been the emergence and proliferation of the 'discourse of cultural pluralism of

other hand, it has examined the relationship through the lens of nationalism; that is, the emergence of national consciousness and the subsequent creation of nation-states by the non-Muslim subjects in former Ottoman lands. The latter approach has failed to take into account the fluidity of identities and boundary demarcation in the period of transition from empire to nation (see Fortna 2013 for further discussion). Moreover, as the chapters by Ozil and Poulos demonstrate, it has paid limited attention to spaces of contact, such as the social spaces created through the active participation of non-Muslims in the Ottoman state (for example in the administration of educational institutions) and society more generally (for example in musical production) from the mid-19th century onwards (cf. Keyder 1997).

Indeed, ethnographic accounts drawing on archival sources and interviews with refugees collected after the 1923 population exchange have brought the spaces of contact during the late Ottoman period to the centre stage of academic inquiry by foregrounding the shared everyday experience of living in a linguistically, culturally and ethnically rich society, 'a mode of living' which Doumanis (2013, 1) refers to as 'intercommunality' as well as the complexities, tensions and ambiguities of coexistence.<sup>11</sup> Doumanis (2013, 1) defines 'intercommunality' as

the accommodation of difference between ethnic, cultural and religious communities that happened to occupy the same street, neighbourhood, village or rural environ [*sic*]. These living arrangements were conducted in a spirit of neighbourliness, and underscored by routine practices, social bonds, and shared values.

These spaces of contact and the beliefs and practices they entailed were disrupted with the 1923 population exchange and the transition from the Ottoman Empire to a modern nation-state. In her introduction to the edited collection on the appraisal of the 1923 population exchange, Hirschon (2004a, 10) argues that the 'unmixing of peoples' had serious long-term effects on the way the relationship between Greeks and Turks was conceived and experienced thereafter:

Through time, the process of separation rather than symbiosis inevitably entails diminished contact. The loss of shared experience is accompanied by growing ignorance of the ways of the others; thus, separation entails the loss of ground for communication. What is lost is familiarity which carries

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"Old Istanbul" since the 1980s. He adds that recent studies have highlighted the selective readings of the history of Istanbul and the privileging of particular groups over others based on social class and nationhood.

<sup>11</sup> See Apostolopoulos (1980), Kitromilides and Mourellos (1982), Hirschon ([1989]1998) and this volume.

with it the possibility for understanding and respect, and this is all too often replaced with suspicion, hostility and the inability to cooperate. At the socio-psychological level a process of projecting negative stereotypes onto the 'other' exacerbates the collective alienation (cf. Hirschon 2009).

In effect, as 'diminished contact' shaped the worldviews of Greeks and Turks post-1923, so did it shape much of the mainstream scholarly research until the 1990s, thereby constructing the relationship primarily as a troubled one; a relationship that was often reduced to defining one side in opposition to the other and where the focus was on moments of tension and hostility and the foregrounding, circulation and consumption of stereotypical representations and beliefs (cf. the chapter by Millas).<sup>12</sup> Since the 1990s there has been a visible and comprehensive contestation of dominant discourses of 'Turkishness' and 'Greekness' on both sides of the Aegean with the purpose of explaining the dynamics of their changing societies (cf. the chapters by Yanardağoglu (Chapter 12) and by Dragonas and Frangoudaki (Chapter 14)).<sup>13</sup> While dominant discourses and representations continue to have currency, the critical appraisal of national identity politics has also had an impact on the way the relationship between Greeks and Turks has been framed and interpreted. This critical turn has been reflexively linked with the process of rapprochement between Turkey and Greece in early 1999 when the governments of the two countries came to recognise that 'in the contemporary international environment a policy of cooperation is far more advantageous than continued confrontation' (Ker-Lindsay 2000, 216). The earthquakes that struck both countries (in August and September the same year) played an important role at the time in altering public opinion and creating a positive environment for policy implementation (Ker-Lindsay 2000, 216). As a result, this critical turn opened up hitherto limited spaces of contact for the development of dialogue both in the academy (within and across disciplines)<sup>14</sup> and in society at large.

In this context, scholarly research on both sides of the Aegean has revealed an asymmetrical engagement: while Turkey has had a central position in academic representations and public and private discourses

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<sup>12</sup> It is important to point out that within the context of this relationship, commonly perceived as troubled, there have been periods of rapprochement in bilateral relations, such as the period 1930–54 (Oran 2004).

<sup>13</sup> Early indicative works include the collection of papers in Bozdoğan and Kasaba (1997), Frangoudaki and Dragonas (1997) and Lafazani (1997).

<sup>14</sup> Examples include Hirschon (2004b), Pekin (2005), Birtek and Dragonas (2005), Frangoudaki and Keyder (2007), Theodossopoulos (2007a), Akgönül (2008), Anastasakis et al. (2009), Gavroglou and Tsitselikis (2009), Diamantouros et al. (2010) and Fortna et al. (2012); also Troubeta (2001), Lytra (2007), Özkırımlı and Sofos (2008), Grigoriadis (2012) and Demetriou (2013).

in Greece, a parallel focus on Greece in Turkey has been less pronounced (cf. Theodosopoulos 2007b, Özkırmı and Sofos 2008). Although since 2000 there has been a notable increase of interest about Greece in Turkey, particularly in the field of minority studies (as the chapters by Ozil (Chapter 13) and Yanardağoglu illustrate), this has not radically shifted the peripheral position of Greece in the academic and public spheres. On the contrary, it may be argued that Turkey's growing economic power and rise to the status of a regional power in the Middle East have contributed to shifting interest further away from Greece. In Greece, the opposite process seems to be in operation. Academic and public interest in Turkey has 'boomed', the latter mediated, for instance, through the consumption of (popular) culture products (see Bayraktaroglu and Sifianou 2012, also the chapters by Poulos (Chapter 4) and Mackridge (Chapter 8)).<sup>15</sup>

A radical process of separation also occurred in Cyprus in 1974. In the aftermath of the Athens-backed military coup against the Makarios administration and the subsequent Turkish invasion (officially known in Turkey as the Cyprus Peace Operation), 160,000 Greek Cypriots and over 40,000 Turkish Cypriots were forcibly displaced from their homes in the north and the south respectively, culminating in the geographical, ethnic and political division of the island (see the chapter by Ker-Lindsay).<sup>16</sup> The unilateral declaration of independence of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in 1983, successive failed UN reunification initiatives, including the 2004 comprehensive reunification plan, which was accepted by two-thirds of Turkish Cypriots but rejected by three-quarters of Greek Cypriots, and the subsequent EU accession of the Greek Cypriot controlled Republic of Cyprus have further consolidated the division of the island.

Against this backdrop, as Loizos (2007, 178–9) points out, bi-communal initiatives, though mostly small scale, have been instrumental in constructing spaces of contact, that is, 'creating contexts in which Turkish and Greek Cypriots can communicate more freely with each other than they normally could do in the divided island during the years 1964 to 2003', thereby contributing to processes of rapprochement. Loizos (2007, 183–4) further outlines a series of changes in the political, educational and communications arenas (such as increased access to tertiary education and the establishment of new media outlets) which took place in the 1990s and culminated in the relaxation of the restrictions on movement from north to south and *vice versa* in 2003. These changes and the new spaces of contact they opened up have the potential to question ethnocentric discourses

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<sup>15</sup> I thank Bengisu Rona and Yorgos Dedes for drawing my attention to these on-going divergent processes.

<sup>16</sup> Note that between 1964 and 1974 bi-communal relations on the island had been affected by hostilities between the nationalists on both sides, making contact between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots difficult (Loizos 2007).

and stereotypes between Turkish and Greek Cypriots and renegotiate individual and collective identities (cf. Demetriou 2007). Nevertheless, such renegotiations may be fraught with tensions and ambiguities, as the chapter by Charalambous on the teaching of Turkish as a foreign language to Greek Cypriot secondary school pupils reveals.

## Intersecting Themes and Perspectives

The framework builds on the four interrelated levels outlined in the previous section, namely the personal, the communal, the national and the transnational. The aim is twofold: firstly, to illustrate the connectivity among these different levels and the importance of examining them together rather than in isolation and, secondly, to demonstrate how these levels of analysis come together in different nexuses and are interpreted by different disciplinary approaches.

### *The Personal*

‘The personal’ is at the heart of ‘who people are to each other’, that is, to their identities (Benwell and Stokoe 2006, 6). Many contemporary theories of identity are premised on an understanding of identity as fixed, bounded and private, as a property one has or does not have. In this sense, identity is defined as ‘an “essential”, cognitive, socialized, phenomenological or psychic phenomenon that governs human action’ (Benwell and Stokoe 2006, 3). This understanding of identity contrasts with a broadly ‘social constructionist’ reading of identity as

a public phenomenon, a performance or construction that is interpreted by other people. This construction takes place in discourse and other social and embodied conduct, such as how we move, where we are, what we wear, how we talk and so on (Benwell and Stokoe 2006, 4).

Central to this conceptualisation of identity is that identities are constructed relationally through systems of opposition as social actors categorise themselves and others in various ways depending on context and participants (Lo and Reyes 2004, 118). However, these systems of opposition may not have the same salience for both parties involved and their foci and meanings may shift over time.

Several of the contributors address the issue of identity in ‘different context[s] of construction: the different discursive environments in which identity work is being done’ (Benwell and Stokoe 2006, 5, emphases in the original). Millas illustrates how through a process of critical self-reflection he guided his university students in Turkey and Greece to identify,

interrogate and ultimately challenge hegemonic representations of national identity defined by essentialist discourses of language, culture, ethnicity and religion, circulating in institutional and everyday contexts. The chapters by Demetriou and Charalambous provide nuanced accounts of how identities are ascribed, disputed, resisted and negotiated in narrative (stories told in interviews) and in classroom exchanges between teacher and pupils respectively. At the same time, they reveal how social actors 'persist in seeking essentialised groundings for the selves they encounter and the selves they offer' (Howard 2000, 383). Demetriou illustrates how narrators construct 'a hierarchy of differentiation' (Lo and Reyes 2004, 119) through the telling of stories of conflict and war in Cyprus: depending on their biographies, narrators situate, evaluate and interpret their experiences of loss of property, life and bodily integrity and those of others in strikingly different ways. Charalambous brings to the fore the tensions, omissions and silences in processes of 'othering' in Turkish as a foreign language class in a Greek Cypriot secondary school. A common concern of all three chapters is the juxtaposition between the positionings of the self vis-à-vis the national rhetoric. The chapter by Poulos extends the discussion on identity construction by shifting our gaze to a discursive environment that has received scant attention, namely the realm of music production in which the author eloquently situates the emergence and development of the musical category of the 'Rum Composers of Istanbul'.

### *The Communal*

Similar to the identity of the individual, 'community' expresses 'a relational idea'. It suggests that

the members of a group of people (a) have something in common with each other, which (b) distinguishes them in significant way from the members of other putative groups. 'Community' thus seems to imply simultaneously both similarity and difference (Cohen 1985, 12).

Communities can be national, regional or administrative; they may represent linguistic, cultural or religious groups; and due to the impact of the new information and communication technologies and globalisation, communities are increasingly virtual and transnational. In this respect, a focus on community inevitably calls for an investigation of boundaries and the processes of boundary demarcation where the terms 'we/us' are contrastively defined in relation to 'others'. Post-structuralist and post-modernist approaches to community have emphasised the situated social construction of communities and the articulation of identities in communities. In his critical investigation of language and community, Rampton (2000, 12) argues that



randomness and disorder have however become much more important in recent social theory, where instead of trying to define the core features of any social group or institution, there is major interest in the flows of people, knowledge, texts and objects across social and geographical space, in the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion, and in fragmentation, indeterminacy and ambivalence.

The social construction of community and boundaries of inclusion and exclusion permeate the chapters of this volume. A salient approach in illuminating these concepts is by seeking to capture the members' experience of them. In Chapter 1, Hirschon presents the recollections of refugees of the 1923 population exchange and their descendants. At one point, the elderly Filio Haidemenou concludes a poignant retelling of her visit to Turkey many years later in the following words: 'the people did not have problems between them'. By collapsing ethnic, linguistic, cultural and religious boundaries, the narrator seeks to stress the common humanity, shared experience and way of life *between* the two communities, disrupted by the population exchange. At another instance, Hirschon illustrates how refugees transported regional stereotypes from the former homeland to transform space into place in their newly established neighbourhoods in the urban settlement of Kokkinia, in Greece: for instance, 'Ai Nikola was said to be the "aristocratic neighbourhood", because its residents were from Constantinople, and therefore somewhat superior'. Far from representing themselves as a homogeneous, bounded refugee community, narrators highlight the heterogeneity as well as the regional and social fragmentation *within* the community.<sup>17</sup>

Another approach focuses on the social construction of community and boundary demarcation in text production (for example novels, history textbooks, historiography, cartoons). Lemos, in Chapter 9, illustrates how two novels inspired by the Greco-Turkish war (1919–22) and its aftermath, namely *Yaban* (The Outsider) by Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu and *To Nούμερο 31328* (Number 31328) by Elias Venezis, draw on recurring themes (such as the suffering of innocent Anatolian inhabitants at the hands of the invading Greeks or the vengeful Turks respectively) to foreground lines of ethnic, social, political and ideological differentiation between and within communities. Mackridge, in Chapter 8, introduces yet another kind of community: the linguistic communities of Greek and Turkish speakers and the 'leaky' boundaries between the two languages in contact. Drawing on a range of genres, Mackridge explores Turkish loan works that have traversed the linguistic boundary and have been incorporated into Greek, their multifarious meanings and competing associations and social values.

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<sup>17</sup> Cf. Hirschon (1999, 2009). For further evidence of the social construction of community and boundaries from the members' perspectives as well as the tensions involved, see the chapters by Yanardağoglu, Demetriou and Charalambous.



*The National*

'Primordialist' accounts of nations are premised on the 'givenness of ethnic and national ties' (Özkırmılı 2000, 75). In this one language – one culture – one nation-state paradigm, each individual 'belongs' to a particular nation and ethnic identity is understood as fixed and stable over time and space. Critiques of 'primordialist' theories have highlighted the 'element of artefact, invention and social engineering which enters into the making of nations. Nations do not make states but the other way round' (Hobsbawm 1990, 10). Rather than being the product of pre-existing ethnicities, nations are now thought to be socially constructed in the context of modernity. Notwithstanding, as Özkırmılı and Sofos (2008, 10) remind us in their introduction to the comparative study of Greek and Turkish nationalisms:

nationalism selects, reconfigures, and sometimes recreates older traditions and identities in accordance with present concerns. Sometimes the choices of nationalists may not be the product of conscious political design, but of various contingencies.

Several chapters illustrate how 'primordialist' theories have infused official narratives in Greece, Turkey and Cyprus.<sup>18</sup> These narratives represent 'the "Greek" or the "Turkish" nation as the reincarnation of a perennial "Greek" or "Turkish" essence, which managed to preserve its character intact despite vicissitudes of history' (Özkırmılı and Sofos 2008, 6). Regardless of the enduring legacy of these grand narratives and their reproduction in the public and private spheres, in recent years these long-cherished narratives have begun to be challenged. In the field of education for instance, top-down educational policies conceived to promote intercultural understanding in Cyprus and to reform minority education in Western Thrace have sought to question and transform hegemonic societal and popular representations, albeit not without contestations, tensions and ambivalences (see the chapters by Charalambous and by Dragonas and Frangoudaki respectively).

Not surprisingly, the populations exempted from the 1923 exchange did not fit each nation's essentialist identity formulations and from the onset they were perceived as a threat to their homogeneity. Even though their minority rights were ostensibly protected by an international treaty, state policies, institutional practices and discriminatory measures effectively contributed to their marginalisation and silencing in both countries.<sup>19</sup> The

<sup>18</sup> For instance, the discussion of mainstream historiography on the population exchange in the chapter by Tsitselikis and of history books in the chapters by Millas, Papadakis and Hirschon.

<sup>19</sup> For further discussion, see Özkırmılı and Sofos (2008), also Hirschon (2004b), Akgönül (2008).

chapters in the last section of this book critically assess some of the obstacles minorities have faced in exercising their rights: the administrative and legal lacuna in the management of non-Muslim educational institutions (Ozil); the Patriarchate's on-going battle for the official recognition of its legal status and ecumenical character, its right to own and maintain property, to train its clergy and offer religious education (Kamouzis); freedom of opinion and expression in the minority press (Yanardağoglu); social and educational inequality between majority and minority members (Dragonas and Frangoudaki). Özkırmılı and Sofos (2008, 178) succinctly sum up how the two opposing nationalisms have shaped the minority experience in both countries as follows:

Despite their putative differences and the alleged superiority of each of the two nationalisms over the other, the undercurrent of violence, symbolic and material, seems to have been the common denominator.

### *The Transnational*

International actors, supranational organisations and not-for-profit organisations have been instrumental in shaping bilateral relations between Greece and Turkey and have had an enduring presence in past and present initiatives to end the long-standing division on the island of Cyprus. For instance, Kamouzis contextualises the discussion of current and on-going efforts to provide solutions to the problems of the Patriarchate in the context of official European and American pressure on Turkey to promote reforms for the improvement of the conditions of its non-Muslim minorities. In a similar vein, Ker-Lindsay situates the historical overview of the Cyprus issue in successive UN initiatives for a permanent solution. Moreover, the minorities in both countries have sought solutions to their own problems by increasingly internationalising discriminatory state policies against them, thereby undermining the monopoly of the nation-state (further discussed in the chapters by Kamouzis and Yanardağoglu).

The authority of the nation-state has been further challenged due to processes of globalisation and the impact of new information and communication technologies. Many public spaces, such as the media, education and the political arena have become progressively more globalised. Migration flows have enhanced cultural diversity and hybridity and minorities have shifted their discourse of recognition from an emphasis on constitutional rights to human rights. A case in point are the novel possibilities new information and communication technologies open up for minority media and minority education, as elaborated by Yanardağoglu and Dragonas and Frangoudaki respectively. The recent establishment of the on-line radio, *Ihos-tis-Polis*, and the publishing house

*Istos* in Istanbul reveals a new willingness on the part of the minority community on the one hand to reach out to a wider audience beyond the national borders of Turkey and on the other hand to participate actively in the development of democratisation and transparency in Turkish civic society. By the same token, in Greece, new technologies have provided a powerful pedagogic and transformative tool in Western Thrace and have contributed to improving minority children's formal and informal learning environments and increasing their visibility and audibility in mainstream Greek society more generally.

### About this Book

The 14 chapters that follow investigate the relationship between Greeks and Turks, as well as between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots from the perspective of a variety of academic disciplines. The contributors deploy diverse epistemological traditions and methodological perspectives to illuminate the relationship. Several chapters adopt a diachronic approach and chart the continuities, ruptures and transformations. In this respect, some authors take 1923 and the transition from empire to republic as their point of departure while others examine the relationship from the late-Ottoman period onwards. A number of chapters aim to provide snapshots by focusing on particular historical periods or on the here-and-now. Several contributors approach the relationship through a comparative perspective and in the process revisit the role of well-established social actors and highlight that of less studied ones. Overall, the chapters present fresh, up-to-date insights into the relationship and share a critical perspective.

The book is organised in three sections which broadly reflect overarching themes emerging from the chapters, although inevitably some themes cut across sections. 'Rethinking Remembrance and Representation' opens with two chapters exploring memory and loss from an anthropological standpoint. Renée Hirschon questions how the interaction between history, memory and emotion has shaped the relationship between Greeks and Turks, particularly with regard to the individual and collective articulation of national imaginings. Taking as a point of entry the long-term effects of the compulsory exchange of populations stipulated by the Lausanne Convention (1923), the author weaves insights from her own extensive research over four decades as well as the work of others to foreground the importance of the subjective experience. In so doing, she explores the individual and social construction of memory, characterised by the privileging of particular narratives over others, omissions and silences.

Olga Demetriou's discussion of memory and loss complements and extends the previous chapter in at least two ways. First, it recognises the

concept of loss, a concept which has rarely been attended to, as a key analytical category in its own right for the investigation of the Greek-Turkish encounter in Cyprus. A focus on loss allows the author to attend to individuals' varied responses to loss as a result of refugeehood as well as to the nuances and contradictions expressed in their narratives: for instance, on the one hand individuals' narratives of loss may support and reproduce constructions of loss in the national narrative and on the other hand they may be at odds with and undermine them. Second, the explorations of loss discussed in this chapter move beyond the ethnically determined binary categories of 'Greek Cypriot' and 'Turkish Cypriot' to foreground the narratives of loss of members of the 'Greek Cypriot community' who are ethnically identifiable as 'Greek Cypriot', 'Armenians', 'Maronites' and 'Latins' and whose diverse experiences of loss as a consequence of the inter-ethnic conflict have generally been discounted.

The next two chapters examine issues of representation and social categorisation. In a reflexive account of his own teaching practices with his students in Turkish and Greek universities, Hercules Millas explains the process by which he sought to alert his students to the mechanisms of reproduction of national stereotypes of self and other. The critical and comparative examination of the writing of history school textbooks, national historiographies, novels and memoirs was deployed to develop what Millas calls his students' 'self-knowledge' which he sums up as 'a sense of doubt vis-à-vis national explanations and empathy for the hitherto misinterpreted 'other''. Central to the author's argument is the interaction between private and public, individual and collective representations in shaping the national categories of 'Greek' and 'Turk'.

Taking as a point of departure the musical ensemble *Bosphorus*, a collaboration between Greek and Turkish musicians, who sought to introduce the Ottoman musical tradition to Greek audiences in the late 1980s, Panagiotis Poulos traces the emergence and construction of a distinct musical category, that of the '*Rum* Composers of Istanbul'. The author argues that the genesis of this musical category out of the shared musical traditions of late-Ottoman Istanbul needs to be situated in the broader project of modernity, which transformed the non-Muslim musicians of Istanbul into 'musical "minorities"' and altered the way this music was hitherto experienced at a sensory level.

The first three chapters of 'The Politics of Identity, Language and Culture' cluster around Cyprus, with James Ker-Lindsay's contribution functioning as a framing chapter. Written from an international relations perspective, the chapter features a historical account of the Cyprus issue and the different initiatives that have been proposed to solve it, as well as the main points of contention up to the present. It illustrates why a solution to the Cyprus issue 'still matters' and why any attempt to understand, interpret and ultimately solve the Cyprus issue needs to

attend to the complex interrelationship among all the actors concerned, the Greek Cypriots, Turkish Cypriots, Greece, Turkey, the European Union and the United Nations.

The next two chapters consider the interplay of language, nationalism and identity in the field of education. Through the comparative investigation of Turkish and Greek Cypriot history schoolbooks, Yiannis Papadakis studies the ideological positions that have shaped the ways the history of Cyprus is represented. Just like the history textbooks of Greece and Turkey discussed by Millas and by Hirschon, Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot schoolbooks have represented the history of Cyprus through the lens of ethnic nationalism subscribing to a Hellenocentric and a Turkocentric paradigm respectively. Papadakis' analysis illustrates how the short-lived 2005 history textbooks produced by the Turkish Cypriot Left temporarily challenged these hegemonic discourses, affecting a shift to a Cyprus-centred paradigm, which prioritised the narrative of a shared 'motherland' for both Turkish and Greek Cypriots.

While Papadakis' chapter approaches education from the perspective of the different discourses in history schoolbooks, that by Constandina Charalambous focuses on the teacher and pupils' linguistic practices and negotiations of dominant representations of 'us' and the ethnic 'other' or the 'enemy' during Turkish-language classes in a Greek Cypriot secondary school. Charalambous sets out to explore how the teacher and pupils grappled with two conflicting ideological positions: on the one hand, the reconciliatory rhetoric which predicated the introduction of the Turkish-language classes and on the other hand the Hellenocentric educational discourses that permeate Greek Cypriot education. Focusing on the teacher's perspective, the author illustrates how the teacher sought to adopt a 'neutral' stance by emphasising the teaching of the target language in terms of grammar and vocabulary and by refraining from the teaching of the target culture and directly referring to the Turks and Turkish Cypriots.

The next chapter, by Peter Mackridge combines a close analysis of linguistic features from Turkish in the Greek language across a variety of genres (for example memoirs, dictionaries, jokes, oral conversation, cartoons, newspaper headlines) with their reception. The author describes these linguistic features as a source of stylistic richness in the Greek language and identifies two contradictory attitudes towards their reception. On the one hand, words of Turkish origin are construed as shameful remnants of the country's Ottoman past, elements that are alien to dominant representations of the national 'self' and, therefore, must be erased while on the other hand, they are imbued with emotional resonances and positive associations of familiarity, informality and intimacy, making them an enduring feature of the Greek language.

The final chapter in this section by Natasha Lemos turns to the comparative investigation of early literary works dealing with the Greco-

Turkish War (1919–22) and its aftermath. Focusing on two canonical works of this genre, *To Nόμερο 31328* (Number 31328) by Elias Venezis and *Yaban* (The Outsider) by Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, Lemos examines the features of the narratives that have made them popular in their own country but little known in the other. In particular, her analysis concentrates on how the two authors represent the image of the self, a topic that has received far less attention than the image of the ‘other’, where the self is constructed as the victim of war atrocities perpetrated by the ‘other’ in quite divergent narratives of the same historical events. As Lemos points out, the enduring popularity of these novels in their home countries is related to the fact that they go beyond straightforward narrations of past events at the time of the war and its aftermath to address social issues relevant to the time of their writing.

The last ‘Discourses of Inclusion and Exclusion Revisited’ opens with Konstantinos Tsitselikis’ contribution introducing the historical and ideological background for the discussion of majority-minority relations between Greece and Turkey and the failure of both countries to incorporate their minorities in the national imaginary. The author focuses on the Lausanne Convention and the subsequent exchange of populations as a cardinal moment in the process of linguistic, cultural, ethnic and religious homogenisation of the two nation-states and the subsequent minoritisation of the segment of their respective societies that was exempted. Tsitselikis traces academic and public discourses on the population exchange from a diachronic perspective: from early critiques by scholars of international law and the reproduction of dominant Hellenocentric and Turkocentric paradigms, through mainstream historiography to the emergence of an ideological and representational shift since the early 2000s through critical, interdisciplinary and comparative approaches.

The next three chapters deal with the Greek-Orthodox (*Rum*) minority of Istanbul in relation to three key minority institutions: the Church, the media and schools in Turkey in diachronic perspective. Dimitris Kamouzis’ chapter features a detailed historical account of the official positions and unofficial negotiations between the Greek and Turkish governments and the Ecumenical Patriarchate in the context of the 1924 patriarchal election and the subsequent expulsion of Patriarch Constantine VI. The author assesses the continued resonance of these events on the tripartite relationship among Greece, Turkey and the Ecumenical Patriarchate vis-à-vis the patriarchal issue today, namely the official and definitive recognition of the Patriarchate’s legal and ecumenical status and the concomitant ability of its religious and cultural institutions to function unhindered, as well as the role of international actors, such as the EU and the USA.

Eylem Yanardağoglu offers a critical analysis of the development, decline and transformation of the Greek-Orthodox minority media from 1923 until today. The author illustrates the constitutive relationship between



domestic policies and international conditions in the shifting trajectories of minority media in Turkey and how key minority media practitioners and community representatives have responded to them over time. In addition, the chapter examines recent changes in the Greek-Orthodox minority media, notably the establishment of a new publishing house, an on-line newspaper edition and radio station, which Yanardağoglu situates at the intersection of two on-going and complementary processes: on the one hand, an 'opening up' in Turkey with regard to ethnic, linguistic and religious minorities and on the other hand, the active engagement of the minority community itself with civic society after a long period of self- and state-imposed silence.

The chapter by Ayşe Ozil investigates the legal and administrative framework, which has governed the functioning of Greek-Orthodox minority educational institutions in Turkey. The author argues that this framework is characterised by fundamental discrepancies, omissions and ambiguities and short-term solutions, which have determined the administrative and legal status of these institutions from the late Ottoman period when the current school system was conceived until the present day. Defined as 'private' institutions under Turkish law but largely understood as 'communal' institutions by the members of the Greek-Orthodox minority, the schools have been severely limited in the application of the minority's legal rights in the field of education.

The final chapter in this section and the book in general shifts our attention to majority-minority relations on the other side of the border, in Western Thrace in Greece. Similar to the previous chapter, it continues on the topic of education, a topic central in the negotiation of majority-minority relations as the educational field is a prime site for the maintenance and reinforcement of a minority's linguistic, cultural and identificational resources and the protection of its rights. In this context, Thalia Dragonas and Anna Frangoudaki present an overview of a 15-year intervention (1997–2013) entitled 'The project for the reform of the education of Muslim minority children'. The aim of the project has been the comprehensive overhaul of minority education within and beyond the classroom setting through the development of innovative pedagogic practices and methodologies as well as new materials for the teaching and learning of Greek as a second language combined with extensive teacher training and work with the minority community. The quantitative and qualitative changes that have resulted from the implementation of the project have sought to empower the social actors involved (minority pupils, parents, teachers and other community members), combat chronic school underachievement and reverse the structural inequalities minority children face at school and in Greek society more generally. These positive changes attest to the on-going process of transformation of Thracian society in general and minority education in particular.

To conclude, the chapters in this edited collection seek to illuminate aspects of the relationship between Greeks and Turks, Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots since 1923. Inevitably, certain aspects of the relationship are examined in more depth than others (such as the centrality of the subjective and agential dimension of the relationship, the interanimation of local and global processes, practices and discourses). There is no doubt that much more can be said on the subject. Three aspects of the relationship that can provide valuable areas for future explorations are, firstly, the heterogeneity of the minority experience in terms of language, culture, social class, religious and political affiliation and education, secondly, the flows of people and ideas beyond the national borders of Greece, Turkey and Cyprus and the new encounters these flows have effected in transnational contexts and, thirdly, the examination of contact encounters in virtual communities and networks.

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PART I

Rethinking Remembrance  
and Representation

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# Chapter 1

## History, Memory and Emotion: The Long-term Significance of the 1923 Greco-Turkish Exchange of Populations<sup>\*</sup>

Renée Hirschon

### Introduction

This chapter attempts to show how history, memory and emotion interact in the relationship between Greeks and Turks, affecting and influencing relationships at the macro-political level, as well as at the interpersonal level. It aims to underline the importance of the personal, of the emotional and the subjective in the formation of national images, elements which I consider to be critical, though not openly acknowledged in the sphere of diplomacy and of international relations.

My presentation in this chapter is founded in an anthropological approach, which is essentially holistic. Unlike in other specialised social sciences such as economics and political science, anthropology's functionalist heritage in the British tradition, though now seen as static and limited, nonetheless has its uses insofar as it conceptualises the interconnection of a range of different human activities.<sup>1</sup> It has a particularly valuable role to play as an interpretive approach and, therefore, in promoting cross-cultural understanding through 'making sense' of the institutions and practices of other societies (see, for example my attempt to explain the Greek crisis through cultural and historical factors which result in 'cultural mismatches' among EU member countries (Hirschon in press 2013).

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<sup>\*</sup> I am most grateful to Vally Lytra for editorial guidance and suggestions, to the internal readers, as well as to Dimitris Kamouzis and to Dimitrios Gkintidis for constructive comments, all of which have improved this text, although I could not incorporate all of them. I am especially indebted to Emine Yeşim Bedlek for allowing me to use her draft translation from the Turkish of the *Entrusted Trousseau* by Kemal Yalçın, and to Natasha Lemos for additional help.

<sup>1</sup> My approach is wider (developed at the University of Chicago where intellectual influences included those of Talcott Parsons, and systems theory) and also incorporates individual actors in a social, cultural and historical context, in a dynamic way. Resonances with Bourdieu's 'habitus' and phenomenological anthropology can be inferred.

In this short analysis, it is not possible to cover many of the diverse factors, which operate in framing relationships 'when Greeks and Turks meet one another'. Thus, my focus is necessarily limited, its reference point being the long-term effects of the Compulsory Exchange of Populations, a provision of the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne, which, in my view, continues to influence the relations between these states and their citizens. I have purposely focused here on the micro-scale, on interpersonal relations, an approach which is anecdotal and case-based, and which can be presented at different levels.<sup>2</sup> The chapter moves from the individual personal (memory accounts of refugees and their descendants), to the locality (the remembered and transformed landscape, the neighbourhood), to the national (history textbooks, perceptions) and the transnational (Greco-Turkish encounters, abroad and in the UK).

Memory is par excellence a human endowment, a widely recognised and studied phenomenon, but it is well to add a cautionary remark and be more precise since there is considerable evidence that non-human creatures also have the capacity for memory.<sup>3</sup> What distinguishes human beings, however, is the capacity to verbalise their memories through the use of language. The expression of memory through language, whether oral or written, is a unique mark of our species. Anthropologists whose work is concerned with the past invoke history, myth and oral narratives as points of reference (for example Tonkin 1991) and their approach is closely related to that of social historians (for example Samuel and Thompson 1990). In this approach the question of 'objective' history of the positivist kind is rejected, and my approach as an anthropologist foregrounds the individuals' accounts, and is part of an oral history tradition which I consider useful in uncovering personal aspects of the relationships between Greeks and Turks, in contemporary as well as in past contexts.

### **Embodied Memory: The Individual Experience**

The remarkable figure of Filio Haidemenou and her activities provide a paradigmatic example of the role played at the individual personal level. Filio

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. Kirtsoglou's (2006) careful analysis of Greek army officers' perceptions which deals with the dynamic aspect at two levels, that of personal views and that at the level of a changing international context.

<sup>3</sup> A growing body of literature exists in the various disciplines which consider these issues. Different approaches are adopted in what has now achieved a distinct status overall as 'memory studies'. These range from the neurosciences, to zoology, ethology, the social sciences and humanities, psychoanalysis and to the subjective reflexivity of post-modern enquiry. Consequently, there exists a vast body of multidisciplinary bibliographic resources.

herself can be seen as a monument, an embodied memory (Csordas 1994).<sup>4</sup> She was a treasure house of stories, a memory bank of the past, and a bridge between the successive worlds of experience of her 100 years, a life spanning the 20th century. Focussing on Filio, we are observing a living monument. Indeed, in herself she provides us with a reference point, uniting history, memory and emotion. But beyond this, too, she provides a clear illustration of the ways in which memory can be materialised and enshrined, since she spent many years devoted to creating monuments of the lost past.

Filio was born in Vourla (Urla) near Smyrna/İzmir on 28 October 1899. When I interviewed her in her home in Nea Philadelphia, Athens, in 2000, she had celebrated her 100th birthday and had become the best known among Asia Minor survivors, a public figure appearing on television and in interviews, and in talks to schools. These activities followed great efforts in her 90s, which were the fulfilment of a promise she had made long before. When she fled in terror aged 23, seeing the flames engulfing her 'beloved Vourla', she had vowed never to forget her homeland.

So it was that many years later, in 1990, aged 91, after a turbulent life narrated in *Τρεις Αιώνες, Μία Ζωή* (*Three Centuries, One Life*) she became instrumental in building a monument to the Asia Minor heritage now boldly commanding the square in the Municipality of Nea Philadelphia, in Athens. She had initiated a fund-raising campaign, raised the initial sum of 60 million drachmas (£120,000) and got the project underway. As this project took off, she then began another, single-handed, and even against some local opposition: she initiated the collection of objects for a Museum in Nea Philadelphia with documents, photographs, costumes, and artefacts donated by families from the old established refugee settlements. She made local and national radio appeals, personally took responsibility for the collected items, catalogued them, washed and mended the fabrics herself, lobbied the Municipality for premises and, with the support of the local mayor, the museum opened in the late 1990s with over 600 items on display.<sup>5</sup>

Significantly, Filio had been back on visits to Vourla several times since the 1970s. The last time she returned to Vourla was to bring back stones and earth from there to be buried in the monument when it was inaugurated. These were to be placed in the Memorial 'so that it is Mikrasiatiko' (να φέρω πέτρες και χώμα απ' εκεί για το άγαλμα, για να είναι Μικρασιατικό), she told me with emphasis (see also Haidemenou 2006, 207–8).

The account she gave me in our personal interview revealed a particularly significant dimension of the quality of some personal

<sup>4</sup> 'Embodiment' has been a topic in anthropological enquiry from the 1990s, and has introduced new conceptualisations for the understanding of materiality, and of the body as culturally situated (see Csordas's seminal Introduction, 1994, 1–24).

<sup>5</sup> [www.neafiladelfeia.gr/Default.aspx?pid=134&la=1](http://www.neafiladelfeia.gr/Default.aspx?pid=134&la=1).



encounters between Greeks and Turks who have experienced the disruption caused by the Population Exchange of 1923. That is the recognition of their shared experience of loss and of uprootedness, and the injustices inflicted upon them as persons through an international agreement in which they had no say.

An illustrative encounter occurred at the place where Filio had gone to school so many years earlier. Although she had not finished the 3rd grade of the primary school because of the disturbances caused by the Young Turks' rise to power in 1908, throughout her life she was not deterred by her minimal formal education, and spoke and wrote with passion about her longing for education. On that visit, she recalls how she went to the flattened site of the famous school in Vourla, the Anaxagorios (Αναξαγόρειος Σχολή). Built of marble in the 1700s and called after the philosopher Anaxagoras because he was from there, this grand building had been destroyed by the Turks around the time of the catastrophe. As she bent down to dislodge a piece of marble from the earth, her mind recalled her teachers at the school. She mentioned their names one by one, and what they had taught. Listening to her was like a memorial service (μνημόσυνο).<sup>6</sup>

As she got up holding the stone, she was in tears. An elderly Turk came to her and, speaking in Greek, he asked, 'Are you a Vourliotissa?' He revealed that he was one of the 'exchanged' (ανταλλάξιμος) whose father was born in Crete. He put his arm around her, saying, 'Don't cry, yiayia. We have the same pain. Both of us are without a homeland' (Μην κλαις γιαγιά, έχουμε τον ίδιο πόνο. Είμαστε και οι δυο χωρίς πατρίδα). Telling me about this encounter, she ended with the poignant comment: 'The people did not have problems between them' (οι λαοί δεν είχαν τίποτα μεταξύ τους).

I was reminded of the recollections of the older people I knew in Kokkinia in the 1970s, who often recounted how people of both conflicting nations had suffered, that it was not only the Greeks who had been subject to brutalities. The ability of some of these people to transcend their own painful memories was expressed in the recognition of shared experience and common responsibility. They would say, 'the expulsion was from both sides' (ο διωγμός ήταν απ' τις δύο πλευρές), and they were wont to conclude, 'We are all God's creatures' (του Θεού πλάσματα είμαστε όλοι) (see Hirschon 2006, 71–5).

Filio was the main driving force behind the monument and the Museum in Nea Philadelphia, and displayed exceptional energy, but she was not alone. She could not have done it without the support of people in the

<sup>6</sup> It is significant that she chose to take stones from the school. The value she placed on education is further witnessed by the fact that she established excellence awards in her name for the best pupils graduating from the high schools of Nea Philadelphia and Nea Halkidona: see <http://neafiladelfeia.gr/Default.aspx?pid=186&rowid=201>.

community who were enthused by the project of creating lasting memorials for their lost homelands. Indeed, she founded an association, whose members voluntarily assisted in the creation of the monument and in establishing the museum, and which today numbers about 700 members.<sup>7</sup> The enduring bonds and longing for the places and way of life disrupted by the exchange are evidenced in a growing number of research projects and in the oral accounts of which are becoming better known in the literature (see the oral archives in the Centre for Asia Minor Studies and its publications, for instance Apostolopoulos 1980; Kitromilides and Mourellos 1982).

The remarkable book by Kemal Yalçın, *The Entrusted Trousseau: Peoples of the Exchange* (in Turkish, Yalçın [1998] 2008), based on interviews and presented in a semi-fictional form, provides many examples of the deep emotional ties to the homeland that were expressed even 70 years after the expulsion by those who were forced to leave their homes and were settled in Greece when the Treaty of Lausanne was applied. The peaceful mixed communities of Cappadocia were most noticeably disrupted by the violence of a political decision, and not by military conflict. In 1924 Yalçın's family was asked by their Orthodox Christian neighbours to look after a trunk containing the dowry goods of their daughter, when the family received the expulsion order and had to leave for Greece. Yalçın himself, two generations later, undertook to return the trunk and goods to the Minoglou family, though their location was unknown. In order to do this, he made two separate trips to Greece, the second one after his father's death in 1994. He was ultimately successful in his quest, found the Minoglou family who had settled in Volos, and returned the long-lost trousseau. Sadly, though, his father was no longer alive to learn of the fulfilment of their family's promise.

Yalçın's book contains moving accounts of his contacts with those expelled from their homeland and their descendants, some of which I present here to illustrate patterns and the quality of the bonds between those displaced through the events of 1922–23. These accounts are worth attention for what they reveal of the common and shared experience of loss of their homeland, today's modern Turkey, the recognition of a shared culture and the immediate appreciation of the 'other' (see also contributions in Theodosopoulos 2006).

Among those interviewed by Yalçın was Eleftheria Staboulis, a high school teacher in Greece. Eleftheria's father, Lazaros, was originally from Kayseri. Her mother, Sofia Kalinikidou, had six children. Four of them died on the way to Greece. The older sister aged 10 was lost on the way and to this day they do not know what became of her. The family had travelled from Kayseri to Yozgat, from Yozgat to Sinop, from Sinop to Çanakkale and finally from Çanakkale by boat to Greece where Eleftheria was born. Her father longed for his village near Kayseri and frequently

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<sup>7</sup> See <http://neafiladelfeia.gr/Default.aspx?pid=355&la=1>.

narrated stories about his life there to his children. He always wanted to go back, so that when permission was given in 1974 for Asia Minor refugees (*mübadiller*) to visit Turkey, her father asked Eleftheria to return to his hometown on his behalf since he was now elderly and no longer fit enough to travel to Turkey. Lazaros said:

My daughter, I am old now. I cannot go to Kayseri. You go there. Here's our address. Here are the names of our neighbours. Go and find our home. Bring me a bag of soil from our garden and a bottle of water from our fountain if it is still there. Before I die, may I drink the water from our spring and kiss our soil; then let me die!

Eleftheria went to Kayseri to fulfil her father's wish and found their family house. It was in bad condition with a family residing there, so she preferred to sit in the garden. She told how she spent time taking in the atmosphere and listening to the water running in front of their house. Then she filled a bag of soil and a bottle of water and took it back to her father as requested:

My father filled his pillowcase with the earth I brought him and, until the day he died he would lay his head on it to sleep. He drank the water from their fountain sip by sip, and slept on that pillow of soil until he died.

When Eleftheria ended her narration, she started weeping. Her voice was trembling. She lit a cigarette. 'We were the people of that earth. Why did we become enemies?', and she finished her words with this question (Yalçın 2008, 40–41).

Yalçın continued his search for the Minoglou family and interviewed Prodromos Vasiliadis, born in 1910 in Salihli/Manisa. He was 12 years old in 1922 when, together with his mother, already a widow because his father had died long before, he abandoned his homeland in panic. The family had owned a grocery store and a vineyard in Salihli. None of his brothers or sisters had been to school because of poverty and he was the only person who had a primary school education, but he had left the school in the 4th grade. In 1919, the Greek army passed through Salihli, but in 1922 they returned in flight, heading to Smyrna due to the defeat. He remembered people panicking and preparing their belongings to leave Salihli. It was the retreating soldiers who told them to leave: 'In 1922 the Greek soldiers were fleeing. They told us all to flee too and not to delay because the irregulars were coming'. Prodromos fled to Smyrna with his family because the irregulars (τσέτες) were attacking them, not the soldiers of Kemal. After enduring the turmoil in Smyrna, the family was taken to Salonika. Without a father, the family suffered a great deal of difficulty. In 1924, Prodromos moved to Katerini and worked in several places to survive. He married in 1935.

Prodromos, aged 64, finally made a return trip to Salihli in 1974. When he arrived he started crying. Somebody saw him and asked him where he was from. Some local people tried to comfort him and called Ali Ağa, one of the elders of the town. Ali Ağa remembered his father Panayoti and hugged him, and then took him to his former family house where he was welcomed by the woman who lived there, but Prodromos felt unable to enter. He sat on the stairs of the house and wept. On his return to Greece he brought with him a bag of soil from Salihli. Concluding his narration, Prodromos was moved to tears and said how he wished to return to Salihli (Yalçın 2008, 133–6).

Yalçın also visited Father Yorgos who was from Ayancık/Sinop (Yalçın 2008, 123–31). He was born in 1906 in Ayancık, an Orthodox Christian, and Turkish was his mother tongue. The importance of shared cultural practices is revealed in this narration, for Father Yorgos expressed his joy in welcoming somebody from Asia Minor, who shared with him the same culture, traditions and language. When Yalçın greets Father Yorgos by kissing his hand, Father Yorgos says, 'Did you see – he has kissed my hand! He is a Turk. This is a tradition in our culture. The hands of the elders are kissed'.

As they drank their coffee, Father Yorgos narrated his life story. His father had been a tailor, and they had been wealthy in Anatolia. His maternal uncle was a wealthy man who made boats. In Ayancık, there were 80–90 *Rum* families, and the rest were Turks and Armenians. He stated that there were no problems between different ethnic groups. When his father was conscripted into the Ottoman army during World War I, his uncle took care of them, but when the Armenians were rounded up and disappeared, they started to feel insecure and they moved to Istanbul.

Father Yorgos recalled his time there in 1922 when he was 16 years old, when he played football for the Galatasaray team, and how he enjoyed the beauty of İstanbul, how they swam at Kadıköy beach, and went sailing to the Princes' Islands. In 1923 the Lausanne Treaty was signed, but Father Yorgos and his family wanted to remain in İstanbul. However, only those *Rum* residents of İstanbul who had resided in İstanbul before 1918 were allowed to stay in the city. The rest had to migrate to Greece according to the Lausanne Convention. Father Yorgos' family stayed in İstanbul for two more years (illegally for about a year) and then left for Greece. They tried to find a place that resembled Ayancık, and finally decided to live in Platamona. They spent about two years living in tents and in 1926 the government provided them with a refugee house. He made his living by farming and shoe-making.

Father Yorgos recalled Ayancık vividly and talked about its beauty and what a happy life they had enjoyed there. His narration included political references: he stated that nobody from Ayancık joined the Greek army during the Greco-Turkish War, but it was the Greeks in İzmir who

joined the Greek army. He blamed Britain for encouraging the Greeks to invade Asia Minor, thereby destroying their peaceful lives in Turkey. Greeks and Turks killed each other for nothing, he said. According to Father Yorgos, Mustafa Kemal was a great man. However, he should not have sent Asia Minor Greeks to Greece because Turkey lost its most educated and skilled people. Father Yorgos said that they had waited for many years, expecting to be forgiven by Mustafa Kemal, so that they could go back to their home country. His advice to the new generations of Greeks and Turks was not to fight again, but to work hard to make peace (Yalçın 2008, 130–131).

Yalçın ends the account by expressing surprise that Father Yorgos seemed stronger than his own son, a much younger man who had been born in Greece. When Yalçın asked what the reason was, Father Yorgos revealed his devotion to his original homeland, saying, 'I drank the water of the Black Sea while growing up; that's why I am strong. It is a remedy and made me strong'. In a further query, Yalçın asked Father Yorgos about his fluency in Turkish. Father Yorgos' answer revealed again the long-term attachment to home and the importance of roots, for he said, 'Turkish is the language of my home country. I will not forget it'. His long years in Greece had not eliminated his notion of his mother tongue and of the homeland, the place which had nurtured him.<sup>8</sup> It is notable how the enduring power of that bond is symbolised through the soil and the water, and constitutes a common theme in these accounts.

### Refugee Settlement as the Topos of Memory

It is clear from the many studies of displaced peoples that a sense of continuity is a critical part of the process of adjustment, a reaction to the disruption of exile and a means for establishing a basis for social life. In this section I note the ways in which the recreating of the landscape and of place associations assert the relationships within and between communities. Long-term nostalgia and the recreation of familiar places in a new space appears to be a central element in the process of adjustment as examples from many diverse societies show (Colson 2003).

In the Greek context, Kokkinia provides an appropriate example. Now known by its official name of Nikaia, it was established on the outskirts of Piraeus in the 1920s in response to the urgent problem of

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<sup>8</sup> Herta Muller, 2009 Nobel Literature Laureate, eloquently criticises the simplistic misuse of the exilic phrase, 'My homeland is my native tongue'. Her own experience of life in exile does not reduce it to a matter of language, but she emphasises that language is one part of belonging within a familiar social and cultural context (2002, 24–5).

housing in the urban areas. Kokkinia was one among many urban refugee settlements, established under emergency conditions to accommodate a jumble of people from all over today's Turkey – Thrace, Asia Minor and the Black Sea area. Following the stipulations of the Lausanne Treaty of 1923, in which a compulsory exchange of populations between Greece and Turkey took place, the first ratified by international treaty, it was of major proportions. The exchange involved over 1.2 million Christians who were forced to settle in Greece and 350,000 Muslims who were expelled to Turkey (Hirschon [1989] 1998, 36–9; Hirschon 2003, 14–15). Mistakenly and inaccurately called 'repatriation' in an inaccurate understanding of the events, this accord actually constituted a systematic application of what we now call 'ethnic cleansing', in order to create homogeneous nation-states out of mixed and diversified societies (see Chapter 10 by Tsitselikis for a discussion of the Population Exchange).

In other parts of Greece, resettlement of whole villages also took place. The policymakers placed great emphasis on rural settlement where in northern Greece alone a total of 2,000 new villages were established, the rationale being that people would be more likely to become self-supporting as agricultural producers. The policy in northern Greece also served geopolitical ends since it reinforced the ethnic homogeneity of a formerly diverse region (Hirschon [1989] 1998, 40, 258 n.3).

All over the country, the refugee population faced severe problems of survival. Despite an auspicious start, the urban settlements did not prosper. International and national funding had dried up but the basic infrastructure was incomplete; roads, drainage, schools, hospitals could not be provided. It was not long before most of the urban settlements became politically and economically marginalised (see Hirschon [1989] 1998, 42–55). Nonetheless, some 50 years later in Kokkinia, the coherence of social and cultural life was striking. The vast urban sprawl was differentiated into neighbourhoods, each purportedly having its own characteristics and atmosphere. Strikingly, these derived from regional stereotypes from the former homeland. For example, the district of Yermanika was said to be noisy and quarrelsome because many people from Smyrna had settled there (Hirschon [1989] 1998, 68), while the nearby neighbourhood of Osia Xeni was characterised as quiet and respectable since it was said that the residents were mainly from the Pontus region, and they were regarded as peace-loving, and orderly. Ai Nikola was said to be the 'aristocratic neighbourhood', because its residents were from Constantinople, and therefore somewhat superior (Hirschon [1989] 1998, 22–4).

These characterisations of neighbourhoods, however, were not objectively based since Kokkinia had been settled by people from widely diverse geographical areas. There was no orderly resettlement by place of origin, but an *ad hoc* distribution of various types of housing allocated



at random (*ibid.*, 68). Of great significance, therefore, is the perception of the urban landscape and its character. The attribution of stereotypical regional characteristics can be called a process of ‘cognitive mapping’ – by assigning regional characteristics to a new uncharted territory, the dislocated refugees apparently created what can be identified as a kind of ‘social landscape geography’ using regional stereotypes as a means of familiarisation and personalisation of the environment. Most striking is the fact that these regional characterisations were held in collective memory and continued to hold currency more than 50 years after settlement, into the second and even third generations (Hirschon [1989]1998, 24–6).

In Kokkinia, other socially significant landmarks were created. This is a recognised and fundamental process in relocation (Hirschon [1989]1998, 26). Street names recalled homeland localities: Adramytiou, Ikoniou, Moschonision, Philadelphias, Mikras Asias. Churches in Kokkinia were dedicated in memory of the sanctuaries abandoned in the homeland: the churches of St Fotini, of St Nicolas and of Evangelistria were built to enshrine the icons brought from the homeland, and thus constituted the material locus of links with the past. Notably, stones or soil were incorporated in these buildings whenever the refugees were able to bring them back after return journeys to their place of origin (see first-hand accounts in the previous section). These were among the elements employed to transform space into place – to reconstruct a meaningful environment, and to create a sense of continuity in the disruption of their expulsion.

Similarly, all over rural Greece, refugee settlements were called by their homeland names, prefixed by ‘Nea’ for ‘New’ – evidence of the need for continuity of place and its associations. Exchanged people from Cappadocia who had been settled in the northern Greek villages of Nea Prokopi and Nea Karvali centred their communities on the transported relics of the saints from the homeland enshrined in the churches. These have become major places of pilgrimage (Stelaku 2003), as has the shrine of the Panayia Soumela, recreated in Verria (northern Greece) for the wider community of people from the Pontus region. On the island of Limnos, descendants of Reisderiani refugees who were settled in the village of St Dimitrios have a lively oral culture and continue to uphold their Asia Minor traditions in distinctive narratives, poetry and song, even into the fourth generation (Tsimouris 1997). The ways in which continuity is promoted are evident in many other refugee settlements in Greece, both in rural and in urban settings.

### **Patterns and Distortions in National Perceptions**

Some of the informal mechanisms, which promoted a sense of continuity in the disrupted lives of the refugees and exchanged peoples, are discussed in

the previous section. These include the collective and informal memory of places in the homeland. At a different level of significance is the conscious application of notions regarding the 'other', in both national states, through official historiography and in policy decisions.

For Greeks and Turks, different interpretations of the events around 1922–23 clearly demonstrate how a moment of shared history holds opposite meanings for each side. For Turkey, 1922–23 is a time of triumph, ending the War of Independence, a victory which culminated in the establishment of the Turkish Republic. For Greece, however, 1922 marks the Asia Minor Catastrophe, a disaster which ended the Hellenic presence in the Anatolian heartland.

This marked asymmetry in the experiences of the two countries continued as one of the noteworthy features of the period following the Exchange (Hirschon 2003, 13ff). The divergent paths of the two nation-states in the following decades ended what once constituted a common or shared history. The separation was reinforced by nationalistic accounts of the past, especially by the official teaching of history, which tended to emphasise hostile relations, aggression, oppression and mutual betrayal. Estrangement was the inevitable consequence of the building of nation-state identity in which hostility towards the 'other' is cultivated and becomes the prevailing collective attitude (see Millas, Chapter 3, for an eloquent discussion of the various sources influencing perceptions of the 'other').

It is clear that trust is an essential element in the negotiation of relationships of all kinds but, in the case of Greece and Turkey, institutionalised enmity and suspicion have dogged the perceptions of each side for long periods. Contributing to this point and highlighting the fluctuating nature of international relations between Turkey and Greece, a pattern is detectable in which the periods of rapprochement have alternated with periods of hostility over the past 90 years.

Significantly, when relations between the two countries are amicable, proposals are made to revise the history textbooks on both sides. In Greece, the revision of the 6th-grade primary school history textbook by M. Repoussis and others was published in 2006 but, at a time of growing nationalist sentiment, a widespread controversy was stirred up involving educationalists and the general public regarding its revisionist approach, most of whom had not seen the textbook. Among the critics were the late Archbishop Christodoulos and some Church spokesmen who objected to the account of the Ottoman period, criticising the neglect of what is commonly seen as the Church's major role in preserving Greek identity through language and religion, especially through the 'secret school' (κρυφό σχολειό) that operated under the oppression of the Ottoman regime (a now challenged myth). Concerning the 1974 events in Cyprus and their representation, the Cypriot Minister of Education sent corrective comments to the Greek Education Minister, recommending that phrases



in the book such as the 'Cyprus problem' or the 'Cyprus issue' be replaced by the 'tragedy of Cyprus', a more emotional formulation. Criticisms, even from liberals and left-wing critics, centred on the misleadingly anodyne phrases regarding the flight of the civilian population and the destruction of Smyrna, and to the absence of references to atrocities by the combatants on both sides in the 1919–22 war.

The textbook was withdrawn both in order to correct the careless factual errors, a justifiable activity, but also because considerable pressure was exerted to have the text rewritten in order to promote 'Greek consciousness'. While this was being done, the previous textbooks containing the unexamined nationalistic view of the past were used. Four years later, a new history textbook has been issued for the school year beginning in September 2012. Whether this version of past history will also be controversial remains to be seen. In Cyprus, where intercommunal divisions are extreme, a wider awareness of the critical role played by education has developed and discussions around school curricula are ongoing: for example, regular meetings sometimes involving up to 250 teachers engaged with curriculum reform take place, which has been viewed as an optimistic sign (see Loizos 2006; also Papadakis and Charalambous, in Chapters 6 and 7 respectively).

Through the representations of the schoolbooks and of popular ideas, the image of the 'threatening Turk' is depicted graphically. The phrase '400 years of slavery' is a well-worn cliché which resonates evocatively in the public mind and remains largely unexamined; it is both the backdrop to, and the generator of ingrained fears and mistrust. In a critical examination of the history behind these attitudes, Pesmazoglou (2001, 2007) exposes the European roots of anti-Turkish sentiments and how they have been incorporated into the construction of modern Greek identity. Greek children are taught to think of Turks as bloodthirsty, lacking culture and civilisation, the Ottoman period is presented as a dark age, one of continuous cruel oppression, and the contemporary media play up the images of violence in the news coverage (for example during demonstrations outside the Patriarchate in Istanbul, and fatal incidents in Cyprus). Against such ideological weight, even the most liberal-minded Greeks, left-wing critics, academics and well-educated members of upper-class families have admitted to me that, on their first visit to Turkey, they have felt insecure, nervous and fearful.

At the personal level, then, we see how easily images arise unbidden even in the minds of those who may have worked consciously to overcome their prejudices, evoking emotions which may act to inhibit their ability to face up to them. Indeed, how powerful are the unchallenged sets of perceptions that we are endowed with through our given culture and heritage as citizens of particular nation-states, whose basis for membership is exclusive and rooted in oppositional images!

On the Turkish side, parallel problems are evident. Just as the Ottoman period is distorted and misrepresented to students in Greece, so for the Turks, the Byzantine Empire 'is neglected even ignored' (Millas 1991, 29). In a 400-page Turkish high school textbook, Hittites get more than two pages while Byzantium warrants only nine sentences (Millas 1991, 29). In another Turkish high school book a passage on the military incursion of 1919 emphasises 'the Greek cruelty which the Turkish people will never forget' (Millas 1991, 29). Generally, Greeks are characterised as aggressive and violent, with long-term expansionist territorial ambitions, surprising Greeks who hear this. Contrary to the international recognition of the two countries' boundaries, Turkish textbooks have propagated the idea that Greece does not have legitimate claims to the Dodecanese islands (Millas 1991, 30). Persistent disputes over rights to the Aegean airspace and the territorial waters, as well as the rocky outcrops that almost brought the countries to war in 1996 (Imia/Kardak incident) are undoubtedly related to this background.

As Keyder (2003) shows in his assessment of the consequences of the exchange for Turkey, the revision and presentation of history in the service of the nationalist project severely distorted the peoples' actual experience. Characterising the endeavour as concealment, repression and silence, Keyder asserts that the official discourse 'became an exercise in pure artifice', and he notes that 'there are silences in every nation's history that underlie an active effort to forget' (Keyder 2003, 48). Instead of the operation of memory in recreating the past, there is an opposite process, that of forgetting.

The recognition of the silence, which characterises the approach to nationalist history on the Turkish side is thoroughly discussed in a synoptic article by Yildirim (2006a). His two scholarly studies published in the same year are invaluable and unique in their comparative perspective, with detailed attention to the archival as well as published literature on many aspects of the exchange. Yildirim's work exposes clearly a similar nation-building trajectory on both sides, nonetheless with significant contrasts and an overall marked asymmetry of experience. This latter feature is now a recognised finding which emerged originally from the bilateral approach promoted at the 1998 commemorative conference assessing the consequences of the Lausanne Convention for both Greece and Turkey (Hirschon 2003, 13–20).

On the Greek side, an abundance of studies exists from the earliest days, reflecting an effort to remember what is called the Asia Minor Catastrophe, not dwelling on the disaster of a failed campaign but focussing on the mass expulsion. The received view focussed on what became accepted uncritically in Greece as the successful accommodation of the refugees, but this conviction ignored the long-term difficulties experienced by the displaced peoples themselves.

On the Turkish side, the triumph of the War of Independence was celebrated and with it came a silencing of events around the exchange, part

of the concerted state effort to create a new Turkish identity (Yildirim 2006b, 138–9; Özkirimli and Sofos 2008; see also Millas 2003 on the silence in Turkish literature for over seven decades). This was largely done through the state-controlled rewriting of Turkish history in the early Republican period, and the consequent silence continued for several decades (Yildirim 2006a, 58–9). Only in recent times has attention at last been directed to the Exchange so that from the 1990s scholars and journalists began to engage with this topic. Yıldirim notes two different tendencies, one which accepts uncritically the state-promoted version of events even by liberal Turkish scholars, while a more critical and distanced approach is evident in the work of a number of revisionist historians and social scientists (Yildirim 2006a, 62–3).

A further asymmetrical feature is also evident in that equal attention is not devoted to Greeks by Turks. While Greeks are preoccupied and, at times, even obsessed with what they see as the aggressive hostility of their Turkish neighbours, for Turkey there are far more serious problems of instability on their eastern borders, and Greek issues do not dominate their foreign policy concerns.

Another contrast is shown in the record of the displaced peoples' experiences in the two countries. In Greece, homeland associations were formed early and proliferated, while the Centre for Asia Minor Studies (Κέντρο Μικρασιατικών Σπουδών) established under Melpo and Octavio Merlier in 1930 contains a valuable archive of thousands of interviews, documents and musical recordings from the first generation refugees and exchangees.

Though considerable archival sources exist in Turkey, for many years there was little interest in exploring them so that the few homeland associations soon closed down. Possibly among the most significant developments on the Turkish side, well-illustrating the long-term power of memory and its institutionalised expression, is the establishment of the Foundation of Lausanne Treaty Emigrants (*Lozan Mübadilleri Vakfı*) in 2000–01, an organisation which brings together for the first time those people whose forefathers and -mothers were the exchangees of the 1923 Convention. This Turkish Foundation aims 'to preserve and regenerate the collective identity and cultural values of the first generation immigrants and their children'.<sup>9</sup> Its organisers have created a bridging forum between the separated peoples, and it actively promotes bilateral meetings. Among its published aims are,

to support friendship and cooperation among Turkish and Greek people, to protect the cultural and historical heritage of both sides, to conduct research on the population exchange, to organise conferences, and festivals, and to facilitate return visits to the place of origin of peoples on both sides (ibid.).

<sup>9</sup> Cf. <http://www.lozanmubadilleri.org/English.htm>.

This reconciliatory agenda, however, is not generally matched in similar institutions in Greece, where the long-established local homeland associations of many settlements in Asia Minor, Pontus and Thrace often tend to be propagators of an explicitly nationalist agenda. Many Greek homeland associations have become noticeably nationalistic and vociferous. Indeed it is significant that the use of the term 'genocide' was not used in the period of my fieldwork in the 1970s but has been adopted and is now commonly used for the events around the Exchange.

It is therefore important to recognise, however, that there are also images and memories of a benign kind, critically dismissed by cynics as mere romanticism, but which are proving to have a curious longevity and vitality. Shared cultural items lend a kind of intimacy (see also Mackridge's cogent discussion of the role of language in this volume). In the Greek context, the role of popular culture is evidenced in the atmosphere of enjoyable recognition generated through some TV serials, and soap-operas featuring Greco-Turkish love affairs. Astoundingly successful, the most popular TV programme during 2005–06 was a Turkish love saga, 'Borders of Love' (*Yabancı Damat*), featuring a mixed marriage, as well as the small budget Greek film translated into English as 'A Touch of Spice' (Πολίτικη Κουζίνα), featuring the life of a *Rum* (Constantinopolitan) family, while some of the adaptive strategies in Greco-Turkish marriages have been the subject of research (Petronoti and Papagaroufali 2006). Another encouraging sign is learning the language of the 'other' which is no longer a taboo, but increasingly considered a desirable accomplishment. Ironically, the bilingualism of many first and second generation people was lost in Greece under the prejudices of that time, but is now being recovered by those born three and four generations later (cf. Chapter 7 by Charalambous for competing discourses around learning the language of the 'other' in secondary schools in Cyprus).

## Contemporary Encounters

The effective operation of state policy especially through education and the teaching of history is evident in the pervasive attitude of national stereotyping and prejudice which constitutes a major curse of our times. One attempt to examine this problem took place in the context of the Greek-Turkish network of the SEESOX programme at St Antony's College, Oxford University. In 2003, I organised an open discussion session to explore the views of the younger generation, represented by post-graduate students at UK universities. The open panel format broke new ground through involving a range of younger participants with their spontaneous contributions. This revealed the effects of prejudice, some of its sources and how it is dealt with at the level of personal experience.

The relevance of these accounts lies in the way they expose the ingrained prejudices which are part of the cultural experience of all of us. Bound up with various processes involved in constructing collective social identity and self-definition, the key elements of memory, history and narrative operate in forming attitudes to the 'other'. The accounts voiced in this session revealed how important face-to-face contacts are, since these provide opportunities for first-hand knowledge and, through them, the possibility of building up mutual respect, trust and friendship.

The discussion in which lively contributions came from the younger generation mainly focussed on identifying the various sources which had influenced attitudes to the other country. Many speakers related how their first encounters with the other side had occurred as students at foreign universities, in classes and halls of residence where they were surprised to discover how many similarities existed, and that they had even been able to become friends. Familiar ways of behaving, some shared vocabulary and cuisine, indeed a common heritage, is discovered to their mutual amazement.

Volunteering from personal experience, speakers (predominantly postgraduate students from Turkey, Greece and Cyprus at various British universities) related how they had been subject to prejudice from various sources in their home country as well as to an overall ignorance. Some noted that it was not only the content of the school teaching but, even more, it was their teachers' attitudes, often highly nationalistic, that had been influential. One Greek student pointed out how he had finally noticed that university teaching in Greece differed from that at school since wider sources were used, and widespread ideas that are generally accepted were questioned.

Several personal accounts revealed how prevalent were prejudices and critical attitudes from the family regarding any positive interest in the other side. A Greek student of refugee origin recalled the bitter memories regarding his grandparents' flight and expulsion in 1922–23, and suggested that a process modelled on the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission could well contribute to creating rapprochement between Turks and Greeks. A Turkish student from Istanbul whose family is of Cretan origin told how she had to break the news to her mother that her research in Imbros/Gökçeada would also involve understanding the situation from the Greek point of view. Her mother was shocked and said, 'Your grandfather's bones would shiver, if he knew what you are doing'. Another young woman recounted how a friend who had grown up in the UK of Greek Cypriot parents went back to their home village when the borders to the north were opened. She noted that her friend had returned saying, "'It was amazing – they're just like us'", and she commented, 'It was as though my friend had imagined them somehow to be monsters, animals, not human beings'. A Turkish Cypriot woman studying in Birmingham revealed that at home she had never heard anything about

Greek civilisation, its history and philosophy; it was only in the UK that she uncovered this whole dimension to her amazement.

Clearly, many young people are actively engaging with and contesting the negative stereotypes and prejudices of the context they have grown up in. The examination and revision of attitudes was a common theme in the accounts from these students, and is ample evidence of the value of face-to-face knowledge on an extended basis.

Contact across borders is a marked trend and has been increasing on a number of fronts, not least through tourism. Turkey has become a major destination with about 400,000 Greeks visiting the country in 2006. There has been a remarkable rise in tourism from Turkey to Greece: in 2008 and 2009 Turkish tourists to Greece numbered over 200,000 per year, and rose to 561,000 in 2010 (SETE),<sup>10</sup> despite the inconvenience and cost involved with visa applications.

Even before the 1999 earthquakes there were concerted attempts to create and promote bilateral ties through initiatives by committed persons. Most active among them were business people, artists, musicians, journalists, some local mayors and academics who undertook exchange visits and organised joint events.<sup>11</sup> It is notable that even when political relations between the Greek and Turkish states were at their worst, cultural and intellectual exchanges between the two nations never entirely ceased. Despite the 'official discourse' which generally presents Greek-Turkish relations in black-and-white terms, on the Greek side novels, films and songs which portrayed a more subtle state of affairs were never entirely absent, though the 'silence' in literature on the Turkish side right up to the 1990s should be noted (Millas 2003).

This pattern shows the ambivalence of a relationship in which mutual fascination and consciousness of common cultural roots coexists alongside fear, suspicion and resentment (Kirtsoglou 2006). Notably, ever since 1999 when the major earthquakes in both countries evoked sympathetic responses and led to official political rapprochement, a plethora of cultural and academic exchanges have taken place between Greece and Turkey (see Birden and Rumelili 2009). This created the impression that many important problems had been solved. The watershed visit to Athens by Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan in May 2010 and the hour long live TV dialogue with the Greek Prime Minister, George Papandreou, in which warm expressions of mutual support were broadcast seemed to offer hope for reduced defence spending and the attention to minority rights, but these and other difficult issues continue to beset relations between the two countries (namely the Aegean territorial

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<sup>10</sup> Association of Hellenic Travel Enterprises, [www.sete.gr](http://www.sete.gr).

<sup>11</sup> For a detailed discussion of these initiatives in the case of Mytilini and Dikeli particularly, see Myrivili (2009), 331–57.



waters, air space sovereignty, the Theological School of Halki in Turkey and the Cyprus stalemate).

Based on the panel discussion session and on the familiarity engendered through popular culture and bilateral meetings, it is clear that great value can be gained in the long term through increasing contact between Greeks and Turks, especially among young people (see Myrivili 2009, 348–51). Social, cultural and educational exchanges could play a critical role in promoting the understanding of their own society as well as that of the ‘other’. It would be well for Greeks and Turks alike to delve into their common collective memories, whether pleasant or painful, and to realise how closely their worlds were intertwined for 400 years.

### **Conclusion: The Importance of a Holistic Approach**

An anthropological perspective allows us to move from different levels and to include the operation of a variety of factors in our analysis. At the macro-level, there were encouraging indications of a more general climate of goodwill promoted by Greece’s support for Turkey’s long-standing (and still pending) application for membership in the EU. In a period when setbacks occurred, the Greek position supporting Turkey’s application has been a critical positive factor. The volatile character of this relationship, however, is always evident whenever tensions arise over intractable issues (Cyprus, the Aegean, the Patriarchate, the Theological School of Halki). Current turmoil in the Arab states (2012–13) is affecting the balance of relationships in the region, including those of Greece and Turkey.

With regard to the contentious relations between Greece and Turkey over the past 90 years, in my opinion a bilateral view is essential for a fuller understanding of the complexity of these relations at the state level. Through the templates of documented history and through the oral accounts passed from one generation to another, people develop views and images of the ‘other’, which are powerful and enduring, and undoubtedly affect the direction of policy.

In this presentation, I have emphasised the importance of ‘the human factor’ because it is the fundamental element in processes of change. It is chiefly at this level, of the personal in the context of a social, cultural and temporal milieu, that one might hope for deeper transformations, for a long-term restitution and stabilisation of better relations. This chapter aims to create an awareness of the need for a more inclusive consideration of the subliminal responses and the mechanisms through which they are maintained. The significance of these elements, deeply embedded at the individual level, have nonetheless insidious effects not fully recognised or addressed in certain specialised academic analyses or, indeed, in the international realm of diplomacy.

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# Chapter 2

## Situating Loss in the Greek-Turkish Encounter in Cyprus

Olga Demetriou

### Introduction

'Loss', explicitly or not, has attended narratives of the Greek-Turkish encounter with few exceptions if at all.<sup>1</sup> The war of 1922 and the fleeing of refugees from the chaos of total destruction of Smyrna has been the arch-image for the 'loss of Greek homelands' ever since the events took place. The substratum on the basis of which the Greek-Turkish encounter is deemed worthy of analysis consists of wars and conflicts attended by similar losses (cf. Millas in Chapter 3). Yet despite infinite analyses of 'war' and 'conflict' in the study of this encounter, 'loss' has rarely constituted an analytic frame per se. This chapter focuses on 'loss' as such an analytic frame for studying the Greek-Turkish encounter in Cyprus. More specifically, I draw on a series of interviews with refugees who are members of the Greek Cypriot community (and are ethnically identifiable as 'Greek Cypriot', 'Armenians', 'Maronites' and 'Latins'), most displaced during the war of 1974, to focus on the multifarious ways in which they rationalize their experiences, all of which turn on the concept of 'loss'.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Examples are included in the collections by Hirschon (2003), Theodossopoulos (2007), Anastasakis, Nicolaidis and Öktem (2009), Diamandouros, Dragonas and Keyder (2010).

<sup>2</sup> The sample from which the extracts presented here are drawn included 15 interviews, ten of which were with people who have experienced different facets of displacement in Cyprus, and five of whom were involved in litigation cases relating to rights to properties they had fled from in the north. This sample has been presented in detail in a report published in 2012 by the PRIO Cyprus Centre entitled 'Displacement in Cyprus – Consequences of Civil and Military Strife – Report 1 – Life Stories: Greek Cypriot Community' (available at <http://www.prio-cyprus-displacement.net/images/users/1/Report%201-%20O.DEMETRIOU%20ENG.WEB.pdf>). The report was prepared as part of the EU-funded project 'Dialogue for Trust Building and Reconciliation', implemented by PRIO Cyprus Centre in 2010 and 2011. During the course of the project a number of interviews were collected, which included both semi-structured interviews (the transcriptions and translations of which yielded the quotes presented here) and less formal

This calls for some engagement with the concept. What is it that is communicated in 'loss' that allows us a different analytical vantage point into the Cyprus conflict?

Using this concept not only as an ethnographic term but also as an analytic frame draws attention to three alternative viewpoints in the analysis of the Greek-Turkish encounter. Firstly, it calls forth a more individualized perspective on the experience of this encounter, whereby the 'nation', if not deconstructed, is not the primary issue at stake. Instead, the loss at the centre of the narrative is an individually internalized loss, which might even be at odds with the collectivization of this sentiment as a referent of the 'nation' and its purported unity. There is also a difference between this more individualized perspective and some of the work on loss, which has taken a more sociological approach to the question (for example Gavriilidis 2008). Secondly, in theoretical terms, the concept of loss enables an approach that focuses on nuances and the differentiations of experience that fracture rather than unify collectivities. And this is entirely in contrast to psychoanalytic approaches that have collapsed the individual onto the national (for example Volkan 2011). Instead, what I have found more useful in thinking about loss and its implication in the Greek-Turkish encounter are anthropological and feminist approaches to conflict, which have long insisted on the analytic importance of such nuances (between the individual, the collective, the national and so on) through studies of the formation of political subjectivity (for example Altınay and Türkyılmaz 2011; Neyzi 2008; Athanasiou 2005). Thirdly, it points to the psychoanalytic perspective as something that must be subjected to these nuances rather than as a tool for universal explanations (for example Galatariotou 2008, Sant Cassia 2005). The 'closure' that in the classic Freudian account must attend loss in order to enable the passage from the pathological condition of melancholia to the normalized condition of mourning (Freud 1917) is not always clear-cut. It is for this reason that 'trauma' has been contested as a frame for understanding this encounter (Loizos 2009; Agathangelou and Killian 2009). This is relevant for pointing to the experience of loss as an open question, leading in turn to other questions.

Loss of what? for example. Property, life and bodily integrity are the first features to be inventorized in accounts of conflict and war. Wars are normally introduced by the numbers of dead, wounded and displaced in which they have resulted. In the Cyprus case, numbers (normally broken down by ethnic affiliation and conflict phases) approximate 4,500 for the dead, 2,000 for those gone missing and whose remains were not recovered until exhumations began in the 2000s and 230,000 for the displaced.

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discussions with refugees. This data had in turn built on previous ethnographic research on refugeehood undertaken in Cyprus since 2006.

Memories, social relations, community or 'the life we could have had', as some of my interviewees put it, are examples of intangible losses that do not simply augment, but also complicate that inventory. A person without dead or missing relatives still mourns for the possibilities war has foreclosed for them. 'Laughing has not been the same since', two of my interviewees said.

A central site of this complication is the positioning of the self, vis-à-vis the 'nation' in locating this loss. Between the official and the private, the public and the intimate are discourses and practices that contradict nationalist rhetoric, take it for granted, debate it or render it irrelevant. Moreover, the 'official', in the cases I examine, stretches between the poles of the two authorities that have been appropriating the losses of the Cyprus conflict: the state rhetoric of the Republic of Cyprus (RoC) that has cultivated the concept and sentiments of collective refugeehood (Demetriou 2007), and the rhetoric of the unrecognized authorities of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), who have based their management of loss on a system of property exchange (Navaro-Yashin 2012; Erdal Ilcan 2011). Between these poles, personal losses of friends, family, bonds and 'memories' (understood for example as memories of the life one should have had but did not) collide with, but sometimes also prop up, the official rhetoric.

At the point of this clash, loss turns into a different point of encounter. The recognition of others' losses calls forth the blind spots of nationalist historiography, where atrocities were only committed by the other, and claims and rights are the sole prerogative of the self (cf. Papadakis in Chapter 6 and Millas in Chapter 3). Explaining one's loss is thus often the location where knowledge of this encounter surfaces, even if it remains unreplicated on the level of the official and in policies and politics that 'matter'. In Cyprus, transitional justice policies (involving for example the disclosure of data regarding inter- and intra-communal killings and their perpetrators) still remain elusive, and rapprochement is still a marginalized activity. Yet, the need for the first and the existence of the second have been part of public discourse for some time, both north and south of the dividing line. Instead, when it comes to the 'politics that matter', the hegemonic form of the encounter is adversarial. Managing loss thus becomes a question of choosing sides: does a refugee decry the loss of a home with due reverence to the nation, or does she appropriate this loss according to prescriptions of 'enemy' authorities? The interviews that I collected, as well as narratives I have heard over the last five years of living in Cyprus and working on facets of the issue of refugeehood show that these forms of the encounter are not necessarily opposed to each other but may coexist in the same narrative. They are not, in other words, experienced as battle lines but very often as decisions situated in specific places and times.

## Complicating the Link Between Loss and Nationalism

In the Greek Cypriot context, loss is articulated in relation with the hegemonic discourse of nationalism. This discourse speaks of the northern part of the island as lost to the ‘Turkish occupier’ (Τούρκο κατακτητή). The loss is a collective loss of the (Greek-) Cypriot community – the lands lost are ‘our ancestral homes’ (πατρογονικές μας εστίες), the homes that bore our forefathers. This rhetoric imbues representations of northern Cyprus in elementary schoolbooks and extends to large parts of the formal and informal curriculum, so that the generations being educated post-1974 are viscerally familiar with this concept of ‘loss’ as formative of the Greek Cypriot subject.

The centrality of this concept in shaping political subjectivity through educational media thus merits some attention. The exercise books used by pupils still depict Kyrenia harbour or the shores of Famagusta on the cover (see Figures 2.1a and 2.1b). The caption ‘Δεν Ξεχνώ’, meaning ‘I don’t forget’, a phrase which became the key slogan of Greek Cypriot nationalism in the years following 1974 (see also Yakinthou 2008; Constantinou 1995) is often assumed, and thus sometimes unwritten. Children in pre-school classes are introduced to nationalism surrounding national celebrations with visions of lands in chains, awaiting their liberation, crying for the



Figures 2.1a and 2.1b Varosha coast outside Famagusta featured on the covers of elementary school notebooks throughout the last four decades, as shown here on exercise books issued in 1985 (2.1a) and 2011 (2.1b)





Figure 2.1b

return of their owners and inhabitants (see also Zembylas 2012; Spyrou 2006; Christou 2007; and Papadakis Chapter 6). Refugee associations and municipalities in exile thrive on this rhetoric in their publications and speeches made during national celebrations: one of the most successful is the association Αδούλωτη Κερύνεια, literally meaning ‘Kyrenia refusing enslavement’ (see also Demetriou and Gürel 2011).

When a mother I know complained to the teacher that images of ‘enslaved Pendadhaktylos’ mountain kept her five-year-old daughter awake at nights, the teacher laughed it off. Despite the omnipresence of this rhetoric, there is a level at which it is accepted as exaggeration – almost like a fairytale that eventually the political subject grows up to accept for the fiction that it is. This is a level that has eluded many academic critics of this rhetoric, who have been at pains to redress the exaggeration, provide facts (like inventories of loss) and unmask the rhetoric for the propaganda that it is. I take it as a starting point that for many Greek Cypriots, irrespective of political persuasion, the rhetorical quality of this discourse of ‘enslaved lands’ is taken for granted. This is what allows it to be laughed off, and to persist. It is also what allows it to exist alongside discourses that in political terms would be seen as irreconcilable with it (for example about the peaceful coexistence of Greek- and Turkish-Cypriots) and yet



are espoused by the same state institutions that sustain the rhetoric of collective loss.

The chief example of such discourse is the discourse of coexistence. Having been formed on the basis of the movement of 'rapprochement' (επαναπροσέγγιση), which aimed at bringing Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots closer together after the division of 1974, the discourse of coexistence utilized a different understanding of loss. The loss foregrounded there was the loss of inter-ethnic social ties, the loss of local communities that lived together despite their ethnic differences, the loss of social bonds that existed beyond and despite the ethnic antagonism of high politics. This discourse was to a large extent invested in the prioritization of class difference over the ethnic, and hence was initially articulated by the left, which on both sides had been progressively marginalized by the nationalism of the right during the course of the culmination of the conflict. Rapprochement activists are still marginal and have over the years come under attack by both the state and nationalist circles, and this has positioned the discourse of rapprochement in opposition to the nationalist one in the literature. Continuities between the two have thus largely been eschewed, or where they have been acknowledged, the frame of analysis has been the ultimate prioritization of ethnic antagonism (for example Kızılyürek 2006). Yet, the view that Turkish Cypriots are not the addressees of Greek Cypriot grievances (in opposition to Turkey), and that Greek- and Turkish- Cypriots can and should 'live together', is often propounded in official statements and is hardly a matter of debate across the political spectrum (barring, perhaps, the far right). Given this, I would like to suggest that looking at loss as a key point in such continuity between nationalism and reconciliation discourses, a more nuanced understanding becomes apparent.

The common victimization of both Greek- and Turkish Cypriots thus hinges on the loss of home and homelands as integrally connected to social life, whereby individuals from both communities coexisted in work and leisure. This view is found in the same schoolbooks that speak of enslaved homelands and in state rhetoric that represents Turkish Cypriots as victims of Turkish policy who have suffered just like Greek Cypriots because of the long-term military occupation. This commonality of victimization is a key constituent of the conceptualization of coexistence with reference to more private losses as well, of life, limb and family, which until the early 2000s were considered the prerogative of nationalist discourse (see also Demetriou and Gürel 2011). Since then, the transposition of this discourse of loss onto that of rapprochement has generated discussions around questions of responsibility and reparations, viewed at the intersections of the individual, collective and state level – a discussion that is also reflected in the academic interest around transitional justice (for example Kovras 2012).

In considering these discourses on loss it is important to keep their major material underpinnings in mind: the body (and trauma associated with the loss of its integrity) and property (including associated notions of home and community). The interviews I collected show that the stakes inhering in these material losses are integrally connected to the ways in which discourses on loss are employed. Moreover, this connection is not made on the basis of a monolithic schema structured by the poles of nationalism-conservatism on the one side and reconciliation-criticality on the other. Experiences of bodily harm do not immediately translate into a rhetoric of martyrdom. They can instead provide the basis for a state-critical discourse, and/or a reconciliatory one.

The loss of individual property is subject to the same nuanced processing. Crucially, in the case of property such processing has been translated into action since the start of property litigation in the 1990s. This litigation was inaugurated with a case filed at the European Court of Human Rights by a Greek Cypriot suing Turkey for barring her access and enjoyment of her property in the Kyrenia area (*Loizidou v Turkey*). Since the Court's decision, which confirmed these rights, a number of cases have followed, in which individual rights have been pursued on the legal plane, just as the political settlement has been rendered more elusive. In the last phase of this litigation development, the translation of loss of property into legal action has determined individuals' stances towards the Immoveable Property Commission (IPC). This is a body set up by authorities in the north in order to mete out compensation to Greek Cypriot applicants for properties abandoned in 1974, and which the Republic of Cyprus refuses to recognize and advises refugees not to apply to. However, the recognition of this body as 'a domestic [legal] remedy' by the European Court of Human Rights in 2010 (*Demopoulos v Turkey*) has undermined the Republic's outright rejection of the IPC. In considering the IPC as an option, Greek Cypriot interviewees present a much more complex configuration of discourses than the antagonistic frame of recognition/refusal-to-recognize might predict. The examples below, which also include interviews with people involved in high-profile litigation cases, aim to highlight these nuances.<sup>3</sup>

### Questioning Collective Loss

Take for example the 'nationalist' pole, indicated by adherence to the broad lines of the rhetoric of collective loss of homeland. In the period after the 2004 referendum on a UN plan for reuniting the island under a proposed

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<sup>3</sup> In the interests of anonymity, I have not named these interviewees here, and have used pseudonyms for those interviewees who are not involved in the litigation process.

'United Cyprus Republic', the nationalist discourse on loss centred around the refusal of Greek Cypriot refugees to return to their properties unless this return was a collective one. At the extreme, refugee associations and authorities in exile instructed their audience not to cross to the north after the opening of the checkpoints in 2003, as this would strengthen the Turkish Cypriot authorities' call for recognition of the TRNC, and to reject the UN plan because it failed to guarantee that all refugees could repossess their properties. My sample of interviewees included people who espoused parts of this discourse, but not wholly. People who had refused to cross post-2003 did not point to 'recognition' as the key obstacle. Others, who had rejected the UN plan, did not rationalize their choice on the basis of collective return. Crucially, individuals who had refused to cross had subsequently voted in favour of the UN plan. This puts into question the accepted reading of oft-cited statistics showing that 50 per cent of Greek Cypriots refuse to cross and 76 per cent of Greek Cypriot referendum voters rejected the plan (from which it is often concluded that those who do not cross were also 'NO' voters in 2004).

The woman pseudonymed here (like all interviewees quoted in this chapter) as Roula is one of those individuals. She is 61 and was displaced from a social housing settlement in northern Nicosia to a refugee settlement in the southern part of the city. She might be classified as a 'conservative', and parts of her account adhere to 'nationalist' rhetoric. Yet, other parts emphatically contradict it. This is how she rationalizes her decision not to cross:

I do not believe we will go back, I never did. I would go, but I don't believe it. If I went and knew I would be safe I would return, but to go and then have them [Turks] come again to take us, no. If I am safer here, I don't mind not going. But if there is safety there I do not mind going either ... I still cannot bring myself to go and see [the house] ... Because I saw the war, because my husband was wounded, I have a phobia inside me. Not because I hate them [Turkish Cypriots] that I don't go. But I have a phobia – even when it thunders I still think of the war.

Collective return as a point of principle is not an issue for Roula. It is security on a personal level that is. On this same level, crossing becomes an issue of personal negotiation, not ethical or political injunction. The loss that legitimizes her otherwise 'nationalist' refusal to cross is not the rhetoric of 'enslaved lands'. Neither is it the material loss of the house, which she described as not much better than the one she now lives in. It is the psychological trauma of flight and its aftermath, amplified by her husband's involvement in the war and the long-term damage he has suffered to his leg.

Nadia, who was a teenager at the time of the war when she fled her home in the Varosha area of Famagusta, speaks of trauma and insecurity in very different terms. She recalls the time spent in makeshift settlements waiting to reach some place of safety:

At some point an acquaintance who had joined the army came and reported horrible things that were happening on both sides. This somehow comforted me in the sense that it was about the war doing horrible things to everyone. He was not out to blame the Turks, as the others were doing. He said 'war is a terrible thing because I saw Greek Cypriots do things that I did not believe humans could do'. We asked him what, and he said he'd seen a Turkish Cypriot old man being tied to a jeep and being dragged along the ground until he died, he described atrocious things.

These atrocities, described alongside fears of rape by the Turkish army, become a point of commonality in the dehumanization that war effects on people, regardless of their ethnic belonging. This 'reconciliational' aspect of trauma, which has since led Nadia to a number of rapprochement initiatives, does not ameliorate the experience of the loss she feels as total and irredeemable. She acknowledges she still mourns for the experiences that no political settlement can now return to her:

You tend to idealize things, so for me even if I were given ten times the value of the house it would not be the same. I want my house back, I want my city back, I want my neighbourhood back, I want my smells back, I want to be able to run again on the beach, where I used to run as a child. Can you understand this, without having lived it?

Loss thus emerges in these two narratives as formative of the two women's political subjectivization. It provides the ground for their positioning as political subjects, their views about the ethnic conflict and its resolution, their decisions in the material conjunctures of the present and the projected expectations of a future that seems increasingly counter-intuitive. Yet, it is clear that the nationalism-reconciliation spectrum on which their 'positionings' might be attempted cannot account for the critical reflection that underlies them. They both speak as political subjects who have outgrown the anthropomorphized image of 'enslaved lands'. In Roula's case, refusal to cross is not a principled position beyond question, but a pained stance that makes individual sense. In the case of Nadia, the sharing of pain across communities does not detract from the sense of injustice at having lost her teenage sense of social self. By appropriating their losses in different ways, the two women show the limits of collective appropriations and the attendant readings of 'loss' as a mechanism for

typifying political attitudes in the correlation between the level of the state and that of the individual. One cannot speak of 'Greek Cypriot attitudes to loss', I would therefore suggest, without discounting the processes of critical reflection that constitute them.

Such critical reflection would also push the analysis to ask 'who are Greek Cypriots in the first place?' – a question that seems to me foreclosed only if one already adopts a position of ethnic determinism. One clear example of this, but not the only one, are the minority groups that are counted in law as 'religious groups' within the Greek Cypriot community. The narratives of loss that they recount diverge even more significantly from the schemas of nationalism and reconciliation. This brings into perspective the limitations of analyzing the conflict solely through the lens of dichotomic distinctions between Greek- and Turkish-Cypriots (Constantinou 2007). In terms of loss, this leads to the discounting of the experiences of other groups, which were shaped by the inter-ethnic conflict, yet whose ethno-religious identity has been a significant factor in differentiating those experiences from the two communities. I refer here to the three 'religious groups' that are formally included as such in the Greek Cypriot community, the Armenians, the Maronites and the Latins. It should also be mentioned, however, that along similar lines, the Turkish Cypriot community includes a number of Roma people, who have never been officially recognized as a separate group under any legal regime.

Thus, for example, Armenians experienced refugeehood in very different ways than most Greek Cypriots, even though the categories that determined this experience have not been explicitly oriented towards marking this distinction. Thus, whereas Greek Cypriots displaced in 1974 are officially recognized by the state as 'refugees' (πρόσφυγες), those displaced prior to this point are categorized as Τουρκόπληκτοι literally meaning 'those struck by the Turks'. This translates into differential treatment by the state of the displacement trauma. This becomes a poignant differentiating factor in the 'Greek Cypriot' experience when considering that the majority of displaced Armenians hail from Nicosia and were displaced in 1964, rendering them Τουρκόπληκτοι (struck by the Turks), while most displaced Greek Cypriots are classified as πρόσφυγες (refugees).<sup>4</sup> Alternatively, the majority of displaced Maronites were displaced in 1974, but a significant number of them have also been enclaved within the northern part of the island in areas where the control of the Turkish army has been particularly strong, and of those, some were displaced to the southern part of the island controlled by the government of the Republic subsequent to 1974 (as were Greek Cypriots in the region

<sup>4</sup> For a detailed account of this legal differentiation, see Demetriou (forthcoming).

of Karpaz/Karpasia). Yet Maronites have also had easier access to their properties since 1974 and many have repossessed them following the opening of the checkpoints in 2003. These experiences have punctured the experience of loss among members of these minority groups.

Arpik was a teenager at the time of the family's displacement from the Armenian quarter of Nicosia in 1964. She sympathized with her parents' situation at that point, and remembers not pressing them for luxuries that had previously been available to them: 'if my father couldn't afford, he couldn't afford – that was the end of that'. But she does relate her experience to that of majority Greek Cypriots from which she was made to feel alienated:

Unfortunately we are not considered πρόσφυγες (refugees). We are Τουρκόπληκτοι (struck by the Turks). Those from 1963 are Τουρκόπληκτοι (struck by the Turks), 1974 πρόσφυγες (refugees). And we did not receive any of the advantages, whereas for you [Greek Cypriots] there are various options. Sometimes I hear Greek Cypriot refugees talk about 1974, especially younger people, and I tell them 'hey, I've lived like this since 1963!' and they get surprised, they don't know ... Mrs Anna, from Kyrenia, when we said to her that we lost too, she used to say 'this is something else!' (άλλον τούτον!). We did not understand at first, then we realized she didn't count our loss as much as hers. What does this mean? Property is property!

If Roula's and Nadia's approaches to loss individualize their experiences, Arpik's communalizes it, but does so within a frame that puts 'Greek Cypriot community' in question. By foregrounding her experience as an Armenian first and foremost, she calls attention to the silencing of losses other than Greek Cypriot (and/or Turkish Cypriot ones). From a different perspective, I would suggest, this presents an anxiety to communicate what state and other 'classification' discourses have been failing to account for, that is, the particularities of individuals' losses. This failure is more totalizing in the case of Armenians because the silence has been propped up by legal technologies (the categorizations of 'refugees' and 'those struck by the Turks') but nevertheless present in all the accounts.

Consider also the Maronite case, where the 'loss' experienced might be put to question. Maronites in the villages that became enclaves after 1974 have had a choice to stay under Turkish Cypriot administration or relocate to the south. Those that took up the second option have been able to return for brief visits to their relatives' homes in the north since the division. They have all kept the titles to their properties and rights attached to them under Turkish Cypriot administrative structures, which distributed almost all other Greek Cypriot property in the north. And on this basis,

they have been able to reclaim them as primary or holiday residences after the opening of the checkpoints in 2003.

Still, Michel, who was three when his parents left the house in the village of Kormakitis in 1974 to resettle in Limassol, articulates a different sense of 'loss', which, like in Arpik's case, is strongly correlated to the sense of community and to feelings of alienation from the Greek Cypriot majority:

Greek Cypriots would consider us some kind of traitors for going back ... I remember the sense of hatred for the Turks that was inculcated in us at school. I remember going back to the village and hearing people speak in Turkish, including my father, and I used to get angry ... My views of course changed afterwards, in London, and after the Annan Plan, when I met Turkish Cypriots ... The first time I crossed after 2003 was the first time I actually felt able to travel elsewhere other than the village and meet Turkish Cypriots [routes during return visits prior to 2003 were restricted and stops not allowed]. Even though we could have done it before, we wouldn't do it, as if it was forbidden ... I felt the same surprise as everyone else after the Annan Plan when I saw restaurants and shops. Before we used to go to the village and pass through abandoned villages, just like we were told at school.

Paradoxically, the reconstitution of the Maronite community after the flight of 1974 took place, in Michel's analysis, at the community's own expense. As he explains of the level of state policy:

even though the Maronite representative kept asking for one refugee settlement to be reserved only for Maronites this was not done. This was probably because it was not done for other communities either. They probably did not want to create a 'New Kythrea' and so on. But for the Maronites it should have been done because the Maronites are so few. As a result, the Maronites dispersed and the result is that today there is an 80% of mixed marriages, so the community is disappearing. In the past because they were concentrated in those particular villages mixed marriages were the exception. Also, there was no attention paid to other ways of keeping the community together, through its own cultural spaces. As individuals, they were helped as much as everyone.

This quote shows how the efforts of the state to reconstitute 'refugees' as a community had the effect of nullifying other ethno-cultural differences that existed prior to the critical point of 1974. This was not antithetical to the representation of Maronite access to 'lost' villages and properties as a form of treason. It actually went hand in hand with the state rhetoric of collectivizing a sense of refugeehood as the proper condition of the Greek



Cypriot subject. And here lies precisely the force of all the articulations examined so far. In their different ways, they all put this purported collectivity of Greek Cypriot 'refugees' into question. They speak of sentiments and attitudes that are framed by this concept of the 'proper' Greek Cypriot refugee subject, but they describe processes of political subjectivization that undermine the collectivity at its core. It is precisely from this perspective that the analysis of loss can become instructive as explanation of the quagmire of positionalities that are proverbially said to plague the refugee/property issue in Cyprus today.

### Suing for Loss

This is also the case for the practical/policy side of the issue, which often goes under the rubric of 'the property question'. Here, international and local litigation involving claims to property abandoned during the hostilities, and comprising in its majority of Greek Cypriot claims for properties abandoned in 1974, has become a major point of analysis. Yet, little attention has been paid to the ethnography of this litigation, and particularly the question of litigants' own experiences of loss and refugeehood, and its correlations to formal readings of it. This litigation is conducted in a context whereby the establishment of the Immoveable Property Commission (IPC) by Turkish authorities in the north has divided actors in the legal field into those that refuse to recognize the IPC (as the Republic of Cyprus refuses), and are therefore held to be 'patriotic' refugees, and those that do recognize its authority over their title deeds, which they submit to as part of their application, and are therefore held to be acting 'unpatriotically'. The poles of nationalism and reconciliation may thus be said to be reinscribed in analyses of Greek Cypriot refugee litigation where nationalistic or non-nationalistic motives are read into one's stance towards the IPC. The interviews conducted with such litigants show that the processes that led them to the courts partake of the same kind of critical reflection that the previous quotes point to. For example, one litigant, whose case was significant in reaffirming Greek Cypriot rights to property in the north, dwelled extensively on the amicable relations the family had had with Turkish Cypriots in the neighbourhood prior to their departure. The litigant in question did not view the case as a battle for Greek Cypriot rights against Turkish Cypriot claims, but as one where the restoration of rights might open the way to a political settlement of the conflict. As another litigant, who has devoted considerable energy to reconciliation initiatives put it,

return is inextricably linked with the concept of time ... what 'home' means to me is slowly being transformed into 'property deeds' for



future generations. And those who live there now are different people. And unfortunately this seems to be taken seriously into account more generally. From this point of view I believe that we urgently need to find solutions so that we retain the possibility for reunification ... I do not know if the current generation is willing to go back and live in those 'homes' when they have nothing apart from deeds and indeed even more so when they do not even have these, to connect them to the occupied areas ... From here on the thing we have to do is enter negotiations with a spirit of cooperation and agreement, looking at our common house, which is Cyprus, aiming at reunification within the EU and with implementation of its justice principles. I do not believe there are ideal solutions ... what we have to try and find are solutions to implement commonly in a common path ... to slowly put things behind us, like Europe did after WWII ... for future generations as well.

Although both of these litigants have rejected the option of applying to the IPC for the restoration of their property rights, the political discourses they employ in explaining their plight cannot unproblematically be ascribed to nationalism. They might conform to aspects of the official rhetoric, but their explanations remain cognizant of the nationalist discourse they disagree with. One litigant has spoken of 'rampant nationalists' who sometimes phone with congratulations, provoking feelings of discomfort, whereas another drew a distinction between nationalistically-inclined individuals in a refugee group the litigant was part of and other, more like-minded individuals.

On the opposite end, recourse to the IPC does not equate with acceptance of Turkish Cypriot official positions, as the Republic of Cyprus state rhetoric would have it. One litigant rationalized this as follows:

My case, together with ... all the others, has achieved one thing that nobody else had achieved up to then. Turkey recognized our right to property, which it had not accepted up to then. Until that point it was saying that 'whatever we took is ours and nobody will get anything back'. This was the most important thing. And the 1000 people that are now [2010] on the application list of the Commission, that's why they went to the Commission: because their property rights are recognized and they will receive compensation. Regardless of the fact that the compensations received will be far below the value of the properties, their property rights are being recognized. They are recognized as the rightful owners of these properties. This was very important to establish. And we opened the way for all the other property owners.

Still another, who has harshly felt the brunt of being labelled a traitor, spoke of the dire straits between the two property regimes that IPC

applications force people in this situation into (accepting the loss of one's property by selling it out on the one hand, and perpetuating a discourse of recoverability of this loss even when rationality precludes this in practice on the other):

I humiliated myself and went to the IPC and offered a land parcel of 13 σκάλες [c. 13000 square metres] I had – they offered me 48,000 pounds for a plot that is valued at over two million pounds. I refused, but this was a humiliation and it is a humiliation for all of us who go to the IPC. I left feeling humiliated not because I did not want to sell my land, but because this was going to be giving it away, not selling it ... I went to the IPC with a lot of indignation and when I went my indignation was with the government here.

For this applicant, the IPC functioned as a last resort enabling the applicant to escape financial hardship, which the Republic should have instead alleviated a long time ago, had the value of property 'lost' really been taken into account by institutions that mattered (for example banks and lending cooperatives). In the end, the IPC had failed even in this role, as the amount offered was too small – but this only augmented the exasperation with the authorities of the Republic, who had rendered the 'sell-out' to the IPC an option in the first place. A third IPC applicant dwelled extensively on the exploratory aspect of the application:

I went to try and see if it was effective. And I was perfectly prepared to consider reasonable responses to my demands ... Of course I knew they weren't going to tell me 'take your house' ... It's difficult to say what I was expecting as a just decision. I am not a fool, I understand that people cannot be forced from their houses. But on the other hand they did not give me an offer, for example saying 'OK, your house we cannot reinstate but these plots behind the house we can'. If they had said that, I would have felt bitter [θα εκίστιζα], but I would have considered it ... For me the whole process was so unfair, so I was bitter because I could see they thought they can fool me (να με περιπαίζουν). I felt I was being taken on a ride. I felt like Alice in Wonderland sometimes. If they had negotiated seriously I would have been prepared to consider all sorts of things. But they never did ... [The IPC] is a domestic remedy of Turkey, but it is not Turkey's, it's the TRNC's. And it suffers from the corruption and incompetence that a state suffers from that has been illegal for forty years ... That's how I felt going through it actually. That I was in a statelet which is under military occupation, it's under the military, and they would tell me as much: 'we need to ask the army people on this piece' and so on. I think by its nature it couldn't work properly.

These quotes present a variety of approaches to the IPC as a political instrument. They range from the pragmatic view as the only legal mechanism available at the current conjuncture, to the resigned view of it as an instrument of expressing one's exasperation with treatment from one's own government, even to a scientific approach of seeing the IPC as an instrument to be tested without prejudice. An initial agreement between these perspectives on the politics of the Cyprus conflict or on the property issue cannot be assumed. The only position that might be assumed is the choice to appeal to the IPC against the Republic of Cyprus advice not to. On a basic level, this exposes the fact that the stakes of nationalist governmental rhetoric have been eroding, alongside the mythic discourse of 'enslaved lands', across a range of political positions. By appealing to the IPC, one rejects the argument that recognition of authorities in the north constitutes a direct threat to the sovereignty of the Republic (as one assumedly does so in the expectation that the Republic of which they are citizens will continue to exist after their application). Beyond this, however, what might again be seen as a point of convergence between these viewpoints is the way in which claims to justice are appealed to as a remedy for individual losses.

### **Conclusion: The Privatization of Loss**

Erdal Ilıcan (2011) argued that the 'litigation-ization' of the property issue in Cyprus testifies to neoliberalism's insertion into the political. This is also true of the treatment of loss more widely. Although individual meanings to 'loss' have been produced since the time of displacement, and indeed encouraged by state discourses of collective loss, in recent years the privatization of these losses has been posed in contradistinction to 'the community' of refugeehood proposed by hegemonic rhetoric. In all the accounts I collected, the referendum of 2004 was mentioned, chiefly as an indication of what 'return' might actually look like. Litigants also rationalized settlements or suits on the basis of the event of the referendum. But this is the point at which the neoliberal approach also fails: as the management of one's property affairs enters the sphere of the private, the non-resolution of the political conflict becomes the barrier to this individual management. Properties, whether recognized as returnable in law or not, are in practice not returned. In fact, IPC offers for compensation are often rejected.

But in the process of reconfiguring loss, a critical reflection on community develops, the disjunctures between personal losses and the rhetoric of collective loss begin to appear. An affective relation to these private losses is nurtured according to hegemonic rhetoric, but in the process the failures of consensus on what the political condition of being

a refugee subject is are realized. Jacques Rancière (2010) has proposed a focus on 'dissensus' at such points when consensus is fractured. According to Rancière, the issue at stake is the potential of this dissensus to question the democratic-neoliberal edifice, when new collectivities emerge out of it. In the case of Cyprus, refugeehood may have begun functioning as the affective field that exposes the hiatus between the rhetorically projected consensus of slogans like 'we are all refugees' and the dissensus of those who feel they have lost more, or at least differently, than others. Thus far, such dissensus has most obviously been leading to the IPC and the pursuit of compensation, but this does not mean that more reconciliatory forms of reparation (say using property as a platform of intervention in neoliberal policies of appropriation) may not be pursued. Whether refugeehood in Cyprus will be one such example of reconstitution of alternative communities (cross-communal claimants' groups, perhaps?) remains to be seen. Furthering the research on the diversity of the experience of loss might in the meantime help us to better explore the field where such alternative communities might arise. This might include research not only amongst the Greek Cypriot community, but also with respect to the Turkish Cypriot community as well, and perhaps also beyond the communities in Cyprus (for example through asking what non-citizens might have lost in the conflict) and beyond Cyprus (for example by looking at the spectrum of experience of loss within diaspora groups and individuals who may not be organized within diaspora communities). The insertion of the economic crisis since March 2013 into this field puts a further spin on all these questions.

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# Chapter 3

## Rethinking Greek-Turkish Relations: Conversations with My Greek and Turkish University Students

Hercules Millas

### Introduction

The social categories of 'Greeks' and 'Turks' when mentioned together usually call to mind an inter-ethnic relationship, a conflict, a problem, a controversy or at least an issue. This issue is often seen as twofold: for Greeks and Turks it has to do with the 'other'; for third parties (if they do not take sides) it concerns both. In other words, when third parties set out to investigate Greek-Turkish relations, the object of study is 'out there', not part of 'themselves'. When Greeks and Turks undertake the study of Greek-Turkish relations, they seem to be faced with a paradox: they study the 'other' through the lens of their national prejudices that limit their impartiality. As a result, they tend to underestimate the centrality of national identity and the power of stereotypes in their understanding and interpretation of Greek-Turkish relations. This is a vicious circle: our national identity shapes our perceptions; our biased perceptions limit comprehension and reproduce our national identity.

When I discussed Greek-Turkish relations with my students at Ankara University and later at Athens University *my* issue was how to address national prejudices and stereotypes. Academic lectures, when persuasive, were still not conclusive in transcending internalized prejudices. Many issues that were related to bilateral history and politics were analysed in class but not in a way that would overcome the negative image of the 'other'. These negative images remained largely unchallenged and came to the fore unexpectedly: in discussions with my students the past was perceived as 'we' vs the 'other'; where 'we' was placed morally and ethically at a higher level in an internalized hierarchy; the 'other' was seen as the sole or at least the main cause of all ills; the past was viewed selectively and whatever was not in tune with 'our' beliefs was silenced. Worst of all, it appeared that these shortcomings were not at a conscious level, they were went unnoticed by their bearers and, in fact, they were not even suspected. In short, it became clear to me through



these conversations as well as through other similar past encounters that the biggest obstacle my students and I faced was our inability to rethink and ultimately transcend national paradigms. It took some time to find a way to cope with this issue.

Stereotypes and prejudices obscure sound judgement, influence all conciliatory efforts and impede solutions. The parties involved often cannot or do not want to face some real situation. Hence, they develop defense mechanisms, such as selective memory, silencing of events, lack of empathy, excessive aggressiveness and inflexibility. In my discussions with my students, my concern was not so much to pin down the problems *between* Greeks and Turks but rather to illustrate that the problems existed *within* themselves, making my students aware of the obstacles that potentially hindered calm, unbiased and sound judgement. Once this was understood, some main problems appeared to be misunderstandings, phobias, prejudices or exaggerated reactions due to these inner drives. The Greek-Turkish controversies are between human beings who are heavily influenced by historical and psychological conditions.

In this chapter, I present how I discussed Greek-Turkish relations in class with my Turkish and Greek University students. I did not follow an identical process in all cases, but the fundamentals were similar. Here, I focus on the approach I followed at Bilgi University (Istanbul, Spring 2010). I show how I used texts from history school books, historiography and literature to approach bilateral relations. My aim was to illustrate how our (national) environment shapes our perceptions and that unless we are aware of this mechanism we cannot address our bias and stereotypes. By environment, I mean the family, the school and the public sphere, which may influence individual perceptions in different ways. As I seek to demonstrate, prejudices, judgements and national identity operate as one whole. Memories that are passed on to the next generations, historiography, politics and the related evaluations, education and the related exclusions are discussed in this chapter; in short, this chapter is about national identities. I argue that unless the mechanisms of nationalism are understood it is highly unlikely that national stereotypes will be transcended.

To my mind, the purpose of this exercise in which I engaged with my students may be summarized as developing 'self-knowledge'. In my classes, the end result was very encouraging. The students came to understand why there were exaggerations, contradictions and silencing in almost all national narrations. They acknowledged that there were two 'truths', one for each nation, but that both could be equally wrong. They developed a sense of doubt vis-à-vis national explanations and empathy for the hitherto misinterpreted 'other'.

## The Role of Education: History School Books

We normally shape our first perceptions of the social world under the influence of our first immediate environment that is our parents and our home. I suggested to my university students that it would be helpful to find out what kind of education their parents had had. This would point to the influences of their home environment. The content of the education of the parents' generation provides a window not only to the kind of environment Greeks and Turks were exposed to in their youth at school, but also to the kind of home environment the student generation encountered. In this context, the examination of school books provides a useful point of entry in investigating a) what the parents and older generations who produced these school books were taught to believe with respect to the 'other' in a particular historical period, and b) what the educational system wanted to achieve, that is, what the state that produced these school books wanted future generations to believe vis-à-vis the 'other' (among other things).

Therefore, studying Greek and Turkish school books used prior to 1990<sup>1</sup> with respect to the way they evaluated bilateral relations showed to my Greek and Turkish university students the direction their parents were oriented to when they were in primary school and subsequently the kind of the environment in which they themselves first started to think about Greek-Turkish relations.

The investigation of history school books provide ample evidence that Greeks and Turks have been *educated* to become antagonists and opponents (see Papadakis in Chapter 6, for similar findings with regards to Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot history school books). For instance, a comparative examination of history school books in primary schools in Greece and Turkey, which I conducted in 1991, is revealing. These school books represent 'us' as the ancient and superior nation while they implicitly position the 'other' as the historical enemy with negative characteristics. According to a Greek sixth-grade history textbook:<sup>2</sup>

After the wars against the Persians ... a new Greek civilization was created which the whole world still admires ... This civilization was later transmitted and spread to deepest Asia by Alexander the Great. When the Greeks became Roman subjects, this civilization was carried to Europe and formed the basis of present-day civilization. [During the Byzantine era the Greeks] fought against the barbarian nations to save civilization and Christianity. When Sultan Mehmet II brought this long and glorious historic period to a close, Greek intellectuals escaped to the

<sup>1</sup> My assumption was that the parents' generation attended primary school in the 1970s and 1980s.

<sup>2</sup> All English translations from Greek and Turkish are my own.

West and took with them the torch of Greek civilization, helping to kindle the Renaissance in Europe ... The Greeks were enslaved by the Turks for almost 400 years ... With its trust in God and its patriotic devotion, the eternal Greek race was reborn (Diamantopoulos and Kiriazopoulos 1985, 186–7).<sup>3</sup>

The Turkish history books for 1st-grade junior high school and 5th-grade primary school are a mirror image of Greek history books:

Archaeological excavations and research in Central Asia have shown that the oldest civilization in our world was the creation of the Turks ... Turks from Central Asia migrated to various parts of the world and helped the natives who still lived in the Palaeolithic Age to move on into the Neolithic Age. They learned from the Turks how to cultivate the land and how to work with metals. In these new countries, the Turks made further advances, building big cities and founding strong states. Important centres of civilization were thus created in Mesopotamia, Anatolia, Syria and around the Aegean Sea (Akşit 1986, 25).

The first human beings lived in Asia; the great religions were born in Asia ... Asians were the first to invent gunpowder, the magnetic compass, paper, porcelain, silk, glass, the calendar and writing. The oldest and greatest civilizations, as well as the first great states, were founded in Asia. The hardest working and the most high-minded nations are in Asia (Sanır et al. 1986b, 192).

The excerpts above focus on representing ‘us’ in a favourable light. In order to enhance ‘our’ nation the ‘other’ is discredited since superiority is relational. The Greek and Turkish children read the following about the neighbouring nation, its history and their relationships:

Emperor Constantine ... made preparations for the defence of Constantinople even though he knew, as in the past Leonidas in Thermopylae was also aware, that the barbarians would eventually win ... Sultan Mehmet II ... arouse the Turkish soldiers’ fanaticism by promising them wealth in this life and happiness in the Afterlife. Those who died in their efforts to conquer the city (of Istanbul) would meet the Prophet (Muhammed) and rich offerings of food in Heaven ... Terror and horror followed the capture of the city: massacre, plunder, enslavement, vandalism and other barbarisms. Those who sought sanctuary in the church of Saint Sophia fell victims to the fury of the janissaries (Bouyioukas 1983, 152–7).

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<sup>3</sup> For a detailed analysis of these textbooks, see Millas (1991), 22–33.

In 1200 BC barbaric tribes ... invaded the region, which is called Greece today. In doing so they devastated the region and pitilessly killed the aboriginals. The Romans called these unknown tribes 'Greeks' (Sanır et al. 1986a, 191).

[These Greeks were subsequently] intermixed with other tribes which came from Anatolia, thus forming a cross-breed. Then, they were mixed with the Macedonians, the Romans, the Slavs and the Albanians. Therefore, the Greeks of today have nothing in common with the ancient Greeks save a common language and some customs (Sanır et al. 1986b, 151).

[In 1821] most of the Turks who lived in the Peloponnese and on the islands, were killed by the Greeks, forty-five to fifty thousand died ... The Greeks showed by their actions that they are capable of killing without mercy even babes in their cradles (Sanır et al. 1986b, 64).

Greece attacked the Ottoman Empire (1912–13) when the empire was at its weakest. During this war the aggressors acted with cruelty. They killed the Turks without pity ... Until the Greeks appreciate our friendly offers we should be very wary and cautious with this neighbour. Turkish boys and girls must realize this (Sanır et al. 1986b, 152).

[During the Turkish War of Liberation] the Greek army killed civilians without hesitation, women and children included, and set fire to villages and towns (Sanır et al 1986b, 99).

It is worth noting that 'our' deeds that may be characterized as negative are completely silenced in these school books. Moreover, the expansionist wars of the Greeks and Turks are represented in both cases as missions to civilize the world. The similarity between Greek and Turkish school books is astonishing:

Alexander the Great was not only a great conqueror ... but also a man who civilized [the East] ... He respected the religion, the traditions and customs of [the conquered] (Kamaterou-Glitsi 1986, 168).

Sultan Mehmet II is the best example of the greatness and the humane approach of the Turkish nation. He allowed the inhabitants [of Constantinople] to live as before and respected their religion, tradition and customs (Sanır et al. 1986b, 19).

These textbooks are not in use nowadays. There has been a worldwide campaign by the UNESCO and other organizations to amend and improve

school books in the Balkans and elsewhere and many negative attributes to the 'other' were gradually eliminated. Nevertheless, there is still much to be done to address the use of stereotypes in education and there are often skirmishes about this issue in both countries.

Through the presentation of these excerpts, I sought to demonstrate that history teaching is not a bias-free academic endeavour in public education. Rather, I argue that the intention of both nation-states was to produce a generation that had negative feelings for the 'other'. Moreover, that the ruling élites of both countries have gone through this education should be taken into consideration when researchers try to understand and interpret their actions.

### Entangled in National Identities

The textbooks of both countries show how nation-states strive to create a national consciousness by glorifying what is considered 'ours' and discrediting what is considered 'theirs'. Manichean approaches, silencing whatever is not favourable for 'us' and constructing myths that are flattering to 'us', has been the rule. However, education is not limited to schooling. As the nation-state sets out to construct its national identity this endeavor is carried out in many other fields: in the public sphere, the construction of monuments and statues, parades on national celebrations, museums, public speeches, flags, literary canons and even religion are used for this purpose (Billig 2006). Once national identity is consolidated it gains a new momentum. It is now the turn of the educated élites; that is of artists, writers, film producers and singers, among others, to reproduce the national identity.

This identity, however, operates at an unconscious level, too. Once the members of a nation, similar to the family at home, share the same values and ideas, they do not doubt the validity of their beliefs. 'How then can we trust ourselves that we judge Greek-Turkish relations correctly and without bias?' This was my question that stirred my classes. My students, however, who had not objected until this last question, reacted when their capacity to judge was jeopardized. To prove my point I presented my analysis (Millas 2000a) of Volkan and Itzkowitz's (1994) book, *Turks and Greeks: Neighbours in Conflict*, to illustrate how difficult it is in the case of Volkan, an international expert, on conflict resolution and the construction of Turkish Cypriot identity to remain impartial when one is closely connected to one's national identity.

Volkan analyses different aspects of Greek-Turkish relations ostensibly impartially. However, he is betrayed by his national identity, or to be more precise, by prejudices that have their origin in his national identity. Even though he is a psychoanalyst he fails to notice that he is subjective and

biased in favour of the group he feels he belongs to. He blames the Greek side for being prejudiced against Turks and Turkey, but fails to mention that the Turkish side has corresponding feelings. He claims that Greeks are biased against Turks because of the former's traumas due to losses incurred by the Turks, for example captured lands and lost sovereignty. He does not, however, discuss in depth the Turkish losses, which are only mentioned in passing in the book in question, most notably the secession of Greeks in 1821, the loss of Crete in 1908 and 1913, the loss of Western Thrace in 1912 due to the Balkan Wars (Volkan and Itzkowitz 1994, 84, 98, 100) and, more recently, the blocking of Turkey's accession to the European Union (*ibid.*, 124). According to Volkan, Turks miraculously 'postponed mourning over losing an empire' (*ibid.*, 117). Hence, the argument goes, Turks do not have traumas!

In Volkan and Itzkowitz, events judged as 'against us' have been systematically erased. The traumas of the Greeks do not appear at all, or they are interpreted without empathy. Violence in recent history, such as forced migrations, religious conversions of people, the destruction of sanctuaries, massacres, executions of religious leaders, forced Islamization, the impoverishment of the Greeks of Istanbul in 1942 by a discriminatory wealth tax and their enlistment en masse, their expulsion from Istanbul in 1964, is all swept under the carpet. The reader is told, for example, that when the Turkish army liberated İzmir in 1922, 'some jumped into the water' (*ibid.*, 106). However, the reader is never told if those who jumped were good swimmers and if they ever managed to reach a safe shore and what happened to those who did not jump.

The emotional load of the words used to explain similar events differ according to the identity of the doer. Turks 'conquer' (*ibid.*, 64), while Greeks 'invade' (*ibid.*, 102); Greeks purify their language to 'reject' Turkish words (*ibid.*, 88), Turks simply 'initiate language reforms' (*ibid.*, 114). Greece grew 'against' Turkish territories (*ibid.*, 77), Turks simply expand 'against Anatolia' (*ibid.*, 28); identity discussions among Greeks show their 'confusion' (*ibid.*, 87), Turkey's recent 'identity crisis' is interpreted as a process of 'searching [for] a newer identity' (*ibid.*, 186, 188). Crete is 'absorbed' by Greece (*ibid.*, 203), Turkey 'conquers' or triumphs in Cyprus in the 16th century and 'intervenes' in 1974 (*ibid.*, 131); Turks were 'humiliated' by the 'other' in Cyprus (*ibid.*, 142), but Greeks 'thought' that they were insulted by the 'other' (*ibid.*, 204). The word 'self-determination' is used only once, as a right of the Turks (*ibid.*, 101). When innocent people are killed, they are 'massacred' if the victims are 'ours' (*ibid.*, 78) but they 'lose their lives' if they belong to the 'other' (*ibid.*, 67).

These examples can be extended *ad infinitum*. It is clear, however, that selective memory, wishful thinking, stereotypes and prejudices which shape national identity are obstacles that prevent researchers from facing some facts. This is the case with some (and probably many) academics who

are even specialists in conflict resolution. This kind of discourse of some academics when viewed in conjunction with the educational endeavor of the nation-states, once deconstructed and presented in a systematic way, could not but cast some doubts in the mind of my students. In fact, the awareness of this discourse had therapeutic consequences for my students, as it is normally the case with cognitive psychology! All of my students at this stage looked ready to listen to an alternative to the commonplace.

### The Role of History and Historiography

As I have shown earlier in this chapter, history is the main 'tool' of nationalism. According to the nationalist paradigm the discourse related to the 'nation' is founded and legitimized in a historical framework: the nation is *old*, the existence of our heroes go back to times *immemorial*, for *centuries* we strived for our sacred land, our civilization is *ancient*, we proved our national merits and dedication *long ago*. This discourse is backed by a history writing that commenced and was supported by the nation-states, not only in Greece and Turkey but worldwide. The excerpts from Greek and Turkish school books I presented and discussed were examples of what is meant by 'official historiography'.

The 'other' is part of this historiography, too. A glance at Greek and Turkish history writing and the way the 'other' is presented will show that the textbooks are not a coincidence, an isolated case. They are simplified versions of what is generally encountered in mainstream academic historiography. In my classes, we discussed how 'history' turned to 'historiography' in Greece and Turkey. As in the case of school books, historiography, especially at the dawn of the nation-states, was supported by the state through state-sponsored institutions, universities, scholarship, research and publications. In the meantime alternative views of dissidents were discouraged.

What especially triggered the interest of my students was the history of historiography in Greece and Turkey. They were surprised to discover that history writing was not an enterprise of documenting events that happened in the past, but that historians selected which events to present in order to narrate the story of the nation. In fact, the national narrative seemed to have been decided almost in advance and the documentation and interpretation of selected events seemed to follow. In addition, they were surprised to discover that there was more than one history: there were a number of histories, sometimes complementary and other times conflicting (Millas 2008).

For modern Greeks the question of national identity, that is, 'what are we as a nation?', appeared at the end of the 18th century, after the French Revolution and prior to the Greek Revolution of 1821. At the time, some



Greeks called themselves Ρωμιοί (Romioi/Romans) and they seemed content to live under Ottoman rule; whereas others either wanted to transform the Ottoman State into a French-type republic (for example, Rigas Velestinlis), or were in favour of an altogether independent state and called themselves Έλληνες or Γραικοί (Hellenes or Greeks) (for example, Adamantios Korais). When the new Greek nation-state was established, the official ideology propagated the idea that modern Greeks were the descendants of ancient Greeks. A major change in historiography occurred with Konstantinos Paparigopoulos who discovered, or rather invented together with Spyridon Zambelios, the 'Greekness' of Byzantium and proposed the new dominant Helleno-Christian national narrative (Millas 2008).

The official national narrative conceptualized the Greek nation from antiquity to our days, incorporating both classical Greek civilization and Christian Byzantium in one uninterrupted, unproblematic continuum. Within this seamless narrative, there was a break of 400 years, also referred to as the yoke of Τουρκοκρατία or Turkish bondage, which ended in 1830. The 'other' thus was inserted in the national grand narrative as the historical enemy and was portrayed as responsible for the 400 years of Turkish bondage as well as for the loss of the Byzantine Empire (Millas 2007).

Official Turkish historiography underwent similar processes of national identity construction. In the beginning of the 20th century, the Ottoman state initiated a series of national projects in order to secure the loyalty of its subjects and save the empire, which was facing serious threats of secessions. Ottomanism, that is the ideology that sought to unite all the subjects of the empire under a common identity, was adopted, but later abandoned for Islamism, which sought to unite the Muslims only. Subsequently, the Young Turks and later, under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal, the Turkish Republic promoted Turkishness as national ideology. In the 1930s, the newly founded Turkish Republic advanced the Turkish Historical Thesis according to which the Turks were the oldest and most civilized nation on earth.

Indeed, the Greek and Turkish school books discussed earlier in this chapter reproduced these national narrations educating generations of Greeks and Turks. Although there have been alternative approaches to history, such as Marxist class analysis, these perspectives have remained marginal. The main body of historiography continues to reproduce discourses established in the dawn of the nation-states.<sup>4</sup> These national historical narratives were envisaged as serving to strengthen national identity. In this context, the all-negative 'other' was considered as

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<sup>4</sup> For an alternative historical interpretation of Greek and Turkish historiography see Millas (2008, 2002); for an up-to-date discussion of a historical and representational shift in Greek and Turkish historiography see also Chapter 10 by Tsitselikis.



indispensable. For Greeks the negative Turk and for Turks the negative Greek were represented as a threat to the unity of the nation.

The role of this 'negative other' can be best seen in the Greek and Turkish novels, which I will turn to in the section below. The investigation of Greek and Turkish historiography, however, sufficed to surprise my students and to help them reach some conclusions. First, they came to accept that history was not a source of knowledge but a narrative open to different interpretations. Greek and Turkish historians did not only emphasize different interpretations but even conflicting ones. Moreover, historians of each ethnicity focused on different aspects at different times. History as a discipline in our class lost much of its credibility since my students expressed doubt vis-à-vis 'our' national history. In other words, the students felt freer to think for themselves since there was no authority to dictate the truth about the past: history had now become relative and this relativity was associated to national identity.

### Novels as Witnesses of Identities

The world of novels displays a novelty: it is rich as life itself; it includes not only the official discourse of the state but all aspects of social reality. It shows how the past and present are being perceived by various sections of society. Most importantly, once these literary texts are analysed they bring to the fore the unconscious part of the writers and communal ill feelings vis-à-vis the 'other' that are normally not readily accepted.

The first Greek novel was published in 1834, five years after the establishment of the independent Greek state. The first Turkish novel appeared in 1872, three decades before the dawn of the Young Turks movement and 50 years before the establishment of the Turkish nation-state.<sup>5</sup> One consequence of these different dates of publication becomes apparent in the way the 'other' is portrayed in these literary texts. In the earliest Greek novels, the Turks were represented as a nation with shared negative characteristics, as the historical enemy and as a source of threat.<sup>6</sup> In the first Turcophone novels, however, Greeks did not appear as

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<sup>5</sup> The first Greek and Turkish novels respectively are conventionally considered to be *Λέανδρος* (Leandros) by P. Soutsos and *Taaşuk-ı Tal'at ve Fitnat* (The Love of Talât and Fitnat) by Şemsettin Sami; for a detailed discussion, see Millas (2000, 2001), which includes the analysis of about 500 novels written by about 150 Greek and Turkish writers.

<sup>6</sup> As Millas (1994) has illustrated, only 40 years earlier, the image of the Turk in grecophone literature was not negatively portrayed. This can be readily noticed in the politically oriented poems and other writings of Rigas Velestinlis and other Greek intellectuals. After 1834 literary authors, such as I. Pitsipios, Gr. Palaiologos,

the 'other'. Before national identity became a major concern in Ottoman society, Turcophone novels did not make an issue of Greeks. Whenever Greeks were portrayed, they were not identified as members of a nation but as individuals or as citizens of the Ottoman state. Sometimes, they were portrayed as having positive or neutral ethnic characteristics, but they were definitely not portrayed with negative stereotypes.

On the Turkish side, the close link between the negative image of the 'other' and nationalism becomes apparent in the next generation of authors and the Turkish nationalist novels. The first writers to portray a negative 'Greek' were Ömer Seyfettin, Halide Edip and Yakup Kadri, who started publishing their works in the second decade of the 20th century. From then on, nationalism existed not only as ideology and as political movement but also as rhetoric that ran through all kinds of texts: school books, historiography, newspapers and fiction, which is of interest to us here. This nationalist discourse sought to legitimize all military and/or political actions against the 'other', who was portrayed stereotypically as the enemy, as a source of various political problems (for example a threat to 'our' freedom), as very different from 'us' and as a negative character (for example dishonest, violent and so on).

It is the world of literary texts that illustrate in the clearest way some intricate manifestations of nationalist perceptions. The negative image of the 'other' is a complex phenomenon: sometimes it contains contradictions, while other times the negative image is concealed or lies at an subconscious level in our minds or, surprisingly, it may be expressed as a positive disposition. For example, the 'other' may be perceived by the same person in the same historical period as positive when he/she is real and concrete, or as negative when he/she is imagined and abstract. The comparison of the novels and the memoirs of three well-known Turkish writers who belong to the literary group known as 'national literature' (*milli edebiyat*), Ömer Seyfettin, Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu and Halide Edip Adivar, is revealing. When all the references to 'Greeks' are grouped together the following pattern emerges:

Table 3.1 includes all references to Greeks in texts of fiction (novels and short stories) and memoirs (Millas 1996, 79–87). The following discrepancy becomes apparent: in texts written in the same year and narrating similar incidents, the 'other' is negatively portrayed (as 'cruel', 'savage' and so on) or positively depicted (as 'honest', 'considerate' and so on) depending on the genre. The 'other' has negative attributes if one is a fictitious figure, that is, a character in a novel, and positive ones if one is 'known to us', as are the characters in memoirs.

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St. Ksenos, D. Vikelas and A. Papadiamantis portray a negative image of Turks who are represented in confrontation with 'us'. This representation persists throughout the 20th century.

Table 3.1 Positive and negative attributes to Greeks in novels and memoirs

	Novels & Short Stories					
	Persons				Incidents	
	Women		Men			
	Pos.	Neg.	Pos.	Neg.	Pos.	Neg.
Ömer Seyfettin	0	9	0	7	0	12
Halide Edip Adivar	0	18	1	8	0	46
Yakup Kadri		9	2	18	0	47
Karaosmanoğlu						
SUM	0	36	3	33	0	105
Memoirs						
Ömer Seyfettin	0	0	3	0	4	3
Halide Edip Adivar	2	0	8	3	17	8
Yakup Kadri	1	0	3	0	0	30
Karaosmanoğlu						
SUM	3	0	14	3	21	41

A closer reading of the texts reveals that in the texts of fiction there is only one single woman positively depicted while 36 are negatively portrayed. Whereas in the memoirs none of the women share negative attributes; rather, three have positive attributes. The ratio of positive/negative attributes for men is 3:33 (more than 90 per cent) 'bad' Greeks in fiction and 14:3 (more than 80 per cent) 'good' Greeks in the memoirs.<sup>7</sup>

In other words, these authors during their lives – in real life – met Greeks who were 'nice' but they wrote almost solely about 'bad' Greeks. The bad ones were actually creations, imagined characters and abstractions. A similar tendency can be seen in Greek literature, too. The Greek writers, who lived in Anatolia, met real Turks and wrote about their personal sufferings due to the Greek-Turkish wars and fighting. They presented the Turkish characters in a more 'balanced' manner in their novels than the Greek writers who lived in Greece and had never met Turks. In the second case, the Turks were always negatively depicted (Demirözü 1999).

One can infer that the national paradigm dictates this Manichean dichotomy. Nationalist ideology is premised on an understanding of nations as homogeneous. Nationalists do not seem to be interested in exceptions that might undermine this basic premise. Their reality encompasses all

<sup>7</sup> Note that many other interesting findings come to light when studying these texts, for example the construction of an East/West or Christian/Muslim binary, the rationalization of nationalist ideologies and so on. These topics are, however, beyond the scope of this chapter.

of 'us' (as positive) and all 'others' (as negative). As nationalist writers recreate in print their ethnocentric world, they present reality according to their ideological stereotypes and not in accordance to the few incidents in life, which may contradict their worldviews. So even though they may have met only 'good' Greeks during their lifetime, nationalist ideology dictates that they should portray only negative personalities – not as they may appear but as they really are.

Memoirs according to nationalist writers do not represent the ultimate or the basic truth but only some particulars. A nationalist author feels comfortable when he or she reminisces about the 'nice' neighbours since we all know these do exist. However, in a text of fiction he or she does not want to record particulars but basically the ultimate reality, the symbolic expression of the 'essence' that exists beyond appearances. Nationalist writers, therefore, reproduce predetermined national stereotypes, as these have been constructed through education and in nationalist discourse.

The belief that literary texts represent the essence (the universals) beyond facts (the singulars) is at least as old as Aristotle. In his *Poetics* he wrote that (read fiction for 'poet' and memoirs for 'historian'):

it will be seen that the poet's function is to describe, not the things that happened, but a kind of thing that might happen, i.e. what is possible as being probable or necessary. The distinction between historian and poet is not in the one writing prose and the other verse ... it consists really in this, that the one describes the thing that has been, and the other a kind of thing that might be. Hence, poetry is something more philosophic and of graver import than history, since its statements are of the nature rather of universals, whereas those of history are singulars (Roberts and Bywater 1954, 234/1451).

Hence, authors of novels in their depiction of the 'other' seem to voice the universals, as they understand them, irrespective of singulars.

Literary texts helped my Turkish and Greek students become aware of two more constructions of nationalism. Nationalist writers cannot transcend the Manichean dichotomy even when they try to; at best they create, what I have called, characters who are 'naively positive others'. During periods of improved bilateral relations political contingencies necessitate a more balanced discourse vis-à-vis the 'other'. As a result, the traditional discourse is shifted and the negative image of the 'other' is ostensibly improved. However, a closer inspection reveals that this positive 'other' is a character who is, in fact, completely assimilated and has become one of 'us'. This 'other' has actually lost his ethnic and religious identity: he thinks, feels and behaves like 'us'. The character is 'naively positive' because naïveté characterizes the concept of a 'positive other', who actually does not exist.

An example of a naively positive Turkish hero in Greek literature is *Moskof Selim* in the 1895 novella, which bears the same name, written by Georgios Viziinos. Selim is presented as a 'mature and balanced' person who declares that the Turks should leave Anatolia to the Greeks and go back to the East, to Asia, from where they once came. Naively positive Greeks appear very often in Turkish novels, too, for example, in the works of Kemal Tahir, Halikarnas Balıkcısı and many others. These Greek heroes are happy to welcome the Turkish conquerors. They are depicted fighting against the Christians on the side of the Turks, accepting the superiority and magnanimity of the Turks. The best among them are willingly converted. In other words, in nationalist texts, the 'other' is not represented in a positive light as long as he remains the 'other'.

The comparative studies of literary texts and the role of women are also illuminating. My study of about 500 Turkish and Greek novels revealed about 200 love affairs between Greeks and Turks. The way these relationships were represented in the novels revealed that the identity of the authors (and naturally of the citizens of nation-states) is beyond their conscious choices: in all cases the men belong to 'our' ethnic group and the women to the 'other'. In fact, the women of the 'other', especially in Greek literature, are represented as a 'naively positive other'. This one-dimensional representation, which does not reflect actual life, is probable because historically (and by history I mean 'political history marked by wars') the 'capturing' of the woman of the 'other' is associated with a victory of 'ours' in the battlefield (Millas 1999, 46–64).

Women play a special role in nationalistic discourse. They do not directly participate in the inter-ethnic fighting and are, therefore, perceived as being able to indicate the righteous side. Their preference counts. They normally fall in love with 'us' and prefer 'our men'. Therefore, the role assigned to women in nationalistic rhetoric is directly associated with national identity.

Probably the greater service of literature in the field of images and nationalism is the opportunity that it renders: it brings to the fore aspects of national identity and it offers the opportunity to study conduct that is usually silenced. In class, we analysed the nationalist paradigm with all its manifestations: stereotypes, prejudices, lack of empathy, double standards, high esteem for the 'self' and low esteem for the 'other'. My students became, at least, more skeptical vis-à-vis the perceived truths about the 'other' that they been taught until then. They acquired the competence to decipher the negative messages of nationalist discourse. All these capabilities meant a change in their worldviews.

This change was expressed in various ways. The questions put in class showed their willingness to go beyond the surface and explore what was hidden behind the one-sided curriculum. Many expressed themselves saying that 'for the first time they started thinking that there is another

story to be told by the “other” side’, others came back to share discussions they ‘started at home with their parents’. It is of importance that there were no reactions and/or objections to what we discussed in class; and this is probably because I did not seek to preach my students but show them nationalist texts, which could not hide their bias.

There are, however, authors who did not follow the national paradigm and these were also presented to my students. Their existence is a clear indication that there is a choice and that nationalist approaches are not the only way. Their texts reveal more humanitarian and inclusive approaches to Greek-Turkish relations. In my study, I located different schools of thought, both in Turkish and Greek literature, that distanced themselves from nationalist paradigms. The Ottomanist approach was already mentioned. In addition, starting from the beginning of the 20th century, Marxist writers produced narratives based on class analysis. Humanitarian and religiously orientated writers proposed their own versions of Greek-Turkish relations. The production of such texts seems to be on the rise (Millas 2006a, 2006b). This chapter, however, has been limited mostly to the social forces that impede rapprochement and transcending nationalism; that is, to the forces that are in tune with the official educational system and dominant historical interpretations.

## Conclusion

In this chapter I presented the approach I usually followed to explore Greek-Turkish relations with my students in Greece and in Turkey. My approach sought to alert them to the following questions: in what kind of country (nation-state) did their parents and they themselves live and still do live? What does the education system try to accomplish? What kind of messages does their environment propagate vis-à-vis the ‘other’ (at home, in the streets, in the museums)? How is historiography being formed and what does it ‘teach’ in each country? Why do different nations interpret things so differently and what is the power of national identity? Why are experts in conflict resolution in conflict with the ‘other’? And, ultimately, how are all these and many other stereotypes of ‘ours’, which we do not dare to face and confess, manifested in literature? The purpose of this exercise in which I engaged with my students may be summarized as developing self-knowledge. In my classes, the end result was very encouraging. The students came to understand why there were exaggerations, contradictions and silencing in almost all national narrations. They acknowledged that there were two ‘truths’, one for each nation, but that both could be equally wrong. They developed a sense of doubt vis-à-vis national explanations and empathy for the hitherto misinterpreted ‘other’.

To conclude, it is my contention that the Greek-Turkish controversy is fundamentally an issue of national identity. Built and inspired by state education in relatively recent times, it is reproduced daily in many ways by society itself. Nationalism is very difficult to be seen by its bearers, and therefore a special effort, something like a cognitive therapy, is needed to bring the whole exercise into consciousness and cope with its harmful consequences. Acquiring self-knowledge seems to have been in great shortage in our understanding of the Greek-Turkish controversy, but it also one of the most promising directions for the development of Greek-Turkish relations.

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## Chapter 4

# Greeks and Turks Meet the *Rum*: Making Sense of the Sounds of ‘Old Istanbul’\*

Panagiotis C. Poulos

### Introduction

Towards the end of the 1980s the musical ensemble Bosphorus, the outcome of a Greek-Turkish initiative,<sup>1</sup> offered a fresh challenge to the artistic and cultural relations of Greece and Turkey. Through its concerts and recordings, Bosphorus introduced the Ottoman musical tradition and the unknown and largely neglected world of the composers of the Greek Orthodox community (*Rum*)<sup>2</sup> of Ottoman Istanbul to Greek audiences. While for Greeks this was an occasion for discovering and, to a certain extent, appropriating their Ottoman musical past, for the Turkish musicians,

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<sup>1</sup> It is not in the main aims of this chapter to offer a detailed account of the music life and history of the Bosphorus ensemble per se. Such an account exists in the prolific study by Eleni Kallimopoulou (2009, 115–23) who examines in detail both the background of the formation of *Bosphorus* and situates the ensemble in the context of the Greek musical revival known as *Παραδοσιακά* (Traditional).

<sup>2</sup> For an articulate overview of the term *Rum*, with particular reference the Greek Orthodox community of Istanbul during the Ottoman Empire and after the establishment of the Turkish Republic, see Örs (2006), 24–31. For a general history of the Greek minority of Istanbul since the establishment of the Turkish Republic, see Alexandris (1992). Although there are certain historical and political factors that differentiate the community of Istanbul from the rest of the Greek Orthodox communities of the Ottoman Empire, in this chapter the term *Rum* will be used, without any further designation (for example Constantinopolitan Rum, Istanbul Rum and so on), to refer to the Greek community of Istanbul. This choice reflects the way in which the term ‘Ρωμιός’ (*Rum*) came also into use by Greek musicians, since the introduction of Ottoman music in Greece in the 1980s who use it collectively to refer to the repertoire of Greek composers of Istanbul (for example We play ‘Romious’).

it was a chance to revisit the Ottoman past through a novel perspective. This novel perspective should be understood within the broader academic and artistic interest in the Ottoman cultural heritage in Turkey that coincided with the launching of the Bosphorus ensemble and had as a particular focus the cultural pluralism of 'Old Istanbul'.<sup>3</sup> On the one hand, the Ottoman, non-Muslim musical heritage served as a source for this creative artistic encounter, and, on the other hand, it mediated a number of overlapping and contrasting readings of Ottoman cultural history.

This chapter attempts to make sense of the multiple readings of the history of the shared musical world of Ottoman Istanbul that were foregrounded, circulated and consumed between Greece and Turkey in the context of the abovementioned musical encounter. Central to this inquiry is (the study of) the construction of the distinct musical category of the '*Rum* Composers of Istanbul' that was a central feature of this encounter. It will be shown that the story of the process of construction of this distinct category coincides with that of the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and the transition to the modern nation-state. This construct is rooted in the various modernizing processes, inspired largely by European modernity that facilitated this transition. Therefore, this chapter argues that the story of the '*Rum* Composers of Istanbul', that is the turning of a 'non-Muslim community' into an ethnically defined 'minority', reveals another common heritage of Turkey and Greece, namely their parallel routes towards modernity.<sup>4</sup>

As far as the shared Ottoman musical world is concerned, these routes towards modernity were largely identified with a silencing process. This analysis aims to underline that the sound of this world, and the subsequent need for silencing it, was already an issue for the modernizing literate *Rum* élite of Istanbul in the 19th century, and carried on being so for the equivalent Turkish élite that was responsible for the implementation of the modernizing programme of the Turkish Republic. In either case, the way towards musical modernity was passing through literacy, which in this context was equated to rationality and progress.<sup>5</sup> In the field of musical reforms in Turkey, this notion of literacy was strongly contrasted with a

<sup>3</sup> The term 'Old Istanbul' refers to the content of a public turn – with a significant commercial niche into it – towards aspects of Istanbul's past that emerged in Turkey in the 1980s and carries on until the present, see Göktürk et al. (2010), 10–11; Türel (2010), 303. Although the chronological limits of 'Old Istanbul' are not explicitly spelled out, a great amount of the output of this turn focuses of the late Ottoman period (19th–early 20th century).

<sup>4</sup> For recent comparative studies on modernization in Greece and Turkey, see Frangoudaki and Keyder 2007. For general critical studies on Turkish modernity, see Bozdoğan and Kasaba (1997), Navaro-Yashin (2002) and Çınar (2005).

<sup>5</sup> For the modernization processes in music following the establishment of the Turkish Republic, see Tekelioğlu (1996), O'Connell (2000).

number of Ottoman cultural institutions that were founded on the principles of 'orality/aurality' and the use of memory.<sup>6</sup> Consequently, the imposition of musical literacy, both on a technical level (musical transcriptions, compilation of repertoire and biographies, writing the canon of history and theory of Turkish music and so on) and on a broader political level that meant a top-down approach towards Ottoman musical history from a very positivist and modernizing perspective (that is, literate), was largely responsible for the silencing of this world.

The first part of this chapter is an account of the primary encounters between the Greek audience and Bosphorus through its first recording and concert in Greece, emphasizing the sense of surprise and wonder towards this supposedly, at least in historical terms, 'familiar' musical tradition. The second part follows the trajectory of the non-Muslim musicians of Istanbul in 20th-century Turkish music historiography and their transformation into musical 'minorities'. The third part looks at the ways the construct of 'Rum composers of Istanbul' has been circulated and consumed in both Greece and Turkey since the end of the 1980s. Finally, the last section attempts an alternative reading, or better 'listening' to texts by chroniclers documenting the musical life of late Ottoman Istanbul that have been recently revisited in Turkey through a number of publications. The aim of this alternative reading of a sample of this type of literature is to give a hint of how differently this world sounded and was 'listened to' at the beginning of the 20th century, and, most importantly, to point to the massive impact that modernity had on the sensory level. This analysis draws on the broad scholarship on sound, which is registered in the wider field of inquiry regarding the history and anthropology of the senses (Howes 2003; Stoller 1997).

### The Prince, the Cantor and the Tavern Musician

For a fresher delving into the world of Ottoman/Turkish<sup>7</sup> music in 1987 Greece, the sleeve notes of the first album of the music ensemble

<sup>6</sup> For a thorough overview of the oral/aural system of musical transmission *meşk* see Behar (2011), and for its transformation in the 20th century, see Poulos (2011).

<sup>7</sup> The term Ottoman/Turkish refers collectively to a specific urban musical genre of the Ottoman times and to its life and transformation in the Turkish Republic, where it was renamed into 'Turkish Classical Music' (*Türk Klasik Müziği*). In the pre-Republican context, Ottoman music refers the musical genre that developed mainly in the large urban centres of the Ottoman Empire, like Istanbul, İzmir and Edirne, under the patronage of the court, of certain mystical orders, like the Mevlevi, but also of individuals outside of the court environment (Feldman 1996, 15–19). Although this was mainly the music of Muslim literate élites it was not explicitly restricted to it, it also included musicians from diverse social groups of the cities, such as merchants and artisans (Behar 2010, 158–63). Within the context

Bosphoros, entitled Ρωμιοί Συνθέτες της Πόλης (*Rum Composers of Istanbul*),<sup>8</sup> must have seemed like a bizarre linguistic and cultural puzzle. Turkish musical terminology designating compositional forms was written in the Greek alphabet, for example, Χουσεϊνί Αγίρ Σεμαί (*Hüseyini Ağır Semai*). In contrast, the names of the musicians of the ensemble and of certain musical instruments that did not have a Greek equivalent, for instance the pair of kettle-drums called *kudüm*, were written in the modern Turkish alphabet. The visual mix from the interchange of alphabets was complicated further by various explanatory notes within the text, informing the reader, for example, that the term πεσρέφ (*pesrev*) means 'introduction' in Persian (Zannos 1987). This complexity on a language level that hid behind some 600 years of cultural coexistence and interaction within the Ottoman world was further emphasized by the short biographical notes of the composers who were the focal point of the album. Appearing in chronological order, the first one lived in the 17th century and was a prince, namely Πρίγκηψ Δημήτρης Καντεμύρης. The second one, Ζαχαρίας ο χανεντές (*Zacharias the singer*), was a trained church cantor and singer at the Ottoman palace in the 18th century. These were followed by Βασιλάκης, Νικολάκης and Αντώνης Κυριαζής, all roughly dating between the second half of the 19th century and the early 20th century. Unlike their predecessors these three did not possess any title and they were related to each other professionally, as performers at a restaurant in the Galata area in Istanbul. If anything, this rather strange genealogy of musicians labelled under the single title Ρωμιοί Συνθέτες της Πόλης (*Rum Composers of the Istanbul*) implied a world that was socially very diverse.

The complexity that the sleeve notes of the album conveyed was balanced by the smooth and coherent sound of the superb performances of the Bosphorus ensemble that introduced this, in many ways, novel and musically unknown experience to Greek audiences.<sup>9</sup> One year after Bosphorus' first album came out in the Greek market the ensemble made its

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of this 'openness', members of the non-Muslim communities participated in the creative processes of this music. In contrast to previously held views that described Ottoman music as 'court music' by analogy to the court musical traditions of Europe, recent scholars tend to define this genre in terms of 'urban music' (Behar 2010, 172, Aksoy 2008, 33).

<sup>8</sup> 'Πόλη' meaning 'city' in Greek is derived from the Greek name for Istanbul that is 'Κωνσταντινούπολη'. For an account of the term, see Örs (2006), 25.

<sup>9</sup> The innovative character that generally underlined the Bosphorus project was also reflected in its sound production. The stereo and texturing possibilities of the modern studio were fully explored in this album, stressing its difference from the bulk of Turkish productions in the same genre. Such is the case with the overall graphic design of the album that qualified it as an artefact capable of targeting a wider audience, beyond the Greek and Turkish audience, which demonstrated an

first public appearance in Greece, at the Pallas theatre in Athens. Therefore, the private auditory experience of the album was followed by the public one of the live concert. This opportunity was a unique chance for anyone who wanted to get a better sense of what a performance of this music would be like. The video of the performance that was broadcasted at that time on national television in Greece captured the warm and enthusiastic reception of the audience who burst into extended applause in between parts and at the end of the concert. In this innovative encounter, the Greek audience and the Turkish musicians were sharing once again a historically common musical and cultural past.

However, besides the musical compositions of the Istanbulite *Rums*, there seemed to be another dimension, possibly more enduring, that was bringing the two groups closer together. If the sound of the video is turned off, then one watches a group of musicians and its audience well accustomed to each other and at ease with their roles. The audience listens attentively throughout the concert while the musicians, concentrating on their music sheets, perform. At the end of the performance the audience stands up and claps whereas the musicians bow towards their audience. As it is captured on the video, the Greek audience and the Turkish musicians were indeed sharing a common cultural heritage: the auditory experience of a concert together with all the social conventions that regulate the verbal and body behaviour of both the musicians and their audience, embedded in this very European cultural institution (Johnson 1995).

This type of well-defined auditory experience was, together with a number of other cultural and political institutions, part and parcel of what it has meant for both countries to be modern. In other words, this common experience was reflecting in one way the parallel trajectories of the two countries towards modernity, or put differently towards an 'urgent' modernity. This feature of urgency stems from the pressure put on both countries by their immediacy to the source of modernity, that is Europe (Frangoudaki and Keyder 2007, 3). Ironically, it was this urgent modernity that was mainly responsible for making this common musical past obsolete and finally erasing it. This process of cultural alienation was to a large extent achieved through nationalism, which both countries employed in their modernizing attempts (*Ibid.*, 3). Consequently, nationalism played an instrumental role in making the musical world described in the sleeve notes of Bosphorus' first album seem so complex, and most importantly foreign. Therefore, it is within this narrative of modernity, with its continuities and discontinuities, where one should look in order to find the clues for solving the aforementioned complex puzzle that was labelled *Rum Composers of the Istanbul*.

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obvious local interest. I am grateful to Chris Williams for pointing to the relevance of these features to my analysis.

## The *Rum* Musicians of Istanbul in Print

While modern Greece chose to largely ignore this shared Ottoman musical past (Pennanen 2004; Kallimopoulou 2009), modern Turkey provided a little space for it in the already shrinking and marginalized cultural sphere that, after the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923, became known as 'Turkish classical music'. A vital feature in the transformation of 'Ottoman music' into 'Turkish classical music' was the employment of musical literacy, a process that had actually already emerged at the end of 19th century within the context of preceding attempts at modernization. One aspect of that literacy was the systematic notation of the musical repertoire, which up to the end of the 19th century was transmitted mostly orally/aurally. In a total of more than 300 compositions notated in a music collection published in the first quarter of the 20th century by the Ottoman music conservatory (1917–26) *Darü'l'elhan* (House of Melodies), 12 pieces were included by six composers who nowadays are broadly classified as *Rum*.<sup>10</sup> These pieces were part of a broader repertoire, which consisted of pieces mainly by Muslim composers, but also by Armenians and Jews. Notably, certain notations included short biographical notes of the composers. Through this music collection and other transcription attempts that followed, compositions by *Rum* composers of the Ottoman period were incorporated into the large corpus of the modern repertoire of Turkish classical music.

The musical collection of *Darü'l'elhan* documented the presence of *Rum* musicians in the Ottoman musical repertoire up to the 19th century, with this last century being well represented. By contrast, the book by Mustafa Rona titled *20 Yüzyıl Türk Musikisi* (Twentieth Century Turkish Music), a standard biographical source of 20th-century Turkish classical music, included only three *Rum* musicians, namely the brothers Yorgo (1900–77) and Aleko Bacanos (1888–1950) and Marko Çolakoğlu (1896–1957). Notably, at the time of the first edition of this book in 1955 Aleko Bacanos had already been dead for five years, therefore these were, more or less, the last members of the genealogy of *Rum* musicians of Istanbul. Interestingly, while the presence of *Rum* musicians in Istanbul was gradually reaching its end, the separate category of 'minority' (*azınlık*) musicians started emerging in the relevant literature, acquiring a distinct position in the history of Turkish classical music. In particular, in 1947 the magazine *Radıyo* published a sequence of articles under the heading *Türk Azınlık Musikicileri* (Turkish Minority Musicians) written by the radio musician and philologist Ruşen Ferit Kam (1902–44). In these articles the author focused on the important non-Muslim musicians and their role and contribution to Ottoman music. The same author, five years earlier in 1942, had published in the same

<sup>10</sup> These musicians are Kantemiroğlu, Zaharya, Şivelioğlu Yorga, Tanburi Corci, İstavrit Usta and İlyä.



magazine another article entitled *İnce Saz Takımları* (Delicate Instrument Ensembles).<sup>11</sup> In a manner of assessing the transformation of this popular type of Ottoman music ensembles the author made a nostalgic statement for the lost world of the late Ottoman musical life of Istanbul and its non-Muslim component. In 1966, in the style of Ruşen Ferit Kam, the music journal *Musiki Mecmuası* (Music Journal) published a sequence of articles by Hayri Yenigün entitled *Musikimizde Azınlık Bestekârları* (The Minority Composers in our Music). These articles comprised short biographical notes of well-known non-Muslim musicians. Finally, along these lines, in 1986, a year before the launch of Bosphorus first album, Özalp incorporated a lengthy chapter on 'Minority Musicians' (*Azınlık Musikîşinasları*)<sup>12</sup> in his history book of Turkish music (1986), further consolidating the place of the non-Muslim musicians of the Ottoman period in the narrative of Turkish classical music.

The emergence of the category of the 'minority musician' of Ottoman music in modern Turkish music historiography reflects the massive social and political transformations that the two countries went through in the 20th century. This evidently post-Treaty of Lausanne categorization imposed a very compartmentalized conception on the musical history of Ottoman Istanbul. Out of this compartmentalization emerged the notion of the 'ethno-religiously qualified composer', for instance *Rum bestekâr* or *Yahudi bestekâr* (Jewish composer).<sup>13</sup> The problematic aspect of this largely 20th-century construct is that it failed to acknowledge the cultural and social qualities of the Ottoman musical world resulting, instead, in the narration of Ottoman music history in very modern terms. The emphasis given to the ethno-religious distinction on the basis of a late 19th-century understanding of the *millet* system (Braude 1982, 69–74) which, when reproduced within the contemporary context of the modern nation states of Greece and Turkey, reinforces an image of each community as a segregated, solid and undifferentiated social entity throughout the history of the Ottoman Empire. An eloquent demonstration of the weakness of this concept is the following quote from *The History of the Growth and Decay of the Othman Empire*, written by the Moldavian prince Demetrius Cantemir

<sup>11</sup> The term *ince saz* described initially rather small music ensembles that performed indoors the Ottoman musical genre *fasıl*. Since the 18th century the term refers to the musical ensembles performed in to the *meyhanes* (taverns) that were a type of public entertainment institution run usually by *Rums* (Feldman 2002, 116). The professional musical world of the *meyhane* was largely populated by non-Muslim musicians, hence the strong identification of *ince saz* ensembles with the non-Muslim communities.

<sup>12</sup> The term *musikîşinas* is translated as 'music lover', and refers to both musicians and music aficionados.

<sup>13</sup> For recent publications on the Jewish minority of modern Turkey with regard to music, ideology and the construction of the nation state, see Maureen (2011) and O'Connell (2011).



(1673–1723), who as seen earlier is placed at the head of the genealogy of Rum composers:

... but for Instruments two Greeks excell'd, *Kiemani Ahmed*, a Renegade, and *Angeli* Orthodox (both my Teachers for fifteen years) and also *Chelebico* a Jew, with the *Turks Dervish* Othman, ogli, his Scholar, Tashchi ogli Sinek Mehemmed and Bardakchi Mehemmed Chelebi, which two last, when they had been taught by one Camboso Mehemmed Aga, were afterwards with Ralaki Eupragiote, a noble Greek of Constantinople, instructed by me in some parts of Musick ... (Cantemir 1734, 151).<sup>14</sup>

The above excerpt, apart from being a very important record of the inter-community relations of musicians in 17th-century Istanbul, offers a good introduction to the complex world of Ottoman social and cultural history with regard to notions of ethnicity and religious identity. Cantemir, a noble Christian Orthodox of Moldavian descent, through his musical apprenticeship comes together with a Jew and two musicians of Greek descent, one of whom was a Christian Orthodox and the other a Muslim, a 'renegade' as he calls him. Another very significant feature that Cantemir's excerpt conveys is the social stratification within the world of those related to music and more specifically among members of the same religious community. Cantemir's reference to his student Ralaki Eupragiote, whom he calls a 'noble Greek of Constantinople', points to a clear distinction between him and his teacher, Angeli. Indeed, the later was a professional musician and music instructor, registered on the payrolls of the Ottoman court (Uzunçarşılı 1977, 91). This feature of social stratification and music professionalism will be explored further in this chapter.

The issue of musicianship in relation to professionalism brings us to the singling out of the compositional skill, that of the *bestekâr*, that follows the modern notion of the 'minority musician'. It is the skill of the *sazende* (instrumentalist) with which the non-Muslim musicians first appeared in the 17th-century musical world of Istanbul. Since then, and with no significant interruption until the beginning of the 20th century, non-Muslim musicians in parallel to their role as performers also appeared as music instructors both in the Ottoman court and privately (Uzunçarşılı 1977). In the 19th century the *sazende* gives its way to the *calgıcı* (instrument player) who dominates the public entertainment institutions of Istanbul. Indicative of the social and cultural connotation of this profession is that in a census of the Rum community of the parish of Stavrodromi (Pera), dated in the first quarter of 20th century, 'instrumental player' (τσαλγκιτζής) constitutes a separate professional category from that of 'musician' (μουσικός), which

<sup>14</sup> This is the English translation published in 1734. The original text is written in Latin. For Demetrius Cantemir and music, see Wright (1992).

describes rather the musician of Western music.<sup>15</sup> Without any intention of diminishing the very significant contribution of non-Muslims in the field of composition, this historical remark aims to demonstrate the very partial image of 'what makes' a non-Muslim musician in the Ottoman times that the aforementioned labelling 'composer' constructs. Adhering to the perception of the *Rum* community of musicianship, the concept of 'composer', as it is used in this context of modern Turkish music historiography, conforms with a very Western notion of artistry and authorship, which in the orally transmitted Ottoman repertoire has a quite different and far more complex meaning (Behar 2011, 141–51).

If anything, this neat distinction between 'minority musicians' and the others failed to convey the very complexities and overlaps of Ottoman society, particularly with regard to the meaning of notions such as ethnicity and religious identity and their interrelation with the concept of musicianship prior to the 19th century. The emergence of the category of 'minority musicians' coupled with the notion of the 'ethno-religiously qualified composer' served the needs of the Turkish Republic's music modernizing élites to classify and regulate the feature of cultural pluralism of the Ottoman period that was obviously in tension with the values of Turkish nationalism. This tension had been a central topic of dispute in the field of 20th-century music theory and history up until the 1940s, especially with reference to matters of origin (Feldman 1990/1991, 100–101). In addition, it conformed with the wider aspiration for the production of an official musical historiography that was a further element of literacy that defined modern.

Ironically, while Ruşen Ferit Kam was writing about the *ince saz* and the non-Muslim musicians of old Istanbul, the wealth tax (*varlık vergisi*) was already in operation causing a further shrinkage of the minorities of Istanbul (Aktar 2012). The wealth tax was one of the policies of Turkification that were followed by the Turkish Republic throughout the 20th century (Zürcher 2007; Aktar 2000, 2012).

### The *Rum* Composers of Istanbul on Stage Again

Through the Bosphorus ensemble the tag of 'Rum Composers' (*Rum Bestekârları*) acquired its Greek version, namely 'Ῥωμιοί Συνθέτες'. The *Rum* Composers established themselves in the post-1980s Greek music scene through numerous reproductions of this tag in the titles of recordings, concerts and publications. As Eleni Kallimopoulou (2009) has shown in her study of Greek popular music, the introduction of this aspect of Ottoman music and of Turkish classical music in general through Bosphorus interacted

<sup>15</sup> Anthemion – Archives of the Greek Orthodox Communities of Istanbul, Θ2, 721: Registry of Ottoman Citizens of the Parish of Stavrodromi.

with the wider musical revival labelled 'Παραδοσιακά' (Traditional). The intriguing aspect of the introduction of this very novel feature in the Greek music scene was that it lent itself easily to diverse interpretation. More specifically, Kallimopoulou has underlined the diverse ideological motivations behind the various Greek institutions that were involved in the revival of traditional music in their reading and appropriation of the Greek Orthodox element of Ottoman music (2009, 124–6, 131–2).

A monumental textual outcome of the above trend was the book by Tsiamoulis and Erevnidis (1998), entitled Ρωμιοί Συνθέτες της Πόλης (*Rum Composers of Istanbul*). This was the first large-scale attempt at presenting the biographies and the corpus of compositions of *Rum* composers of Ottoman music to a Greek readership. It is significant to note that the vast majority of the sources used for the music and the biographies of the composers were the modern Turkish texts, presented in the last section. In addition, these efforts brought to the forefront the significant overlap between Ottoman music and the church musical milieu of Istanbul, particularly that of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate and the broader social circles of the Phanariots.<sup>16</sup> This overlap referred especially to the 18th century when a twofold type of musicianship appeared: these were musicians who were educated both in their communities' liturgical music and in the Ottoman genre, like the case of Hanende Zaharya. Researchers in the field of Byzantine music explored further this aspect, studying very important material from the Greek side that filled in gaps in the history of the genre (Plemmenos 2003; Kalaitzides 2005).

Unlike in Greece, the Bosphorus ensemble did not pursue a significant public career in Turkey. It is actually as late as 2006 that its recordings, mostly those of the ensemble's concerts in Greece, were made available to the Turkish market by the music label *ADA Müzik*.<sup>17</sup> Despite this delay, the conceptualization and showcasing of a distinct *Rum* repertoire within Ottoman music – an innovation that, to a large extent, is attributed to the Bosphorus ensemble – did make its way into the world of Turkish classical music of Istanbul and, interestingly, overlapped with the broader

<sup>16</sup> The Phanariotes were an élite group residing in the Phanar (Fener) quarter of Istanbul, where the Ecumenical Patriarchate has been situated since 1600, offering services in the Ottoman administration. In terms of origin, they were descendants of either Greek or Hellenized Romanian and Albanian families. Between the period 1699–1821 the Phanariotes monopolized the office of principal interpreter of the Porte as well as the offices of the *hospodar* or prince of the Danubian principalities of Walachia and Moldavia (Clogg 1992, 21, Mango 1984, 41–2). The Phanariotes were also closely affiliated to the Church. This relation is demonstrated in the almost exclusive occupation, since the end of the seventeenth century, by Phanariotes of certain appointments called *offikia* (Mango 1984, 48).

<sup>17</sup> Bosphorus, [http://adamusic.com.tr/Sanatci/188/bosphorus\\_/AnaSayfa](http://adamusic.com.tr/Sanatci/188/bosphorus_/AnaSayfa).

intellectual and commercial turn towards the revisiting of the Ottoman cultural heritage of Turkey (Göktürk et al. 2010, 10–11). In this context, in 2000 the cultural production company of the Metropolitan Municipality of Istanbul *Kültür A.Ş.*<sup>18</sup> on the occasion of the ‘700th Anniversary of the Foundation of the Ottoman State’ published a CD boxed-set with recordings by the *Lâlezâr* ensemble entitled ‘Ottoman Turkish Music Anthology’. The boxed-set was thematically divided into four CDs, and one of them featured the repertoire of the ‘Minority Composers’ (*Azınlık Bestekârlar*).<sup>19</sup> A year later, Sony Music launched a CD series entitled ‘Ottoman Mosaic’ (*Osmanlı Mozaïği*) which, following the tradition of the themed presentation of its predecessor, included volumes on Women, Armenian, Jews and *Rum* composers respectively. Apparently, this further compartmentalization of the Ottoman repertoire was meeting the product-making needs of the music market. In between Bosphorus’ concerts in Greece and the aforementioned publications, the prodigious record label *Kalan* initiated a series of archival themed recordings that broadly aimed to present the music of the diverse ethnic groups of Turkey.<sup>20</sup>

The shared Ottoman musical heritage in its compartmentalized form accommodated the various and also contrasting aspirations of both Greek and Turkish revivalist intelligentsia and the music market. As far as Turkey is concerned, recent critical studies have pointed to the neoliberal entrepreneurial strategies of the cultural managers who invest selectively on aspects of the history of Istanbul and have underlined the relation between these strategies and the implementation of exclusion on the basis of class and nationhood. Central to these analyses is the emergence and consolidation of the moderate Islamic Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*) in the political scene since 1994, and its impact in the field of cultural production with reference to the secularist vs Islamism (neo-Ottomanist) debates (Keyder 2010, 27; Mills 2006, 371; Öncü 2007, 235–6). With regard to music, it is interesting to observe in the previously discussed musical projects the reintroduction of the adjective Ottoman (*Osmanlı*) in describing the musical genre that throughout the 20th century had been known as ‘Turkish Classical Music’. By contrast to this ideological pluralism in the exploitation of the musical minorities of Ottoman music, the actual music itself yields a very clear uniformity in terms of its basic formal and stylistic principles, making it impossible for one – even an expert – to spot the background of the composer.

<sup>18</sup> *Kültür ve Sanat Ürünleri Ticaret A.Ş.*, <http://www.kultursanat.org/>.

<sup>19</sup> The other three themes were *Segâh Faslı* (Suite in the *Segâh* Mode), *Sultan Bestekârlar* (Sultan Composers) and *Köçekçeler* (Dance-suite). *Köçekçe* refers to the repertoire of the *köçek* who were professional male dancers, drawn usually from the non-Muslim communities (Greeks, Jews and Armenians). For a detailed account of the various musical forms of Ottoman music see Feldman (2002).

<sup>20</sup> *Kalan*, <http://www.kalan.com/en/about-us/kalan-music.html>.

## The Sound Ethnographers of Istanbul: From the Music to the Sound of the *Rum*

The pride of place that was given in the course of this musical transfer to a broadly defined literacy, and therefore to a more ocularcentric perception of the past,<sup>21</sup> was in a way filling in the absence of all other types of sensory experiences that were once embedded in this common musical heritage. The notated repertoire and the biographical information of the Istanbulite *Rum* composers were more the visual imprints of the modernizing processes of Turkey than the resonators of the world inhabited by them, whether these musicians were Phanariots or nightclub performers of the *Galata* district. It might seem paradoxical yet this encounter between Greece and Turkey, despite its musical content, tells very little about how this common past actually sounded. Sound,<sup>22</sup> a wider analytical category than music, has been greatly theorized recently within the broader field of the study of the senses, both from a historical and an anthropological perspective. Theoretical discussions in this field have been prolific in highlighting the historical and cultural formation of the senses, and the vast impact that modernity has had on the sensory experience in general (Hirschkind 2004, 131; Smith 2007, 1–10). From this perspective, the absence of the sound of this common musical heritage is reflecting the reasons for its gradual decline.

Interestingly, in the very rich publishing outcome of the Turkish turn to the Ottoman past of Istanbul, there is a type of literature that seems to challenge this sensory gap. This is the literature of the “‘documentary” writers of memory’, as Carol Bertram defines them (2008, 215). A prominent figure of this group of writers is the chronicler and journalist Sermet Muhtar Alus (1887–1952).<sup>23</sup> Alus, in his texts that were published in a number of newspapers throughout the first half of the 20th century, narrated instances from the everyday life of ‘Old Istanbul’, which he

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<sup>21</sup> Ocularcentrism (or visual bias) refers to the domination of vision over the rest of the senses and had been considered as a defining feature of modernity; as opposed to the pre-modern era were touch, sound, smell and taste constituted significant bearers of meaning. This perception which dominated the relevant literature for quite a while has been challenged by recent scholarship on the history and anthropology of the senses, which demonstrated that ocularcentrism was neither so much a salient feature of modernity as opposed to pre-modernity, nor of Western as opposed to non-Western cosmologies or ways of ordering the world. Instead, it was a result of the way in which researchers themselves looked at their past and at non-western societies. For a brief overview of the topic, see Denney (2011), 604.

<sup>22</sup> For a critical discussion of sound in this analytical context, see Smith (1999), 3–10.

<sup>23</sup> On the life and work of Sermet Muhtar Alus, see Erdinç and İlkan (1994), 13–18, Toros (1997), 11–21. For a recently published sample of his writings, see Alus (1994, 1997).

roughly dated at the turn of the 20th century. These included descriptions of streets and districts, historical figures of the entertainment life of the city including many references to non-Muslim musicians, as well as topics like modes of greetings, the water and the fish of Istanbul. Sermet Muhtar Alus' newspaper articles were first published in book form in 1994 by the Greater Istanbul Municipality's press<sup>24</sup> with the very suggestive title 'İstanbul Writings' (İstanbul Yazıları) and carried on by İletişim publishing house with five subsequent volumes.

Sermet Muhtar Alus formed a intriguing genealogy with two other significant writers that acted in between urban folklore and literature: the author and columnist Ahmet Rasim (1864–1932), who was also a composer of a number of very popular late-Ottoman songs (şarkı)<sup>25</sup> and the urban historian and encyclopaedist Reşat Ekrem Koçu (1905–75). The three of them 'met' at the entries of the eccentric İstanbul Ansiklopedisi (Encyclopaedia of Istanbul) edited by Koçu (Bertram 2008, 215).<sup>26</sup> For instance, in the entry on the *Rum* Carnival (*Apukurya Maskaları*) Koçu (1959) cites a note authored by Sermet Muhtar Alus for the purposes of the encyclopaedia, and then quotes extensively a chapter from Ahmet Rasim's book *Fuhş-i Atik* (Old-time Prostitution) ([1922] 1987). At first glance, the above literature falls into the genre of nostalgic narratives lamenting a lost, and largely idealized world. This is the type of narrative that has been extensively reproduced since the 1990s in Turkey and has been much analysed with regard to the political implications of nostalgia.<sup>27</sup> However, Carel Bertram (2008), in her very intuitive reading of the above authors, offers an additional interpretation.<sup>28</sup> Particularly with regard to Sermet Muhtar Alus, Bertram suggests that his in-between interest in the collections of solid (hard data), and anecdotal information offers a gate into an intimate past (Ibid., 232–3).

This intimate relation with the past is coupled by the primacy that all three writers gave to the sound element in their descriptions of Istanbul. When the above authors describe or remember the world of the non-Muslim musicians of the late Ottoman Istanbul they are acting as a kind of

<sup>24</sup> Notably, the Metropolitan Municipality of Istanbul was the publisher of the boxed-set cd of the *Lâlezâr* ensemble.

<sup>25</sup> For a music biography of Ahmet Rasim, see Süreksan (1977).

<sup>26</sup> On the relation between Sermet Muhtar Alus and Reşat Ekrem Koçu and the former's contribution to İstanbul Ansiklopedisi, see Toros (1997), 18.

<sup>27</sup> On the politics of nostalgia in contemporary Turkey, see Keyder (2010). For nostalgia with regard to the history of Istanbul, see especially Mills (2010). For nostalgia in relation to Kemalism and the rise of Islam into the public sphere, see Özyürek (2006).

<sup>28</sup> Bertram (2008) analyses the above authors in terms of their contribution to the process of turning the 'Turkish house' into a *lieu de mémoire*, which functioned as a field of negotiation of Turkish modernity with regard to its Ottoman past (ibid.: 10, 214–5). For a similar analysis with regard to the non-Muslim musicians of Istanbul, see Poulos (2013).



sound ethnographers producing texts that are documents of the auditory experience of that world. This auditory experience, when compared to that of the concert hall described in the case of Bosphorus' 1988 concert, foregrounds the great shift in the sensorium that the two communities have experienced in the 20th century. Treating these texts as sound ethnographies, that is shifting from reading into hearing them, offers an insight into the shared musical world of Greeks and Turks and also into the massive transformation that this world has been through (Erlmann 2004, 3).

For Sermet Muhtar Alus, the places in Beyoğlu inhabited by *Rum* musicians were first and foremost loud. This is very well conveyed in two articles where the author is supposedly walking from Tünel to Taksim in 1903 (Alus 1994, 21–8). For the historian of sound these two texts can be read as a soundwalk through Cadde-i Kebir (nowadays, İstiklal Caddesi). Entertainment places were described through their sound that extended their physical presence into the streets colonizing the public space. In Sermet Muhtar Alus' terms, musical elements like the sound of percussion instruments, the sound of the *laternas* (street organs), and of exclamations are blended with each other forming a noisy soundscape:<sup>29</sup>

Tam karşıda, bayır aşağı, gene dapdaracık, yüksek binalı, pencereden pencereye el değdirilecek bir sokak daha: Çiçekçi.

Gürültü caddeye taşıyor. Tıpkı panayır yeri. Kasab havalarını tutturmuş lâternalar mı istersin? Zurna, çifte naraların iki tellilerini mi, keriz havaları mı?

Sözüm yabana incesaz takımı düzmüş çingene çalgıcıların 'Sarhoşum amma falso yapmam' türkülerini mi? Oyuna girişenlerin zil sıkıntıları, naralar, yaşşalar ... (Alus 1994, 23).

(Directly opposite, under the slope, another narrow, tall-tenemented alley where the windows touch hands across the way: The Street of the Flower Sellers.

The noise flows onto the avenue. A place for festivals. Do you like street organs playing *kasap* tunes? Or shawms and drum party tunes? Or – mark my words – 'I-may-be-drunk-but-I'm-still-in-tune' folksongs arranged for *ince saz* ensembles by Gipsy musicians? Clanking of dancers' finger-cymbals, shouts, hurrahs ...)

<sup>29</sup> The term *soundscape* is after Thompson (2002, 1), who defines it as 'simultaneously a physical environment and a way of perceiving that environment; it is both a world and a culture constructed to make sense of that world'. For a relevant study on soundscape, see also Picker (2003).

This noisy soundscape is the author's navigating tool, where its individual components function as soundmarks of specific places, turning the author's narrative into a mapping of the entertainment of the high street:

İleride, Kalyoncukulluğu meyhanelerindeki lâterna seslerine gitaralı, mandolinli Rum çalgıları, türküleri karışıyor; zitolar yağıyor (Alus 1994, 26).

(Ahead, in the taverns of Kalyoncukulluk, folksongs, *Rum* mandolin players and guitarists merge with the sounds of street organs. It's raining *Zito*!)

At the top of the high street, in Taksim square, Alus reaches the celebrated nightclub *Eptalophos*.<sup>30</sup>

Taksim'e varmamızla çalgı çağana ayyuka çıkıyor. Sağ köşede, yüksekteki Eftalpos gazinosunda, Kemanî Zafiraki'nin ince saz takımı curcunalı türküyü tutturmış:

‘İndim gittim Diyaribekir düzine

Sürmeler çekmiş yârin elâ gözüne’.

Tempoyla şap şap el vuruşlar, şıngır şıngır çeyrekler, meciyeleri serpişler. Bir miraseydi bey çalgıcılara avuç avuç paraları atarak hovardalıkta. Arada, garsonların:

‘Oriste beyim! ... Amesus paşam ! Ligora bre, pendî bukâlî duziko!’

Bağırtiları ... (Alus 1994, 28)

(By the time we're at Taksim the music is deafening. On the right, at the top, at the *Eptalophos* nightclub, Kemanî Zafiraki's ince saz ensemble is playing a folksong in the curcuna rhythm:

I went down to the Diyarbakır plain

To my lover's kohl-tinged, hazel eyes.

Hands clapping to the beat, clinking of coins, scattering of tips. A playboy, out for debauch, throws money by the handful at the band. And, in between, the waiters:

<sup>30</sup> On *Eptalophos* and other Greek owned entertainment places of Beyoğlu, see Bozi (2002), 272–7.



Oriste beyim! ... Amesus paşam! Ligora bre, pendı bukalı duziko! (There you are sire! ... Right away my lord! Hurry up, bring five bottles of raki straight ahead!))

The very dense soundscape Alus describes not only captures the music but also the showing off practices of the clients and the *Rum* as a distinct speech community. The inaccurate transcription of the Greek are further documents of the very aural way in which the author experiences the *gazino*.<sup>31</sup>

The sense of hearing is evidently at the centre of Sermet Muhtar Alus' text. This underlining element does not aim to simply amplify a sensory-rich representation of old Istanbul. The challenge for the sound historian in this case is to understand the 'cultural poetics of listening' (Smith 1999, 8). For Sermet Muhtar Alus and certainly for Ahmet Rasim, a musician and a regular of the *meyhanes* (taverns) of Istanbul, the noisy soundscape of the *ince saz* ensemble was not perceived as problematic. However, in the first quarter of the 20th century, this perception was not shared by everyone, especially by the members of the literate élite of Greek Orthodox community of Istanbul. For instance, Christodoulos Melissinos, the Bishop of Pamphilos in his history of the district of Tatavla, near by Beyoğlu, the music of the γιντζέ σαζ (*ince saz*) was a feature of the non-developed societies and it was through special ear training drills of 'artistic melodies' that one could prevent himself from its negative effect (1913, 213–4). The reference to the good and bad effects of music points to the use of music as a discursive field where notions of social progress and development are being negotiated and canonized. In Chrystodoulos Melissinos' view, social progress was linked to education and training, a feature that the musicians of the *ince saz* ensemble lacked. This perception of progress was at the centre of the discourse produced by the Greek Orthodox literate élite, in its attempt to construct a 'public opinion' that would act as a canonizing and hegemonic tool over the community (Exertzoglou 2000, 30–31). Entertainment and its spaces were also a significant component of this discourse, whose origin goes back to the beginning of the second half of the 19th century to the foundation of the various community social clubs and associations. In this discourse the *meyhane* is depicted as a place hosting social disorder, which is reflected in bad hygiene conditions, alcoholism and noise.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>31</sup> The *gazino* is a European type entertainment institution that emerged around the last quartet of the 19th century in the district of Pera in Istanbul. The *gazino*, which took over the position of the traditional entertainment place that was the *meyhane*, hosted a popularized version of the courtly musical form *fasıl* (Feldman 2002, 116).

<sup>32</sup> In the very demonstrative, in sensory terms, description of the *meyhane*, by the doctor and founding member of *Constantinopolitan Philological Association* Alexandros Paspatis, the regulars of this type of premises are described as talking in a manner of 'deafening shouts' (1862, 273–9). For Alexandros Paspatis and his very

As has been argued by Mark Smith, history of the senses is a way of making history from below (Smith 2003, 167–8). Sermet Muhtar Alus' soundscape is in a way voicing the professional musician of the late Ottoman Istanbul and his world. It is within this noisy soundscape of the *meyhane*, which for the literate Greek Orthodox élite is considered an element of backwardness, that Kemanî Zafiraki, a professional musician, member of the *ince saz* ensembles of the late Ottoman Istanbul, namely a *Rum* çalgıcı resided. This point highlights a significant discontinuity in the very coherent narrative of the 'Rum composers of Istanbul' as well as the modern literate projections from both the Greek and Turkish sides. The above type of recently revisited texts reintroduce to both Greeks and Turks an aspect of the 'Rum musician of Istanbul' which transcends the literate representations discussed in the previous section. A challenge that texts like the above chronicles pose is for both sides to *listen* to this aspect.

### Concluding Remarks: Greeks and Turks beyond the 'Rum Composers of the Istanbul'

The revisiting of the shared Ottoman musical heritage of Greece and Turkey brought to the fore a number of contrasting readings of the past and through that the complex nature of modernity. However, both the 'literate' and the 'aural' understanding of the 'Rum musician of Istanbul' presented and analysed in this chapter are in a way complementary parts of the narrative of modernity. It is only when these parts are considered together that one can gain a better understanding of why this world changed and in what ways.

The *Rum* musicians of Istanbul disappeared in the course of the 20th century in parallel to the shrinking of the Greek minority of Istanbul. However, they also disappeared because they were part of an outmoded world that both Greeks and Turks strived urgently to change. In sound terms, this was a noisy world that had to be silenced. The recent revisiting of the shared Ottoman musical past turned on the sound of this world, giving the chance to both sides to evaluate the aforementioned change.

Finally, the music of the Bosphorus ensemble proved a powerful trigger for a number of people who, since that time, set in quest for solving the puzzle of the Ρωμιοί Συνθέτες της Πόλης (The *Rum* Composers of Istanbul). This quest included very diverse routes and manners ranging from musical tourism in Istanbul to intensive music apprenticeship next to Turkish music masters and from language courses to scholarly research projects on various aspects of Ottoman/Turkish musical culture.

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idiosyncratic study on the social conditions of the *Rum* Orthodox community of Istanbul based on hospital records correlating occupational to health status, see Exertzoglu (2010), 48–52.

This mobility of people, ideas, as well as commodities has expanded into musical fields beyond that of the 'Rum Composers of the Istanbul', initiating novel cultural encounters. If anything, these novel cultural encounters are generating new sensory experiences, filling in, in a way, the sensory loss that Greece and Turkey experienced in the 20th century.

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PART II  
The Politics of  
Identity, Language and Culture

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# Chapter 5

## Does a Cyprus Solution Still Matter?

James Ker-Lindsay

### Introduction

For over 50 years, the island of Cyprus has been a central bone of contention between Greece and Turkey. Indeed, one can argue that the conflict between the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities has done more to poison the relationship between Athens and Ankara than the myriad of other issues – such as the disputes over territorial waters and airspace in the Aegean, or the treatment of respective minorities – that have led to tensions between the two countries in the modern era. Cyprus has brought Greece and Turkey to the brink of armed conflict on several occasions. For this reason, it is now widely believed that any attempt to bring about a full normalisation of Greek-Turkish relations, let alone build a strong and enduring friendship between the two, can only occur once the long-standing division of Cyprus – often otherwise known as the Cyprus Issue or the Cyprus Problem – has been tackled. But is this really the case?

The problem is that solving Cyprus has seemingly become an impossible task. Starting in 1964 and continuing to the present day, the United Nations has been at the forefront of efforts to bridge the gap between the two communities. However, despite numerous initiatives, the island remains divided. This chapter will consider the various attempts to solve the Cyprus Problem before analysing the main points of difference that appear to stand in the way of a comprehensive settlement. Lastly, it will consider the implications of yet another breakdown of talks. What effects does the continued division of the island have for the various actors that are most directly involved – the Greek and Turkish Cypriots, Greece, Turkey, as well as the European Union and the United Nations? After all this time and effort, and with little apparent prospect of success on the horizon, does a solution to the Cyprus Problem really still matter?

### The Evolution of the Cyprus Problem

On 16 August 1960, over 80 years of British rule came to an end and the island of Cyprus became an independent state. A complex constitutional system was put in place to balance power between the larger Greek

Cypriot community, which represented 78 per cent of the population, and the smaller Turkish Cypriot community, which made up 18 per cent of the island's inhabitants.<sup>1</sup> In most areas of government – such as the Council of Ministers, the civil service and in the 50-seat parliament – power was split between the two communities 70:30 in favour of the majority Greek Cypriot community. At the same time, the Greek Cypriot president and the Turkish Cypriot vice president were given considerable powers of veto. Meanwhile, Britain, Greece and Turkey were vested with the responsibility for ensuring that the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of the island remained intact (for the text of these treaties see Macris 2003).

For the Greek Cypriots, the outcome was a disappointment. They did not want an independent state. Rather, they had fought to end British rule in order to unite the island with Greece (Markides 1977, 2).<sup>2</sup> Moreover, many Greek Cypriots also felt aggrieved about the considerable degree of power given to the Turkish Cypriots. Meanwhile, although many Turkish Cypriots found the settlement broadly acceptable, rather than desirable (Dodd 1993, 6), some extremists wanted to see the island divided between Greece and Turkey. As a result, there was little love for the new state in either community. It was therefore perhaps unsurprising that tensions soon emerged over a number of issues, such as taxation and the administration of city councils. In response, in November 1963, the Greek Cypriot president, Archbishop Makarios, proposed a number of constitutional amendments to facilitate the smooth running of the state. These were quickly rejected by Turkey, which in turn led to clashes on the island and the collapse of the ethnically mixed government. In March 1964, the UN Security Council authorised the establishment of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) and mandated the UN Secretary-General to take the lead in efforts to find a political solution to the situation (the events of 1963–64 are covered in Drousiotis 2008; James 2001; Ker-Lindsay 2004; and Packard 2008).

Over the next ten years, the UN launched a series of settlement initiatives (for more on the various UN initiatives prior to 2000, see Richmond 1998; Joseph 1997; and Mirbagheri 1998; for an account from the perspective of the main protagonists, see Clerides n.d.; Denktash 1988; and Vassiliou 2010). They all ended without success. Meanwhile, in November 1967, following another bout of serious fighting between the two communities, the Turkish Cypriots proclaimed their own provisional administration. While tensions between the two communities subsided in the years that

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<sup>1</sup> The remaining 4 per cent was composed of three religious communities: Maronites, Latins and Armenians.

<sup>2</sup> The Greek Cypriot military campaign to end British colonialism was waged by EOKA (The National Organisation of Cypriot Fighters), 1955–59. The best account of the period is Holland (1998).

followed, new cleavages emerged within the Greek Cypriot community between those who still wished to see Cyprus united with Greece and those who accepted that such an outcome was no longer feasible. In July 1974, these differences came to a head when the military government in Athens, which favoured unification, ordered the overthrow of the Makarios administration. Believing that this was a prelude for union, and following consultation with the British government, Turkey invaded Cyprus just five days later, on 20 July 1974 (for more on these events, see Birand 1985; Asmussen 2008; and Constandinos 2009.) Although peace talks were quickly convened in Switzerland, they fell apart after Turkey issued an ultimatum to the Greek Cypriots to accept a federal solution. Hours later, Ankara resumed its military campaign. By the time a new ceasefire was called a few days later, Turkey was in control of 37 per cent of the island and 160,000 Greek Cypriots, a quarter of the Greek Cypriot population, had been forcibly displaced from their homes. In the months that followed, over 40,000 Turkish Cypriots left their homes in the southern part of the island and made their way to the Turkish controlled areas. The island was now completely divided; geographically, ethnically and politically.

In February 1977, the UN brokered a four-point agreement between the two sides. Henceforth, it was agreed that Cyprus would become a federation made up of two states (bizonal) and two communities (bicommunal). Economic viability and land ownership would determine the size of the states and the central government would be given powers to ensure the unity of the state. Various other issues, such as freedom of movement and freedom of settlement, would be settled through discussion. Two years later, in 1979, the sides negotiated a further ten-point set of proposals that not only reaffirmed the 1977 agreement, but also included new provisions, such as the demilitarisation of the island under the terms of a settlement and a commitment to refrain from destabilising actions. Despite this commitment, just four years later, in November 1983, the Turkish Cypriot community unilaterally declared independence, proclaiming the formation of the 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus' (TRNC). Although Ankara recognised the TRNC, the move was strongly condemned by the UN Security Council in Resolution 541, which called on states not to recognise the new entity. To this day, Turkey is the only country to recognise the Turkish Cypriot state.

Despite the unilateral declaration of independence, the UN continued its efforts to find a solution. However, successive initiatives throughout the 1980s and 1990s failed to produce any results. This was largely due to the intransigence of the Turkish Cypriot leadership and successive Turkish governments, which argued that the problem had been resolved in 1974. However, towards the end of the 1990s, the situation changed dramatically when the European Union decided to open accession talks with the

Cypriot government. Realising that any decision to accept Cyprus would inevitably harm its own accession process, Turkey threatened to annexe northern Cyprus. Undeterred, the EU insisted that it would not give Ankara a veto over who could and could not become a member. With this in mind, the Turkish Cypriot leader, Rauf Denktash, proposed new talks. At first, these appeared to be little more than a stalling tactic. However, following a general election in Turkey, in November 2002, which brought to power a more moderate government, attitudes in Ankara changed. It was now realised that Cyprus needed to be solved. This opened the way for the UN to present a comprehensive plan for reunification (for more on this period see Hannay 2005; Ker-Lindsay 2005; and Palley 2005). On 24 April 2004, the two communities voted on the proposals. Although two-thirds of Turkish Cypriots accepted the deal, it was rejected by three-quarters of the Greek Cypriot community. Just one week later, on 1 May 2004, Cyprus joined the EU as a divided island.

In 2008, the UN launched a fresh initiative. Yet again, the talks were based on finding a federal solution to the island's division. However, although the start of these new negotiations was greeted with considerable optimism, they failed to make an early breakthrough. In February 2014, yet another process was launched by the two sides.<sup>3</sup>

### **Current Issues of Contention**

The search for a comprehensive solution has been hindered by the depth of differences between the two communities over a range of issues. In particular, serious divisions remain over three key issues: constitutional arrangements, territory and property and security. The first of these, constitutional issues, incorporates a number of issues, ranging from the conceptual to the practical. One of the key problems that need to be addressed is the relationship between bizonality and bicomunality. For the Greek Cypriots, a bizonal, bicommunal federation would be composed of two federal units, one of which would in all likelihood be predominantly, but not wholly, Greek Cypriot, and the other would probably be mainly, but not entirely, Turkish Cypriot. In other words, while the two states may have features that make them more or less Greek and Turkish Cypriot, they would not be defined in exclusively ethnic terms. The Turkish Cypriots

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<sup>3</sup> For accounts of the UN reunification talks since 2008, see the regular reports produced by the United Nations: 'Assessment report of the Secretary-General on the status of the negotiations in Cyprus', United Nations Security Council Documents S/2009/610, 30 November 2009; S/2010/238, 11 May 2010; S/2010/603, 24 November 2010; S/2011/112, 4 March 2011; S/2011/4908, 8 August 2011; S/2012/149, 12 March 2012.

have a rather different view. As they see it, bizonality and bicommunality are intrinsically and inextricably linked. Their security depends on having their own territory. Therefore, on the one side of the island there will be a Greek Cypriot federal state and on the other there will be a Turkish Cypriot federal state. In addition, there are questions over the relationship between the federal states and the central government. Although this may now be changing, traditionally the Greek Cypriots have wanted a strong central administration controlling as many policy areas as possible. Only those issues that are of specific interest to the communities would come under the control of the federal states. Again, the Turkish Cypriots take a very different view. They want to ensure that as much power as possible is devolved to the federal units. Indeed, they would also like to see some elements of foreign affairs and defence come under the control of the communities, such as the right to establish representative offices abroad. Then there are questions relating to the institutions of the new state. For example, what sort of legislative and executive structures should it have? Would the parliament have one chamber or two, and would there be a rotating presidency or a presidential council? Also, the structure of the federal judicial system needs to be addressed, including the representation of the two communities in a supreme court.

The second major area of contention centres on territory and property (for a cogent discussion of loss, refugeehood and property from anthropological and feminist approaches, see Chapter 2 by Demetriou). Both sides readily accept that any solution will mean a transfer of territory from the Turkish Cypriots, who currently control 36 per cent of the island, to the Greek Cypriots. Usual estimates suggest that the amount returned will be in the region of 8–11 per cent of the island's total territory. In other words, the size of the Turkish Cypriot entity will be in the region of 26–29 per cent of the island. But perhaps more important than the question of the amount of territory to be returned to the Greek Cypriots is the question of which areas will be relinquished by the Turkish Cypriots. Linked to territory, one of the key issues for the Greek Cypriots is the question of refugee returns. A central aim for the Greek Cypriot leadership will be to ensure that as many refugees as possible will be able to return to their homes, if they so want, and that as many of them as possible will be in Greek Cypriot controlled areas. However, although a territorial readjustment would allow many Greek Cypriots to return to their properties, questions would remain concerning Greek Cypriot properties in areas that would remain under Turkish Cypriot controls. This is an extremely contentious issue (for an analysis of this issue, and some ideas for solutions, see International Crisis Group 2010). Whereas the Greek Cypriots have traditionally argued that all displaced persons should have their entire property returned to them, the Turkish Cypriots have tended to call for some form of property exchange. This would allow Turkish Cypriot properties in the south to



be swapped for Greek Cypriot properties in the north. Or, at least, swap those properties where the original Turkish Cypriot owner had no desire to return and live in the south. Some form of compensation could then make up the difference. Needless to say, both ideas have their flaws and are considered to be unacceptable by the other side. For instance, the Turkish Cypriots argue that if they returned all Greek Cypriot property to its original owners the idea of creating a Turkish Cypriot federal unit would be impossible. If all the Greek Cypriots who had property in the north were to return, they would simply swamp the Turkish Cypriots. In contrast, the Greek Cypriots believe that any attempt to deprive people of their land is an infringement of their human rights. To this extent, the Greek Cypriot position is that most, if not all, Greek Cypriots must be given the right to return to their homes if they so wish. In reality, though, the property issue is being, at least partially, resolved by other means. There is now a mechanism for dealing with the property claims of displaced Greek Cypriots. Importantly, this rarely results in restitution. More often than not, the Turkish Cypriot body responsible for handling such claims, which has been recognised as legitimate by the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) (*Cyprus Mail*, 6 March 2010), has offered compensation instead.

Thirdly, security remains a key consideration for both communities in any settlement process. It is also the area where, on the face of it, there is least room for agreement between the two sides given that their starting positions are diametrically opposed to one another. The Greek Cypriots are adamantly opposed to the continuation of the Treaty of Guarantee and the Treaty of Alliance. As far as they are concerned, it is wholly unacceptable that the constitutional structure of the Cypriot state should be subject to the guarantee of any third countries, let alone that these states also have a right to intervene militarily. Such an idea is contrary to the very principles of state sovereignty and has no place in the 21st century, especially as they relate to a state that is a member of the European Union. Likewise, the permanent stationing of Turkish troops on the island, especially when linked with a right of intervention, represents a fundamental threat to the security and stability of the Cypriot state. All Turkish troops must therefore be removed. The Turkish Cypriots and Turkey take a very different view. As far as they are concerned there can be no changes to either the Treaty of Guarantee or the Treaty of Alliance. They argue that past experience has shown that the Greek Cypriots cannot be trusted. Unless Turkey has a right to intervene, there can be no guarantees that the Greek Cypriots will abide by the terms of any settlement. Additionally, the presence of Turkish military forces, backed up by a legal right of intervention, offers the best safeguards that the Turkish Cypriots will be protected from attack. Therefore, while the number of troops present after a settlement is open to negotiation, they cannot be removed altogether.

Another major Greek Cypriot security concern that will need to be addressed in any future settlement effort is the question of implementation. Many Greek Cypriots remain deeply distrustful of Turkey and do not believe that it will be willing to uphold its side of any agreement. They want to know how the international community, including the European Union and the UN Security Council, will ensure that any deal reached will be upheld fully by both sides according to the timetables laid down. This is especially important to the Greek Cypriots as it is likely that the provisions of an agreement that will be phased in will apply to the Turkish Cypriots, whereas their concessions will be made immediately. To illustrate this point, the new constitutional structure of a state will be put in place from the start. At the moment a settlement comes into force, the Greek Cypriots will be expected to share power fully with the Turkish Cypriots. However, the Turkish Cypriots will not be expected to hand back all land and properties to Greek Cypriots immediately as new homes will have to be built first for the displaced Turkish Cypriots. Likewise, Turkish troops cannot be expected to leave at the moment a new arrangement comes into force. It will take time to redeploy them. All this creates the real potential for delays and postponements, and it is this that the Greek Cypriots are determined to avoid. They want to be sure that any agreement put in place will be honoured and that, should this not happen, the international community will take appropriate steps to ensure full and prompt compliance with the terms of a settlement.

While constitutional issues, property and territory and security represent the most significant points of disagreement, there are a range of other issues that serve to divide the two communities. For instance, the question of Turkish settlers is highly charged. Over the years, Greek Cypriots have insisted that the fundamental tenets of a fair and viable solution to the Cyprus Problem would be based on the repatriation of all Turkish troops and all Turkish settlers. The trouble is that not all Turkish 'settlers' are immigrants. It has now been over 35 years since the invasion. Many of the children of the original settlers brought to the island in the immediate aftermath of the invasion are now approaching middle age and have children of their own who were born and raised on the island. Cyprus is their home, not Turkey. A strict adherence to a demand that they all be deported would mean that tens of thousands of people would be forced to live in a country they do not know simply for the actions taken by the Turkish government many decades earlier. The question of the settlers is therefore no longer strictly a legal question. It is also a humanitarian issue. Then there are questions concerning economic management, or the representation of Cyprus in European institutions. How would taxation and expenditure be regulated? And how would the two communities decide on single representation in the EU on issues that they might have separate control over on the island? All these seemingly peripheral

questions serve to heighten tensions between the two communities and thus complicate the search for an overall settlement.

### **Does a Solution still Matter?**

Given the depth of differences that exist between the two communities, and the long history of efforts to try to broker an agreement between the two sides, it is tempting to suggest that maybe it is time to give up on the search for a solution. Perhaps the current status quo should be left in place. In the case of the Greek Cypriots, there is certainly a good argument to be made in favour of the current situation. Since 1964, the Greek Cypriot-controlled government of Cyprus has been internationally recognised as the only legitimate authority on the island. Even after the Turkish invasion in 1974 and the subsequent Turkish Cypriot unilateral declaration of independence, they have retained their legal authority over the whole of Cyprus, even if their 'effective control' is now limited to the southern two-thirds of the island. At the same time, many Greek Cypriots have come to realise that the current situation, which gives them nominal control over the whole island, has also led to the creation of what is effectively a Greek Cypriot state in the areas that they do have direct authority over. Unlike the constitutional arrangements put in place in 1960, Greek Cypriots do not need to seek Turkish Cypriot approval for their actions. They have managed to establish their own state, unencumbered with the demands of sharing power with a much smaller minority. In effect, while they do not have union with Greece (which is no longer an aspiration for the vast majority of Greek Cypriots), they have managed to create a Greek Cypriot-controlled Republic of Cyprus.

Meanwhile, the severe economic crisis in the Republic, which has necessitated an EU bailout, has served to further entrench opposition towards a settlement. Even in 2004, many Greek Cypriots were concerned about the financial dimensions of reunification (Ker-Lindsay, 2005). Such fears have since grown. Many now feel that Cyprus simply cannot afford reunification (*Bloomberg*, 3 April 2013). As they see it, the Turkish Cypriots would simply be an economic burden – even though the United Nations has said that it feels that a solution would actually be economically beneficial to both communities (*The Sunday Times*, 23 September 2012).

However, while this status quo may be broadly acceptable, if not preferable to a solution, the continued division of the island nevertheless carries with it a range of costs for the Greek Cypriots. For a start, it means that few of the 160,000 people who were displaced when Turkey invaded Cyprus will ever get their property back. This means that with every passing year, the effective ethnic partition of the island that has emerged is being cemented. Simultaneously, the steady influx of mainland Turkish

citizens into the north of the island – and the continued migration of many young Turkish Cypriots<sup>4</sup> – means that the demographic structure has now changed considerably (the most comprehensive study of this topic remains Hatay 2007). Given that it is highly unlikely that many of these settlers will be required to leave, every day that passes makes it more and more likely that following a solution mainland Turks will be sitting alongside Greek and Turkish Cypriots in the parliament, cabinet and civil service. But perhaps most importantly, the continuing division of Cyprus also means the perpetuation of an unpleasant and dangerous security environment on the island. Cyprus will remain highly militarised. And while there is a tendency to think that the Green Line that divides the island is a stable boundary, the reality is that for as long as the two sides fail to resolve their differences, it will remain a potential conflict flashpoint. Although the Greek Cypriots may have control of a state, they are also left with an armed boundary that increasingly divides a small island between its indigenous Greek Cypriot population and a growing mainland Turkish population. Under these circumstances, the prospects of the Turkish army ever leaving the island seem ever more remote.

Likewise, the current situation may also be superficially appealing to the Turkish Cypriots. The creation of their own state, although largely unrecognised, has ensured their safety and security following the violent persecution they faced in the early 1960s. However, this apparent security has come at a very heavy price. The unilateral declaration of independence, in 1983, has left the Turkish Cypriot community economically, politically and culturally isolated on the world stage. After 30 years, many are now asking just how much longer the situation can last. Some have suggested that if – or when – the current talks break down, efforts should be directed towards a Plan B (*The Guardian*, 20 January 2012). The problem is that they have few alternatives to reunification. For instance, efforts to try to persuade more countries to recognise the TRNC are unlikely to produce results. UN Security Council Resolution 541 (1983) expressly calls on states not to recognise the Turkish Cypriot state. Moreover, when Cyprus acceded to the European Union, in May 2004, it did so as a single entity. The *acquis communautaire*, the EU's body of laws, may be suspended in the north of the island. However, the north is still legally regarded as a part of the EU. As a result, any country recognising the unilaterally

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<sup>4</sup> Given that Turkish Cypriots continue to be recognised by the Cypriot governments as citizens of the Republic of Cyprus, they are entitled to a Cypriot passport and all the additional rights associated with Cypriot citizenship – including freedom of movement – since Cyprus joined the European Union, in 2004. As a result, it is understood that the vast majority of Turkish Cypriots now have a Cyprus passport even though they have no emotional allegiance to the Cyprus state.

declared independence of the TRNC would automatically be raising the real prospect of punitive action by the EU. A few countries may be willing to take the risk – but not many. Recognition therefore seems unlikely. No matter how much some within the Turkish Cypriot community might argue otherwise, pursuing recognition is not going to bring about a change in their situation. Northern Cyprus will remain on the very margins of the international community. This will mean that, in addition to being denied access to many international organisations, they will be barred from international sporting and cultural events. For this reason, the status quo may be something that the Turkish Cypriots can continue to live with. It is certainly not something that will allow them to thrive.

Another option that has been raised is the possibility that Turkey may annexe the north of the island (*Bloomberg*, 5 March 2012). This is by no means a new threat. It was used many times by Turkish politicians in the 1990s in order to try to dissuade the EU from opening accession talks with the Republic of Cyprus. At that time it was a bluff. It still is. The stark reality is that any attempt to annexe northern Cyprus will automatically end whatever residual hopes there may be that Turkey could join the European Union. Quite apart from the fact that Nicosia would veto any further negotiations with Turkey, it seems as though many other EU members would happily seize such an opportunity to close the door to Turkish membership once and for all. Any move to lay formal legal claim to the north would have devastating consequences for Turkish-EU relations. Ankara knows this full well. But it goes further than this. The Turkish government also knows that a failure to solve the Cyprus issue will effectively ensure that Turkish hopes of ever joining the European Union will remain unrealised. For this reason, any attempt to maintain the current status quo is problematic for Turkey. Of course, it could be argued that it no longer sees EU accession as a major goal – a claim denied by the Turkish government. However, even if this is the case, Cyprus is still a perennial problem for the Turkish government, and will remain so until it is solved.

Greece also has a vested interest in seeing Cyprus resolved. Although relations with Turkey have improved somewhat since 1999, it is still understood that there cannot be a full normalisation of relations until the Cyprus issue is solved. This is important not just in terms of the risk that any tensions in Cyprus might provoke a conflict in the Aegean, where competing territorial claims by Greece and Turkey also threaten relations (for the most up-to-date view on the Aegean issues, see International Crisis Group 2011). It also means that Greece has to maintain extraordinarily high levels of defence expenditure. This is something it can ill afford at the current period of economic austerity (see *The Guardian*, 19 April 2012).

But it goes further than this. The continued division of Cyprus is also a problem for the European Union. As already noted, the island's division

will prevent Turkey from joining the EU. This in turn threatens to lead to an ever more antagonistic relationship between Ankara and the EU, especially if Turkey continues to try to consolidate itself as a leading regional, and perhaps Islamic, power. If the current tensions between the EU and Turkey were to increase, then a divided Cyprus would become the political fault-line between the two. Although seemingly unlikely at this stage, one cannot wholly dismiss the possibility that future tensions between Turkey and the EU could come to a head and a major crisis erupt. By all accounts, Cyprus would appear to be a very good candidate as a catalyst for such a development. Even if Turkey is denied membership of the European Union, there are still very good reasons why the European Union would want to maintain cordial and constructive ties with Ankara. Apart from important questions relating to European security, such as the flow of migrants through Turkey into the EU, Turkey's developing international role means that it will be an important partner on a range of issues. Solving Cyprus would go a long way towards ensuring that the EU and Turkey could have a strong working relationship.

A solution also matters for other international actors. For NATO and the United States, Cyprus has served as a perennial source of concern precisely because of the danger that it could provoke a wider conflict between Greece and Turkey. Although such fears were particularly pronounced during the Cold War, they also remain to this day. It also has a negative effect on NATO in other ways. For example, the Cyprus issue prevents full and effective cooperation between NATO and the European Union.<sup>5</sup> Lastly, the Cyprus issue represents an on-going problem for the United Nations. Although there may be a very good argument to be made that the UN should perhaps walk away from the Cyprus Problem, at least until the two sides show their willingness to really engage with one another, it is unlikely that it will do so, or that it could do so. Even if there was the inclination within UN headquarters to call it quits, the Security Council has vested the Secretary-General with responsibility for trying to find a

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<sup>5</sup> As Taşpınar (2010) noted, 'The second reason Cyprus greatly matters is because of the NATO-EU divide. NATO-EU cooperation is urgent and crucial in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, the Somali coast and Afghanistan ... Using its leverage within NATO, Ankara prevents high-level formal meetings between NATO and the EU's Political and Security Committee on the grounds that Cyprus does not have any security clearance from NATO. Just as Cyprus has the upper hand in the EU, where Turkey is not a member, Turkey has the upper hand in NATO, where Cyprus is neither a member of the alliance nor of NATO's Partnership for Peace, a program of bilateral and security cooperation between individual countries and NATO. As a result, NATO and the EU cannot even talk to each other. This is Turkey's way of reminding the EU that Europe needs to solve the Cyprus Problem if it wants to cooperate with NATO and have access to its facilities and capacity'.



solution to the island's division. For the meantime, it seems unlikely to revise its view of the problem.<sup>6</sup> For this reason, it would appear that the UN secretariat cannot just walk away, even if it wanted to. This situation appears unlikely to change, especially as there is no other credible, and suitably neutral, actor that could step in and take over from the United Nations.

To add to all these arguments, the degree to which the current *status quo* represents a stable and secure situation has been thrown into question by the discovery of significant quantities of natural gas off the south coast of Cyprus. In December 2011 these suspicions were confirmed. Exploratory drilling in one of the 13 offshore blocks established by the Cypriot government indicated that there was anywhere up to 8 trillion cubic feet of natural gas (*Bloomberg*, 29 December 2011). It remains to be seen how much will be found in the others. Suddenly, Cyprus appears to be facing a very bright economic future – a particularly welcome development given the financial problems that it has been facing alongside many of the other southern members of the Eurozone. This has not gone down well in Ankara, or amongst the Turkish Cypriots. The Turkish government has insisted that the Greek Cypriot administration has no right to exploit these resources without the Turkish Cypriots. Such views have received little sympathy elsewhere. Both the United States and the European Union have repeatedly stressed that the Republic of Cyprus is perfectly within its sovereign rights to exploit any resources it finds within its exclusive economic zone (EEZ) (*The National*, 19 September 2011). Unhappy with this, Turkey has continued to voice its objections and has even raised the possibility that it may take military steps to prevent Nicosia from pressing ahead with its attempts to exploit its new found energy. For the meantime, such threats should not be given too much credibility. Again,

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<sup>6</sup> For example, in April 2012, the Security Council met to discuss the latest developments in Cyprus. During the meeting, it was believed that a couple of countries, most notably Britain, had appeared to suggest that alternative options should be explored if a settlement could not be found. However, this was dismissed by the majority of members (UN official, comments to the author, April 2012). Significantly, in its latest report on Turkey, the House of Commons Committee on Foreign Affairs (2012, paras 195–9) recommended that, 'if [the current UN peace] effort fails and there is still no settlement on Cyprus once Cyprus's period as President of the EU Council is completed at the end of 2012, the Government should consider whether any alternative approach to the Cyprus situation, by itself and the international community, might be more likely than previous efforts to yield a settlement'. The possible 'alternative approach' was not specified in the report. However, it is believed that it may include some form of normalisation between the 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus' and the outside world that would fall short of actual formal recognition by individual states; in other words, a form of 'Taiwanisation' would be pursued.

any attempt to use force against Cyprus will automatically lead to a strong diplomatic response from the European Union. At the very least, it will again reconfirm the view held by many in Europe that Turkey is wholly unsuited to membership of a union that is founded on the very principle that no matter how serious the dispute, force, or the threat of force, will not be used to resolve the issue. Still, there is always the danger that posturing could lead to a conflict. While Turkey may have no intention of starting a conflict, accidents can happen when armed forces come into close proximity with one another at times of political tension. Even the act of sending warships to harass drilling platforms could have unforeseen, and unfortunate, consequences.

## Conclusion

For almost 50 years, the United Nations has overseen efforts to try to resolve the political differences between the Greek and Turkish Cypriots. Despite having tried a range of approaches, and focusing on a variety of models for a settlement, the island remains divided. Under these circumstances, and given that the prospect of an armed confrontation has appeared unlikely for quite some time, it is tempting to conclude that there is no longer a pressing need to find a solution to the Cyprus Problem. Certainly, there appears to be caution on the part of the Greek Cypriots to find a settlement. Having apparently reconciled themselves to the continued political division of the island, all the while retaining internationally recognised sovereignty over the entire island, most Greek Cypriots still seem reluctant to accept a loose federation as the price of a solution. For their part, the Turkish Cypriots, while willing to accept the Annan Plan in 2004, have shown that they too would favour their own state over reunification. Meanwhile, Turkey's inclination to press for a solution appears to be dimming as its prospects for joining the European Union recede.

Under these circumstances and quite apart from the depth and range of differences between the two communities, many believe that the current status quo represents a stable situation that can continue indefinitely. However, this is not the case. For the Greek Cypriots, the inexorable changes in the demographic structure of the north, coupled with the consolidation of now legalised Turkish Cypriot control over former Greek Cypriot property in northern Cyprus, means that the militarised division of the island is becoming less and less likely to be dismantled. They may have their own state, but it is a state of insecurity. At the same time, the Turkish Cypriots face a continuation of their 40-year isolation on the world stage. They exist in a state of limbo. Meanwhile, the division of the island has serious consequences for Turkey, Greece, the European Union, NATO and the United Nations. To add to all this, the discovery of what appear



to be major reserves of hydrocarbons is changing the very nature of the security environment in the Eastern Mediterranean. The possibility of armed confrontation is still there. For these reasons, a Cyprus solution is still important. However, whether it can actually be solved, and what that settlement might be, are different questions entirely.

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# Chapter 6

## The Good, the Bad and the Ugly: Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot School Books on the 'History of Cyprus'<sup>1</sup>

Yiannis Papadakis

### Introduction

Depending on the sociohistorical context, the goals of history education may range from the inculcation of national identity to the propagation of moral and political positions, the creation of empathy and presentation of diverse viewpoints or historical analysis and the promotion of critical thinking, among others (Barton and Levstik 2004). However, in many societies, especially those divided by ethno-national conflicts, history is often used to propagate a narrative focussing on the suffering of the nation and to legitimate its political goals. Such narratives are often constructed by employing three major categories of actors: the Good stands for the (National) Self, the Bad for the (enemy) Other and the Ugly for the 'West' who is perceived as usually unjustly siding with the evil Other. Following the textbooks of Greece and Turkey, which are predicated on a discourse of ethnic nationalism, antagonism and animosity, this is how the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot school books have presented the history of Cyprus. Yet, this discourse has faced a major challenge from the history school books produced by the Turkish Cypriot Left, an interesting development – both for theoretical and political reasons – setting Cyprus apart from the hegemonic Turkish and Greek historiographies.

The recent history of Cyprus has been marked by multiple conflicts, which provide the sociopolitical context within which the school books on the history of Cyprus were produced. An outline of the political history of the recent period, highly contested though it is, is necessary as background. A word of caution regarding the limitations and methodology of this study is equally necessary. Discussing the history of Cyprus is akin to stepping into a political and academic minefield, given that most works were written by Greek Cypriot, Turkish Cypriot, Greek, Turkish or British authors in periods of intense violence. Most authors, implicitly or explicitly, used history

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<sup>1</sup> This chapter is a shortened and updated version of Papadakis (2008).

for the legitimization of their side's political objectives and the rejection of others' political demands.<sup>2</sup> That I am not a historian but a Greek Cypriot social anthropologist poses additional challenges. In this chapter, I employ a comparative approach for the examination of Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot history school books as a critical device of defamiliarization. The theoretical discussion highlights the structural problems and limitations of the historical narratives presented in history books by focusing on the *underlying ideological principles* guiding their representations of history. For the analysis of the history books, I employ UNESCO's handbook setting out guidelines for textbook research, which stresses the importance of qualitative analysis in order to 'reveal underlying assumptions' (Pingel 1999, 45). For this reason, this chapter focuses more on books that present the whole of history from 'beginning' to 'end', since this enables the examination of (the whole) narrative, narrative being the key analytical tool employed here. The key principles of analysis adopted from the UNESCO handbook involve the examination of: terms, context and boundaries; the representation of group identity; continuity, legitimacy and exclusion; and history's characters/protagonists (Pingel 1999, 24, 26, 27, 47).

Three centuries of Ottoman rule in Cyprus were succeeded by British colonialism in 1878. The 20th century witnessed the gradual rise first of Greek nationalism and later of Turkish nationalism, with Greek Cypriots supporting *enosis*, the union of Cyprus with Greece, and Turkish Cypriots demanding *taksim*, the partition of Cyprus. From 1955 the Greek Cypriot struggle was led by an armed organization called EOKA (Εθνική Οργάνωση Κυπρίων Αγωνιστών, National Organization of Cypriot Fighters), and in 1958 Turkish Cypriots set up their own armed group called TMT (*Türk Mukavemet Teşkilatı*, Turkish Resistance Organization). In 1960, Cyprus became an independent state, the Republic of Cyprus, with a population of 80 per cent Greek Cypriots and 18 per cent Turkish Cypriots, an outcome that frustrated both communities' political goals. Both ethnic groups continued to pursue their separate objectives, and in 1963 inter-ethnic fighting broke out in Cyprus. This continued intermittently until 1967, with Turkish Cypriots bearing the heavier cost in terms of casualties and around a fifth of their population being displaced.

With the rise to power in Greece of a military junta, the Greek Cypriot leadership gradually edged away from union with Greece and sought instead to preserve the independence of Cyprus, in the face of attempts by Athens to dictate politics, and to solve the intercommunal dispute. While armed confrontations between Turkish and Greek Cypriots ceased after 1967, a new conflict developed, this time among Greek Cypriots. With the support of the Greek junta, a small group of Right-wing extremists

<sup>2</sup> For a critical overview of the various historiographical approaches to the history of Cyprus see Hatay and Papadakis (2012).

calling itself EOKA B staged a coup in 1974 against the island's president, Archbishop Makarios, in order to bring about union. This led to military intervention by Turkey, resulting in the division of the island, followed by population displacements of most Greek Cypriots to the south and Turkish Cypriots northwards. Greek Cypriots suffered most in terms of people killed, missing and all other social costs of dislocation, with around one-third of a total of 600,000 Greek Cypriots displaced to the southern side. Around 45,000 Turkish Cypriots were also displaced to the northern side. In 1983, the Turkish Cypriot authorities unilaterally declared the establishment of their own state in northern Cyprus, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) that has since remained internationally unrecognized except by Turkey. For much of the 20th century another conflict persisted, this time within each ethnic group between forces of the Right and the Left, with its own record of violence against the Left (for a detailed historical account of the Cyprus Problem and current issues of contention, see Ker-Lindsay this volume).

### **Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot School Books: Reflections of Ethnic Nationalism**

Despite their different political goals, the two nationalisms that emerged in Cyprus shared the same form, namely ethnic nationalism (Smith 1991), stressing common history, descent, language, culture and religion with the people of the 'motherlands', Turkey and Greece. Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots were taught only the history of Greece and the history of Turkey respectively, while the history of Cyprus was only relatively recently introduced and with considerably less time allotted. On the Greek Cypriot side, the history of Cyprus has been presented as an extension of the history of Greece, and on the Turkish Cypriot side as an extension of the history of Turkey (Kızılyürek 2002; Koullapis 1999).

The general framework and basic principles of the Greek Cypriot school books are derived from the dominant model of the history of Greece, which posits three key periods: ancient Greece, 'medieval Greece' (the 'glorious Byzantine Empire') and modern Greece (the creation of the Greek state during the 19th and 20th centuries). Emphasis is placed on ancient Greece as the beginning of history, succeeded by 'foreign domination' until the rise of the Byzantine Empire (treated as a glorious 'Greek' empire) and finally liberation from the 'Turkish yoke'. *Hellenism* is the transcendental, transhistorical category informing this historical discourse, positing the historical continuity of Hellenism from ancient to modern times (cf. Chapter 7 by Charalambous).

'Cyprus is and has been Greek and nothing but Greek' is the message conveyed by the cover of the major Greek Cypriot primary-level school book, which shows a row of ancient columns; as for its people: 'Cypriots

were and are Christian Orthodox' (Polydourou 1991, 58). This book covers the Roman period to the present, thus presenting the most complete narrative of the whole of the history of Cyprus in primary school.<sup>3</sup> From the start it subsumes the history of Cyprus within the history of Greece, with the two first sections entitled 'The Conquest of Greece by the Romans' followed by 'The Conquest of Cyprus by the Romans'. This and the other Greek Cypriot school books to be discussed follow the periodization of history as it has been established for the history of Greece, by presenting history 'from above' as a succession of empires/rulers with the suffix – κρατία (domination), signifying oppression, applied to everyone but the (ancient) Greeks or Byzantines, as in Φραγκοκρατία, Ενετοκρατία, Τουρκοκρατία, Αγγλοκρατία (Frankish, Venetian, Turkish and English domination).

In all the books, 'Cypriot Hellenism' is the central actor of history from beginning to end. All the books employ the term Cypriots (Κύπριοι) as equivalent to Greeks (Έλληνες), often within the same sentence or paragraph. As Koullapis (1999, 283) rightly argued, this practice inculcates in the historical consciousness of Greek Cypriots the belief that from the period of the Mycenaeans to the present there have never been any other indigenous population groups except the Greeks or, at the very least, that the presence of any Others was and is parasitic. As a secondary school book puts it in the foreword: 'Many peoples passed over Cyprus or conquered her [sic] ... But her inhabitants safeguarded her Hellenic character created since the Mycenaeans settled in Cyprus' (YAP 2005a, 2). This 'Hellenization' thesis, reproduced in all relevant school books, has attracted considerable academic critique, mostly though from outside Cyprus (Leriuou 2002). According to the logic of this model, others (Turkish Cypriots, for example) have (historically speaking) no rightful place in Cyprus, hence the category 'Cypriots' is constantly used in a manner that excludes them. As the previous quote indicates, the arrival of the Mycenaeans is considered the most important historical event of all, one that has since 'sealed' the Hellenic character of Cyprus.

According to the logic of ethnic nationalism, just as the Byzantines are treated as Greeks, the Ottomans are presented as Turks, with the primary school book having a section on 'The Conquest of Nicosia by the Turks' beginning as follows: 'It was obvious that one day the Turks would try to grab Cyprus. The way that the state of the Sultan expanded, little Cyprus appeared like a weak mouse in the claws of a wild lion' (Polydourou 1991, 69). This sets the tone regarding the Turks who appear as an expansionist and bestially savage people. The Ottoman period is presented in this and other school books in exclusively negative terms: 'As a part of the

<sup>3</sup> For detailed critiques of this book, which also support the findings presented here, see AKTI (2004) and Charalampous and Mihi (2006).

Ottoman Empire, Cyprus followed the fate of the rest of Hellenism. Insults, humiliations, oppression' (YAP 2005b, 92). Numerous pages of gory-detailed descriptions and graphic images of torture and slaughter are provided in the relevant books (for a discussion of negative representations of Turks in Greek history textbooks, see Chapter 3 by Millas).

By contrast, the Byzantine administration is idealized and shown in a positive light with 'Byzantine civilization flourishing' (YAP 2005b, 66). Given that for Turkish Cypriots the ascription 'Turks' is constantly employed (except for rare references to 'Turkish Cypriots' at the very end of the books), this presents them as part of the larger historical category of Turks, who are depicted as a bloodthirsty, hostile and barbaric people. In brief, according to this narrative, history begins with the arrival of 'Greeks' in Cyprus; the 'Greeks' (of Cyprus) are depicted as the protagonists and moral centre of the story from whose perspective events are evaluated, and 1974 subsequently emerges as the tragic end. As Hayden White argues, the use of the narrative form is predicated on the notion of continuity, in this case the presence of a single central actor, namely the (Greek) nation from beginning to end. The use of the narrative form presents history as a moral story from which stems moral injunctions that members of the (national) community ought to obey. In other words, the narrative form presents didactic stories. When history is presented in this form, it claims total objectivity since the events seem to speak for themselves (White 1990 3, 10, 25).

The period of inter-ethnic violence in the 1960s is described only briefly from an exclusively Greek Cypriot viewpoint. Turkish Cypriots are described as 'mutineer Turks' staging provocations, and are held responsible for the conflict. This period is presented as a period of aggression by the 'Turks' (Turkey and Turkish Cypriots) against the 'Greeks' and shown as a period of mostly 'Greek' suffering, when Turkish fighter planes 'spread catastrophe and death among the civilian population', meaning the Greek Cypriots (Polydourou 1991, 116), even if Turkish Cypriot suffering then was by any measure far greater than that of Greek Cypriots.<sup>4</sup>

As for other religious and ethnic groups, the primary-level schoolbook presents various racist stereotypes. The Arabs 'had to follow their herds of sheep, and camels and horses in search of food. They lived nomadic lives. That is how most of them live today' (Polydourou 1991, 35), while the Muslims, 'blind with religious fanaticism ... rush out like lightning against the neighboring countries' (Polydourou 1991, 36). According to a study employing content analysis, this book includes 100 negative references to 'National Others' (the bulk of which refer to Turks) and only two negative references to the 'National Self', as well as five positive references to 'National Others' and 35 to the 'National Self' (Charalampous and Mihi 2006, 38).

<sup>4</sup> For the most exhaustive academic discussion of the 1960s, including statistics of those killed, missing and displaced by both sides, see Patrick (1989).



For the Ottoman period, all relevant books discuss the practice of *εξισλαμισμοί* (forced Islamization). More attention is given to this issue in the secondary school book on medieval/modern history which employs a number of secondary sources with titles such as *The Greek Descent of Turkish Cypriots*, which argues that Turkish Cypriots are primarily descendants of Islamicized Greeks in Cyprus and that even the people initially brought over from Anatolia by the Ottoman authorities were themselves originally of Greek stock (Polydourou 1991, 101; YAP 2005b, 98; YAP 2005c, 154–63). Irrespective of the historical extent of conversions, this is an essentialist argument that relies on principles of racial descent as determining identity, with the term ‘race’ (φυλή) being uncritically presented in a number of cases in the school books (YAP 2005c 162, 234). This argument denies identity to Turkish Cypriots, consequently denying them the possibility of positing any political claims since they do not exist as a ‘real’ ethnic group. Needless to say, the ‘Greeks of Cyprus’ are presented as unproblematically Greek throughout history, and no questions regarding their descent are ever raised.<sup>5</sup> Unsurprisingly, these questions are urgently raised in the Turkish Cypriot school books.

The 2004 Report of the Committee for Educational Reform, which examined the whole Greek Cypriot educational system including history teaching, confirms the major findings presented above, describing it as ‘Helleno-ethnocentric and religious in character’ and noting that ‘the ideological-political framework of contemporary Cypriot [*sic*] education remains Greek-Cypriot centered, narrowly ethnocentric and culturally monolithic’ (EEM 2004 36, 63).

The Turkish Cypriot history textbooks used until 2004 follow the same logic of ethnic nationalism, with the problems previously identified for Greek Cypriot books now amplified, to the extent that these textbooks could themselves provide textbook examples of all that can go wrong with a history textbook. The books were produced at a period when the Right monopolized power on the Turkish Cypriot side with the explicit aim of preserving the *de facto* partition of Cyprus. These books present the history of Cyprus as an integral part of Turkish history. In primary school, children were taught history as part of ‘Social Sciences’. The relevant book features Atatürk, the founder of modern Turkey, on the cover. It opens with the flags of Turkey and the self-declared TRNC superimposed over the national anthem of Turkey, followed by a photo of Atatürk, a practice incidentally also followed in the new books, due to its enforcement by law. The book begins with a chapter on the history of Cyprus (beginning with the Ottoman conquest), followed by a much longer section on the history of Turkey, thus making the link clear (MEKB 1999). As the secondary school book,<sup>6</sup> and

<sup>5</sup> On this point see also Koullapis (1999), 284–5.

<sup>6</sup> This book (Serter 1990) was in use, virtually unchanged, from the early 1970s. A revised version was only briefly employed before the 2004 school book changes,

the one I focus on, argues, 'from a historical-geographical, strategic and economic perspective Cyprus is connected to Anatolia', while 'for Greece, Cyprus has no significance at all either from a historical or from a strategic perspective' (Serter 1990, 7). History begins with the Ottoman conquest of Cyprus, the most important historical event that has since 'sealed' its character, 'to such an extent that Cyprus with today's numerous Turkish monuments has preserved its "Turkish character"' (Serter 1990, 7). If history begins with the Ottoman conquest of Cyprus in 1571, then according to this logic Cyprus has been Turkish for three-quarters of its history (until, that is, the British takeover in 1878). The Ottoman period is glorified as a time of freedom and progress, with long lists and descriptions presented of Ottoman public works and monuments in Cyprus. The Ottomans are presented as having come to Cyprus in order to save the Greek Cypriots from Venetian cruelty, while revolts against the Ottomans are subsequently described as ungrateful Greek Cypriot actions betraying the gracious Ottoman tolerance, a thesis common to the presentation of revolts against the Ottomans in Turkish school books on the history of Turkey.

For Turkey, the phrase 'Our Motherland Turkey' is used throughout the books. Turkish Cypriots are throughout presented as 'Turks' or 'Turks of Cyprus' and are the protagonists and moral centre of this narrative. Greek Cypriots are referred to as *Rum*, a term that in Turkish is currently usually employed to refer to three categories: the Greek Orthodox community (*Rum millet*) living in the Ottoman Empire, present-day Greeks living in Turkey and Greek Cypriots. For Greeks living in Greece, the term *Yunan* (Ionian) is employed. The use of *Rum* for Greek Cypriots implicitly identifies them as previous subjects of the Ottoman Empire, and certainly different from Greeks, thus denying them their claim to a Greek identity and delegitimizing their political demands for union with Greece. As the secondary-level school book declares, 'Present-day Rums in Cyprus are not Greek', but a mixture of various peoples that ruled Cyprus and 'from this perspective it can be seen that Cyprus has no importance for Greece' (Serter 1990, 8).

The period that receives most emphasis in all Turkish Cypriot books discussed here is 1963–74, presented as a continuous barbaric onslaught of 'Rums' against the 'Turks' in Cyprus, all part of a plan (the Akritas Plan, a Greek Cypriot-inspired plan which aimed to bring about union with Greece, by force if necessary, whose origins and implementation are still disputed) designed to eradicate the 'Turks'. According to the same books this was a period when the 'Rums' displayed 'such savagery and barbarism that the world has seldom seen' (Serter 1990, 114). The battles, killings, mass graves and displacements of this period are presented in great detail, village by village and day by day, using gruesome photographs and graphic descriptions. One photograph, for example, presents a Turkish Cypriot man

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which is why the older version that was used for decades is discussed here.

kneeling in front of the charred corpses unearthed from a mass grave. An additional secondary education school book, *The History of the Struggle of the Turks of Cyprus*, is devoted almost exclusively to these years (Serter and Fikretoğlu 1982). The events of 1974 are described in all books as the 'Happy Peace Operation' when the 'Heroic Turkish Army' came to safeguard the 'Turks of Cyprus' and remained ever since. Greek Cypriot suffering is never mentioned for this or any other periods. As others have also observed, this version of the history of Cyprus legitimated the partitionist aims of the Right through the argument that history *proves* that the two communities can never live together (Kızılyürek 2002; POST 2004).

Since the same model of ethnic nationalism is followed, the two histories emerge as mirror-images that share the same structure and underlying assumptions (see Table 6.1 below). Both uncritically treat the nation as ever-present, while the historical and, following this logic, the political existence of others is disputed. History is constructed through Manichean, black and white, good and evil, homogeneous categories. And as George Orwell commented long ago: 'The nationalist not only does not disapprove of atrocities committed by his own side, but he has a remarkable capacity for not even hearing about them' (Orwell 2000, 307). Both are histories 'from above', male-centered and focusing more on the change of dynasties, on diplomatic and political history, with little attention paid to social history, internal differences (whether political, class or gender), interactions and cooperation. War is so pervasive that it emerges as the motor of history to the point where it becomes naturalized as an inescapable characteristic of humans. Both approaches are monoethnic and ethnocentric; both reject the conceptualization of Cyprus as a multicultural and multiethnic space in the past and the present.

Table 6.1 Narratives of the history of Cyprus

	Beginning	Self (Moral centre)	Major enemy (Other)	Plot	End
Greek Cypriot Narrative	Arrival of Greeks (14th century BC) <i>Hellenization of Cyprus</i>	Greeks (of Cyprus)	Turks	A struggle of survival by Cypriot Hellenism against foreign conquerors	1974 Tragic ('Barbaric Turkish Invasion')
Turkish Cypriot Narrative	Arrival of Turks (1571 AD) <i>Turkification of Cyprus</i>	Turks (of Cyprus)	<i>Rums</i> (Greek Cypriots)	A struggle of survival by the Turks of Cyprus against Greek Cypriot aggression	1974 Happy ('Happy Peace Operation')

## The 2005 Turkish Cypriot School Books: A Paradigm Shift

After the 2003 election victory of the Left-wing CTP (*Cumhuriyetçi Türk Partisi*, Republican Turkish Party), it immediately called for a complete change of history books, and three new books covering the history of Cyprus from the arrival of its first inhabitants to the present were soon published in 2004 and revised in 2005. Since this party, along with its supporters, was in favour of reunification and critical of Turkey (Papadakis 2005, 185–206), it was anxious to replace the history books that clearly promoted the opposite goals. In contrast to the Turkocentrism of the Right, the Left was Cypriocentric and leaned more towards a model of civic nationalism (Smith 1991), prioritizing the geopolitical space of Cyprus and expressing affinity with its all inhabitants, in the hope that a joint state would one day materialize. This is clear from the covers of the books, which all depict an outline of Cyprus, with no dividing line, whereas maps by the Right have always marked the division and included Turkey in the area of the map. In the new books a critique is even made of older ones for ‘teaching that Cyprus was a Turkish homeland’ (MEKB 2005b, 65). The differences from the older books, in appearance, content, underlying assumptions and pedagogical approach are striking.<sup>7</sup>

The most important difference lies in their approach to the concepts nation, nationalism and identity. The term ‘motherland’ is no longer used for Turkey, while the terms ‘our island’ or ‘our country’ are often used for Cyprus (MEKB 2005b, 59, 69, 75). The terms ‘Cypriots’ and ‘people [of Cyprus]’, terms that can include both Greek and Turkish Cypriots, are now also used (MEKB 2005b, 59). It is explained that Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots had many similarities and that what divided them were the forces of nationalism and the British divide-and-rule policies (MEKB 2005b, 59). Indeed, various illustrations depicting ‘a Greek Cypriot’ and ‘a Turkish Cypriot’ often present them as exactly the same (MEKB 2005b, 58, 59, 72). The word ‘Turks’ is no longer used for Turkish Cypriots, and the term ‘Turkish Cypriots’ (*Kıbrıslı Türkler*) is preferred throughout, a term placing semantic emphasis on the first part (*Kıbrıslı*). The problematic term *Rum* is still used for Greek Cypriots but in a different form, *Kıbrıslı Rumlar* (*Rum* Cypriots is the closest translation), which is analogous to the term ‘Turkish Cypriots’. These two new terms of identity now share the designation ‘-Cypriots’.

Turkish Cypriots no longer appear as a monolithic category, nor as part of an eternal nation. Instead, the books explain how gradually, due

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<sup>7</sup> See POST (2007) for the most detailed comparison of the new and old Turkish Cypriot school books, whose findings are in broad agreement with the arguments presented here. It also provides a detailed discussion of the significance of iconography in school books.

to the influences of Turkish and Greek nationalisms (themselves part of the wider forces of nationalism sweeping the globe), the Muslims came to identify themselves as Turks and the Orthodox Christians as Greeks, a process in which teachers and school books that came from Turkey and Greece played a crucial role (MEKB 2005b, 56, 65). Nationalism is mostly presented negatively, as a divisive and conflictual ideology. The new books lay comparatively more blame on Greek Cypriots; yet, the difference from the previous books, in which Greek Cypriots alone were blamed for everything, is striking (Papadakis 2008, 20–21).

The period 1963–74, which in the previous books was presented in a uniform manner as a period of Greek Cypriot barbarism ('Dark Years'), is now divided into two, with 1963–67 labelled 'The Difficult Years', and 1967–74, up to the coup, as 'A New Period for Cyprus' (MEKB 2005c, 92–113, 114–21). This period now constitutes only a small part of the whole (three-volume) *History of Cyprus* (MEKB 2005a, MEKB 2005b, MEKB 2005c), in contrast to the previous books where it received the most emphasis. Gruesome descriptions are now avoided, and where violence against Turkish Cypriots is mentioned, it is noted that it was carried out by 'certain' Greek Cypriots (MEKB 2005c, 126). Similarly, ethnic groups are not depicted as being homogeneous throughout history, but internal divides and conflicts are often presented, such as the divisions in the 20th century among Greek Cypriots – who are shown as being split between the Right (including the Church) and Left (especially AKEL),<sup>8</sup> and later between those supporting Makarios and the EOKA B (MEKB 2005c, 54, 84, 118–9) – and among Turkish Cypriots, who are shown as having been split between the Traditionalists and the Kemalists (MEKB 2005b, 76–7). Indications of internal violence among Turkish Cypriots are also provided, with TMT described as having been used also 'for the settlement of personal scores, and some of its activities caused reactions among Turkish Cypriots' (MEKB 2005c, 64).

History is no longer presented as a monolithic story of conflict; instead, conscious emphasis is placed on examples of coexistence and cooperation, and there is a shift from political and diplomatic history towards social, cultural and economic history (POST 2007). Many examples are presented from the Ottoman period to the present when cooperation was an aspect of daily life, from common workers' struggles to music, football and trade (MEKB 2005b 32, 39; MEKB 2005c 22, 32, 46–8, 51, 110–111), and mundane events like eating and drinking together.

Moreover, Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots are shown as having suffered together, for example from the heavy taxation imposed by the British, and as having died together when they served in the joint Cypriot

<sup>8</sup> AKEL (Progressive Party of Working People) is a communist party that has commanded significant popular support among Greek Cypriots and was often critical of the nationalist policies of the Greek Cypriot Right.

contingent of the British army during World War II (MEKB 2005c, 19, 21). The 1962 murders of two pro-cooperation Turkish Cypriot journalists are castigated as a violent attack against voices for peace and cooperation (MEKB 2005c, 86). The political rapprochement between Turkish President Kemal Atatürk and Greek Prime Minister Eleftherios Venizelos during the 1930s is now presented as an exemplary event (MEKB 2005b, 74). Regarding the events of 1974, the following comment is made:

Now for the first time Greek Cypriots tasted the bitterness that Turkish Cypriots had experienced for many years before. They, like Turkish Cypriots in previous years, were forced to abandon their homes and villages, and due to the war they also lost their loved ones like Turkish Cypriots had (MEKB 2005c, 126).

This could be interpreted as brushing aside Greek Cypriot suffering by saying that it was now their turn to suffer, but it could also be interpreted as attempting to create empathy with Greek Cypriots through the Turkish Cypriots' own painful experiences, which, according to the book's authors, was precisely their aim.<sup>9</sup> In any case, the very reference to Greek Cypriot suffering, which had previously been omitted, is significant, even though it is not given the coverage allotted, for example, to Turkish Cypriot suffering during the 1960s, which is extensively described with the aid of photographs, memoirs and other accounts.

The books remain ethnocentric to a significant extent, although now from a Turkish Cypriot rather than a Turkish perspective, due to greater coverage of issues such as social life, monuments and culture, the press and political personalities of the Turkish Cypriot community. As the preface states:

In Cyprus, with centuries of coming and going, the Turkish Cypriot community has created its own history. So we, ourselves, should write the history we created and teach it to the new generations.

Thus, the term 'Peace Operation' is still employed (though no longer as '1974 Happy Peace Operation'), a description that does not represent but erases the Greek Cypriot experience. Almost all primary sources presented in the text are from Turkish Cypriot authors, but Left-wing writers such as the assassinated journalist Kutlu Adalı, who had previously been considered pro-Greek Cypriot and akin to traitor, are now included (MEKB 2005c, 66). Adequate attention is still not given to issues related to gender, nor to the smaller communities of Armenians, Maronites and Latins (Roman Catholics), nor to past and present migration movements.

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<sup>9</sup> Personal communication with Gül Barkay, 11 November 2006.



Despite these general weaknesses and others that a team of history specialists on different periods could potentially identify, the new books represent a positive and subversive move away from the old model, based on contemporary trends of historical analysis and teaching. The reasons for these changes are academic, ideological and political. These books were created by teams of teachers in conjunction with young academics versed in recent theoretical trends, who consider the nation as a historical construct rather than as a suprahistorical natural entity, avoid treating groups as homogeneous and pay considerable attention to social history. Various references to Greek Cypriot authors are presented in the bibliographies, unlike in the previous books (even though Greek Cypriot school books do not cite Turkish Cypriot authors). As a result of the cooperation with teachers, the books are livelier, more enjoyable and user friendly, including numerous photographs, drawings, diagrams and primary sources, with efforts to instill in students a critical approach towards history (for example MEKB 2005c 14, 19, 21, 22, 30, 46). The ideological reasons include the Left's more pronounced interest in the 'lower' classes, internal differentiations, social history and 'history from below', as well as its own experiences of violence from the Right of their own side, which made it obvious that violence was never the monopoly of Greek Cypriots. It is not surprising that the Turkish Cypriot minority has been the first to firmly place multiculturalism on the agenda, given that the majoritarian '(one) nation-(one) state' perspective excludes it, as the Greek Cypriot school books blatantly do.

The emergent Turkish Cypriot political aim of reunification required modifying the previous narrative of uncompromising conflict, and the goal of a joint state with Greek Cypriots led to an effort, albeit limited and incomplete, to include their perspective as well. If identity is no longer presented in essentialist terms ('in the blood' and unchanging), but rather shown to be constructed in a historical process of choice and change, this leaves the way open for it to be reformulated within a joint future state.

## Conclusion

The new Turkish Cypriot history textbooks, unlike the ones previously discussed, cannot fit into a narrative schema, primarily because of the lack of a clearly defined central protagonist (that is, the nation) present from beginning to end. Not only is identity shown to change throughout history, but ascriptions of identity now emerge as simplifications since they refer to internally differentiated groups with diverse political goals. Returning to the filmic allusion in the chapter's title, an analogy with a genre of Hollywood film, the action thriller, can be illuminating at this point. Such filmic narratives usually involve clear-cut characters (a good

protagonist, an evil antagonist) who are unambiguously good or evil, and who do not change (or 'mature') but appear unchanging from beginning to end. The film has a clear meaning (usually the eventual triumph of the protagonist) and does not require any effort or reflection on the part of the spectator. As with many national histories, these films are violent stories of (justified) revenge and retribution. The eventual, often gruesome and graphic, punishment of the antagonist is welcomed by the audience in providing the much-anticipated (just) catharsis. This narrative form can provide a compelling story with a clear meaning, where the audience can easily identify with the (all-too-good) protagonist.

The change of historical model attempted in the new books has interesting implications regarding notions of blame and trauma, as the analogy with films also indicates. According to the old model, if the Self (and the Enemy) was the same character throughout history, any injury to the National Self in the past is an injury to the current Self too, calling for revenge or retribution against those currently designated as descendants and hence part of the Enemy. Since in the new model this no longer applies, the chain of recrimination and demand for retribution can be broken. The awareness of internal differentiations within each group reinforces this point by breaking down the notion of homogeneity, even when the discussion concerns recent events where a stronger notion of continuity related to current political communities may apply. Moreover, the new model makes it possible to become more critical of distant pasts previously treated as the past of one's nation. The new Turkish Cypriot books can now engage more critically with, for example, the Ottoman period, and they do so by refraining from the previous outright glorification and indicate mismanagement and corruption (MEKB 2005b, 23). The beginning of history now ceases to be the determining factor linking an ethnic group with a territory, if it was 'others', and not 'ourselves' who lived in those times. This new understanding of the past can undermine the argument so often used in ethnic disputes that 'we were here first' or 'historically this land is ours'.

The abandonment of the narrative form, that is, of history as a story of the nation, also entails a rejection of the notion that history has a single meaning, and of history as primarily a moral story. No single meaning or lesson, such as 'Cyprus is Turkish/Greek' or 'the past shows that people can/cannot not live together', can now be derived from history as presented in the new Turkish Cypriot books. This means that the future is no longer presented as historically determined, but is left open as a political choice. The same applies with respect to the future political identity (better *identities*, as the new books suggest by noting internal differentiations) of Turkish (and Greek) Cypriots. This kind of choice was inconceivable according to the previous primordialist model based on the 'identification stance' whereby the political community emerged as preordained from the deep



historical past, a model that precisely because it precludes political choices in the present has been criticized as undemocratic (Barton and Levstik 2004 49, 63). This is not to deny that the new Turkish Cypriot books clearly propose a new identity as 'Turkish Cypriots' and/or 'Cypriots' (instead of 'Turks'). The novelty lay in their understanding of the concept of *identity* as internally diverse, historically changing and a result of political choice, rather than as homogeneous, unchanging and historically determined.

As soon as the Right-wing UBP (*Uluslararası Birlik Partisi*, National Unity Party) came to power in April 2009, a party supporting separation rather than reunification, it replaced the CPT-produced Turkish Cypriot history books with new ones based on the previously employed principles of ethnic nationalism. The UBP books use the newer pedagogical methods, including colourful illustrations and study questions, as did the CTP books, but the text and intent of the new books closely resemble that of the earlier book by Serter (1990). The cover of the 10th-grade book (MEGSB 2009) is indicative of the content. It presents Turkish Cypriots victimized by Greek Cypriots (Turkish Cypriot refugees fleeing), Turkish Cypriots living in refugee camps and their triumphant liberation by the Turkish army waving Turkish flags, a return to the more simplistic (yet possibly more compelling) story form.

But does a more compelling story form necessarily lead to a greater efficacy in books getting their messages across? The discussion in this chapter has taken place from the perspective of the school books as *sources* of knowledge. To evaluate history education comprehensively, it is necessary to also examine the *reception* (that is, how students *negotiate* the books) as well as the *mediums* (how teachers *employ* the books). Given that neither teachers nor students are passive, a shift of focus on practices and reception is necessary to complete this story.

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## Chapter 7

# ‘Whether You See Them as Friends or Enemies You Need to Know Their Language’: Turkish-language Learning in a Greek Cypriot School

Constadina Charalambous

### Introduction

Following recent political negotiations, in April 2003, the (Greek Cypriot) Ministry of Education in Cyprus decided on the introduction of Turkish as a modern foreign language in secondary education. Although Turkish has been an official language of the Republic of Cyprus since its inception in 1960, it had never been part of Greek Cypriot formal curricula. This initiative, although in line with the EU processes and the UN attempts – at the time – for the resolution of the Cyprus Issue, seemed to be in contrast with the dominant nationalist discourses still evident in the Greek Cypriot community (for a historical account of the Cyprus Issue and current issues of contention, see Chapter 5 by Ker-Lindsay). These discourses, along with the island’s recent history of violent conflict, have been constructing the neighbouring community as ‘The Other’<sup>1</sup> and accordingly the Turkish language as the ‘language of the enemy’.

Taking Cyprus’ sociohistorical background into consideration, the present chapter looks at Turkish-language classes in order to investigate the discursive, subtle re-negotiation of the relationship between ‘us’ and ‘the others’ that took place during the lessons. The ideological conflict between, on the one hand, the reconciliatory rhetoric accompanying the setting up of the Turkish-language classes and, on the other hand, the dominant ‘othering’ representations offered by the powerful nationalist educational discourses had significant implications on both language teaching and classroom interaction. By attending closely at classroom talk and the discursive resources that the teacher and students drew on, the

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<sup>1</sup> Note that I use ‘Other’ when the word denotes the ‘primary national Other’ and ‘other’ to differentiate between ‘us’ and ‘others’ without necessarily negative evaluation.

chapter sheds light on the complicated inter-ethnic relations in Cyprus and reveals the difficulties in constructing a 'legitimate' representation of the people whose language was taught in the classroom.

More specifically, as I will argue, the official and popular representation of the Turks /Turkish Cypriots<sup>2</sup> as 'The Other' presented a serious challenge for the Turkish-language teacher. In order to deal with this challenge and escape from inimical representations of the target-community, the teacher tried to adopt a 'neutral' discourse by focusing mainly on grammar and vocabulary teaching, and by avoiding, as far as possible, any explicit reference to Turks and Turkish Cypriots. Aiming to explain the complexities involved in an educational attempt to go against the hegemonic discourses and construct a positive representation of 'the others', the chapter focuses on two sessions that the teacher dedicated to 'culture'. As I will show, even in the two 'language and culture' sessions, the Turkish-language teacher managed to avoid teaching the target culture by a) bringing into the class a Greek song with Turkish lyrics on the first occasion, and b) by confining the content of the second lesson to the discussion of the Muslim traditions of the Arab countries.

In what follows I will firstly discuss the interplay of language, education and ethnic identity in the Greek Cypriot community as well as the impact of nationalist ideologies on the development of Greek-Turkish bilingualism. Then, I will present and analyse data from the linguistic ethnographic study that I conducted on Turkish-language classes,<sup>3</sup> focusing particularly on two 'culture-lessons'. The chapter concludes with some remarks on the limitations and potential of Other-language teaching and learning in changing inter-ethnic relations.

## **Language, Identity and Education in the Greek Cypriot Community**

In Cyprus, the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities have a long history of conflict that dates back to the beginning of the 20th century, when the two hitherto religious communities (Christian and Muslim) came to imagine

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<sup>2</sup> As the Turkish language is common for both Turks and Turkish Cypriots, during the lessons, it was most of the time unclear whether people's comments referred to Turks or Turkish Cypriots. Generally, during the interviews, participants tended to use the phrase 'the others' to refer to the neighbouring community, and in spontaneous interaction they often used the label 'Turks' to refer both to Turks and Turkish Cypriots. Nevertheless, occasionally participants did use the label 'Turkish Cypriots' as well, usually for making a distinction from the mainland Turks. On those occasions, the label 'Turkish Cypriots' carried mostly positive connotations, see Charalambous (2009).

<sup>3</sup> This study was part of my doctoral research at King's College London and was funded by the School of Social Sciences and Public Policy.

themselves as part of the broader – and at the time rival – ethnolinguistic groups of Greeks and Turks (Bryant 2004). Language played an important role in the two communities developing an ‘ethnolinguistic’ identity, as it could confirm sameness with their ‘motherland’ and difference to the other Cypriot community. In general, scholars agree that language was perceived by both communities as a salient part of their ethnic identity and as a precondition to their survival (Bryant 2004; Karoulla-Vrikki 2004; Kızılyürek and Gautier-Kızılyürek 2004; also Chapter 3 by Millas, Chapter 8 by Mackridge and Chapter 14 by Dragonas and Frangoudaki).

Before the establishment of the nationalist discourse, the local variety of Greek, which was the language of the majority, had become the *lingua franca* in Cyprus between the two communities. In some small towns/villages, it had even become the language of communication between Turkish Cypriots as well, and, thus, in 1902, the Turkish Cypriot School Board decided to appoint Turkish-Greek bilingual teachers in primary schools in these areas (Ozerk 2001).<sup>4</sup> Still, as Ozerk (2001) argues, bilingualism was not reciprocal since the majority of Greek Cypriots had never been communicatively competent in Turkish (see also Karoulla-Vrikki 2004; Karyole mou 2003).

Unsurprisingly, the growing hostility between the two communities, a consequence of the rising nationalism in the mid-20th century, had a negative impact on the development of Turkish-Greek/Greek-Turkish bilingualism on the island. With nationalism reaching a climax (second half of the 20th century), the two communities constructed each other as historically and culturally incompatible, and speaking the language of the ‘Other’ was not acceptable anymore (Kızılyürek and Gautier-Kızılyürek 2004; Ozerk 2001).<sup>5</sup> Arguing for the ‘Greekness’ and ‘Turkishness’ of the two communities respectively, the ultimate aspiration of both nationalist movements in Cyprus was a union with the respective mainlands (Greece and Turkey), something that would later have a negative impact on the newly founded Republic of Cyprus. Nevertheless, at around the same time, an alternative ideology also emerged, which remained repressed by the dominant nationalisms. In contrast to nationalist discourses, this ideology emphasized the common identity, the common ‘Cypriotness’, of all Cyprus people, and in both communities it emerged predominantly from leftist circles (Mavratsas 1997; Papadakis 2005; Panayiotou 2006a, 2006b).

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<sup>4</sup> In the late 19th century, Greek was introduced as a subject in Turkish Cypriot high schools, but it was removed in the 1950s.

<sup>5</sup> A characteristic example was the nationalist campaign ‘Citizen Speak Turkish’ which was inaugurated in 1958. This campaign was aiming for Turkish Cypriots’ acquisition of Standard Modern Turkish and not only encouraged the use of Turkish instead of Greek but it even penalized those who spoke Greek or even just used Greek words (Kızılyürek and Gautier-Kızılyürek 2004).

When Cyprus became independent in 1960, both languages were recognized as official languages, and linguistic equality was ensured through the parallel use of both languages in all state bodies, organizations and documents. Both languages were also used in road signs, stamps, coins, bank notes and so on (Karyolemou 2003). However, education remained 'strictly communal' and monolingual (Karyolemou 2003, 364) and therefore people did not develop bilingual communicative abilities. Besides, the intercommunal conflicts, which started as early as 1963, led to the separation of the two communities and their concentration in different areas. Finally, in 1974, the 'Turkish invasion' for Greek Cypriots or 'the Peace Operation' for Turkish Cypriots resulted in the total division of the two communities with real, physical borders, which until 2003 remained impassable (for the development of divergent dominant historical narratives in the two communities see Papadakis 2005; Chapter 6; Killoran 1998, 2000).

Within this context, speaking the language of the opposite community seemed not only undesirable but indeed a sign of betrayal of one's own nation and ethnic group (Ozerk 2003). As a result, the Turkish language, though an official language of the Republic of Cyprus, was never included in any formal Greek Cypriot school curricula until 2003. In general, education in Cyprus has always been restricted within the ethnolinguistic borders of each community (Karyolemou 2003), and, in both communities, schools were responsible for maintaining links with their respective 'motherlands' and creating what Bryant (2004, 127) calls 'true Greeks' or 'true Turks'. Concerning Greek Cypriot education, on which this chapter focuses, there is common agreement amongst most educational researchers that it has been dominated by ethnocentric discourses, with 'Hellenic Paideia'<sup>6</sup> being the ultimate goal of formal schooling (Koutselini-Ioannidou 1997; Ioannidou 2012; Papadakis 2008; Spyrou 2006).

Furthermore, ethnographic research in Greek Cypriot schools has shown that 'the Turks' have been constructed in Greek Cypriot classrooms, textbooks and national celebrations as the 'primary Other' (Spyrou 2006; Christou 2007; Hadjipavlou-Trigeorgis 2000), and that the emotion of 'fear' is often evoked for maintaining the division between 'us' and the 'enemy' (Zembylas 2009, 187–99). It is noteworthy here that, although

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<sup>6</sup> 'Paideia' (παιδεία) is commonly understood in Greek as a concept much wider than 'education' (εκπαίδευση), which has a more narrow and institutional sense. With the insertion of the adjective 'Hellenic' (ελληνική), Paideia becomes associated with the Greek 'cultural heritage', and, as an educational objective, is considered to be the means of transmitting to the youth the values and ideals of Ancient Greek civilization. Particularly when used in the context of Greek Cypriot education, Hellenic Paideia has been regarded as both a goal and vehicle through which young people could be educated, or even 'enlightened', by 'Greekness' (see Charalambous 2009).



the alternative ideology of 'common Cypriotness' did exist and the leftist Greek Cypriot party AKEL, even after the 1974 war, promoted the idea of 'rapprochement' organizing several bi-communal events in the buffer zone or abroad (Papadakis 2005; Panayiotou 2006a, 2006b), this ideology had never been part of official educational discourses.

It appears, therefore, that the dominance of ethnocentrism in the Greek Cypriot educational sphere has traditionally left little, if any, space for a reconciliatory discourse. After 2003, however, things began to change.

### Introducing the Language of 'The Other' in Greek Cypriot Education

The years 2003–04 were marked by significant sociopolitical changes. In April 2003, the two communities, who had until then been in almost total isolation, were able to cross the 'borders' for the first time since 1974 (or in some areas even since 1963). Furthermore, in April 2004, the two communities had their first opportunity to solve the political problem (the so-called 'Cyprus Issue'), along the lines of a UN plan known as 'the Annan Plan', which was eventually rejected by the majority of Greek Cypriots. A few days later, on 1 May 2004, the Republic of Cyprus joined the EU with the *acquis communautaire* suspended in the northern non-government-controlled areas.

These sociopolitical changes did not leave the educational field unaffected. In April 2003, in the midst of negotiations for Cyprus' entry into the EU, the (Greek) Cypriot government announced the introduction of the Turkish language as an optional course in the formal modern foreign languages curriculum in Greek Cypriot secondary schools. The introduction of Turkish in formal state education was part of a package of measures offered by the government in support of the Turkish Cypriots, as a response to the Turkish Cypriot authorities' opening of two gates across the buffer zone in Nicosia that had been announced a week earlier. As part of the same measures, free Greek- and Turkish-language classes were established for Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot adults respectively. This was the first time in the history of Greek Cypriot education that the Turkish language was recognized and legitimized in formal educational institutions, and its introduction seemed also to have symbolic significance (Rampton and Charalambous 2012). At least in the official Cyprus Ministry of Education discourses, these classes appeared to be meant as a first reconciliatory step, as they were expected to bring the two communities closer and, by extension, to contribute to the two communities' peaceful coexistence.<sup>7</sup> The reconciliatory purposes that these

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<sup>7</sup> The second step was in 2008, when the Ministry of Education set a general educational objective for both primary and secondary education, which called on all teachers to promote the concept of 'peaceful coexistence' between Greek Cypriots



classes were expected to serve is evident in the following interview extract by the head of State Institutes for Further Education.

Extract 1:<sup>8</sup>

Mr Filippou: Especially here in Cyprus, this [learning the language of the other] means that the two sides will keep coming closer and closer to each other (...) by learning the language you get many things out of that country and in the particular case I'm sure that the Turkish Cypriots who learn Greek come also closer to Greek Cypriots (...) it [language learning] brings you closer with the culture and the tradition, the civilization of the people that speak this language and I think that learning the language of the other brings you closer and combats racism, bigotry and any separatist phenomena (Interview, 9/1/2007).

The senior ministry official's statement above, explaining the government's rationale behind the introduction of the Turkish language, is also in line with current language teaching theories, arguing that language learning can assist learners' development of intercultural awareness and positive attitudes towards the target-community (see for example Byram 1997; Byram and Risager 1999; Kaikkonen 1997; Mughan 1999). The idea that language learning brings people closer was also expressed by adult Greek- and Turkish-language learners, and there is evidence that during adult afternoon lessons, Greek- and Turkish-language teachers tried to provide space for intercommunal contact (see Charalambous 2009; Rampton and Charalambous 2012). However, when the same policy was enacted into the secondary school classrooms, the reconciliatory purpose of these lessons came into conflict with the discourse of Hellenocentrism,<sup>9</sup> which has traditionally dominated Greek Cypriot formal education.

### **A Linguistic Ethnographic Project on Other-Language Classes**

From September 2006 to January 2007 I conducted ethnographic fieldwork and observed a total of 95 hours of Other-language learning classes, out of

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and Turkish Cypriots. The objective, though undoubtedly significant, was met with strong resistance by teachers and teachers' trade unions (see Zembylas et al. 2011).

<sup>8</sup> All names cited in the extracts are pseudonyms. All interviews were conducted and coded in Greek; subsequently, I translated all relevant extracts into English.

<sup>9</sup> Hellenocentrism is a term used by scholars to define the discourse stressing 'the Greekness of Greek Cypriots' as opposed to Cypriotcentrism, a traditionally leftist discourse which emphasises the shared Cypriot origin or identity that embraces all the communities living on the island (Philippou 2007, 71).

which 46 were recorded. Data were collected from both secondary school classrooms and adult language classes in state institutions for further education. As this chapter is primarily concerned with formal education, I will only focus here on the data collected in two Turkish-language classrooms in a Greek Cypriot High School (Λύκειο) in Nicosia. The school was selected after I established contact with the teacher, Mr Andreas, who was willing to allow me to sit in his class for approximately three months. One of the classes (B1) was a beginner's class and Mr Andreas' favourite one, as it included a lot of high-achieving and diligent students, whilst the second class (C1) was a second-year class which Mr Andreas used to call 'the wild kids'. In both classes, I carried out a total of 32 hours of observations out of which 13½ were recorded. Semi-structured interviews were also conducted with the Turkish-language teacher and 21 students, as well as with Cyprus Ministry of Education officials. Data collection and analysis were in line with linguistic ethnography, a research approach that combines ethnographic methodology with analytical frameworks from sociolinguistics in order to examine the relationship between macro-social processes and the micro-reality of moment-to-moment interaction (Rampton et al. 2004; Rampton 2007).

Dealing with Greek Cypriot discourses of animosity against the 'Turks' emerged as a problem that all three Turkish-language teachers interviewed appeared to face. For example, Mr Dimitris, one of the Turkish-language teachers, reported that he was often questioned by students in his school who were non-Turkish-language learners about his decision to study the Turkish language. Despite his authority status as a teacher, Mr Dimitris seemed to hesitate to provide the students with a definitive answer. As he admitted, 'the reply I give them is like Pythia:<sup>10</sup> "whether you see them as friends or enemies you need to know their language"'. Moreover, Mr Andreas, the focal teacher of this research, stated that several times he had faced negative reactions from fellow teachers when he revealed to them his teaching subject.

#### Extract 2:

Mr Andreas: There were reactions, there are, and there will always be. In the sense that the students themselves accuse the other students, those who choose Turkish, of being traitors. I have also been accused myself, not a long time ago ... just twenty days ago a teacher in a school, when I told him that I teach Turkish he made the sign of the cross<sup>11</sup> ... as if he was to say to me 'what kind of world do we live in! In a country where they have occupied half of it and we are studying their language!' (Interview 18/12/2006).

<sup>10</sup> Pythia, commonly known as the Oracle of Delphi, was priestess at the Temple of Apollo at Delphi who delivered enigmatic prophecies.

<sup>11</sup> A religious gesture that it is also used to denote extreme surprise.

In a similar vein, all 21 students I interviewed confirmed being called 'traitors' (and some of them also 'communists') by their peers because they had chosen Turkish as their Modern Foreign Language option. In the following extract, for example, two 16-year-old learners of Turkish discuss their peers' reactions towards their Turkish-language learning.

Extract 3:

- 1 Giorgos: They say that Turkish language is for communists
- 2 and for communism and ...
- 3 Monica: Yeah! They [school peers] think we are traitors
- 4 because of learning their [Turkish] language!
- 5 They told that to me many times (Interview, 8/1/2007).

In classroom interaction, it emerged that the dominance of Hellenocentrism in formal education had a very significant impact on language teaching, and the history of conflict was a constant backdrop in the lessons. Being familiar with the dominant discourses of Turkish otherness, Turkish-language learners themselves occasionally made negative comments about the 'Turks' and they resisted a positive representation of the 'Other' in the classroom (Charalambous 2009). In addition to the students' reactions, the competing ideological representations of 'us' and 'them', offered by different political traditions in Greek Cypriot society, represented a significant challenge to the language teacher. On the one hand, the teacher could not endorse the hegemonic discourse of inter-ethnic hostility as this could result in clearly rendering Turkish in the classroom as the language of the enemy. On the other hand, arguing against this discourse or employing explicitly reconciliatory talk could have leftist connotations and, therefore, result in the teacher being considered politically biased (Charalambous 2012).

More specifically, as it will become clearer in the following section, Mr Andreas' main preoccupation was *not* to evoke in the classroom the animosity between the Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, and, at the same time, *not* to argue explicitly against the popular and institutional discourses of 'otherness'. This was accomplished, firstly, by limiting, as far as possible, his references to Turks/Turkish Cypriots (avoiding to even name them), and focusing instead on grammar and vocabulary; and secondly, by avoiding both explicitly negative statements that targeted the Turks/Turkish Cypriots, as well as positive statements about the 'Turks' as a collective entity. In this way, Mr Andreas could escape the challenge of arguing against the traditional representation of the Turks, whilst keeping in line with current EU anti-racist discourses. Finally, he could also escape from reproducing a particularly negative image of the Turks, which would not be favourable in a Turkish-language classroom. In what follows, I will

present data from the two lessons that Mr Andreas dedicated to the target culture, in order to examine how he handled talk about 'the Others' whose language was being taught in the classroom.

### *Olmasa Mektubun:*<sup>12</sup> A Turkish Version of a Greek Song

Mr Andreas was a very good and dedicated teacher who always tried to engage the students in the lesson (for example by 'fun' vocabulary games such as crosswords, bingo for learning the numbers and so on). In his effort to make the lesson pleasant Mr Andreas promised the students he would bring a Turkish song, as part of 'culture teaching'. However, the song he brought to the students was a Turkish adaptation of a well-known Greek song, thus limiting the 'Turkishness' of the lesson to merely the language. Mr Andreas played this song to both classes I was observing and to his colleagues in the staff room. In what follows, I present three extracts from the three different occasions on which Mr Andreas introduced the song. Extract 4 takes place in class B1, after students had listened to the song twice; extract 5 takes place in class C1, almost immediately after students had listened to the song; and extract 6 takes place in the staff room. As it becomes evident in the three extracts below, Mr Andreas appeared rather troubled when he talked about this hybrid song consisting of Greek music with Turkish lyrics, assuming that on all occasions the listeners would consider the song as being 'stolen' by the 'Turks'.

#### Extract 4:<sup>13</sup>

- 1 Mr Andreas: Children now you will be thinking that they stole
- 2 the song from us. And you will be saying 'but it's
- 3 ours!' There are many Greek songs which are ... (.)
- 4 composed with Turkish lyrics. So it is not only
- 5 them who take from us but we take from them too ...
- 6 There is a tendency now ... with the European
- 7 Union and with globalization to ... to become a ...
- 8 Andri: A global village
- 9 Mr Andreas: Everything is common now ...
- 10 Music unites people.

<sup>12</sup> This is the Turkish title of the song translated as '*If it Weren't your Letter*'. The Greek song is entitled 'Όλα σε Θυμίζουν' (Everything reminds me of you).

<sup>13</sup> For transcription conventions, see Appendix 1. Note that the line numbering of some of the excerpts has been re-formatted by the editor for typesetting purposes.

- 11 I don't like the phrase 'stole' ...  
 12 Nazım Hikmet is a Turkish poet who wrote many lyrics  
 13 that were used in many Greek songs  
 (B1 class, recorded lesson, 30/12/2006).

## Extract 5:

- 1 Mr Andreas: I brought a Greek song for you to listen to  
 2 Kyriakos: [Greek-voiced {ελληνόφωνο}]  
 3 Mr Andreas: [so that it is pleasant to the ears  
 4 At least the music!  
 5 The lyrics ok they are difficult!  
 6 Mr Andreas: Manos Loizos {sic}<sup>14</sup> has written many songs with  
 7 Turkish lyrics (.) I mean this ... it's not ... (.)  
 8 I don't know about this song ...  
 9 they don't steal err (.) it's not- ehm: (.)  
 10 They didn't steal it children from us the Turks (.)  
 11 I mean we also-  
 12 Eh we take from the Turks and the Turks take from us  
 13 From the Greeks in general  
 14 I mean (.) many Turkish poets like Nazım Hikmet  
 15 ((Mr Andreas moves towards the cd player to get it ready for re-playing the song;  
 student background talk))  
 16 Mr Andreas: Nazım Hikmet wrote many poems  
 17 and (.) Manos Loizou has taken his lyrics  
 18 and made them into songs he wrote the music  
 19 [both in Turkish and in Greek  
 20 Dimos: [((whispering in English)) Let's talk to the radio-mic now  
 21 Mr Andreas: So I mean [it doesn't m- they were collaborating  
 22 Dimos: [( ) ((doesn't sound Greek-imperceptible))  
 23 Mr Andreas: =and ... as you know yourselves there are a lot of English  
 24 songs in Greek and a lot of Greek songs in ... English  
 25 I mean (.) here there is no ... (.) stealing let's say {it} is ...  
 26 {there isn't} any a stealing-action  
 27 it's (.) a collaboration  
 28 ((he continues his talk by providing information about Nazım Hikmet and a  
 famous poem he has written))  
 (C1 Class, recorded lesson, 30/11/2006).

<sup>14</sup> Manos Loizos is the Greek composer of the song.

Extract 6:

((Mr Andreas is carrying the cd-player with him. He is addressing one of his colleagues, a Greek-language teacher)) Mr Andreas: Let me play something to you now that will make your hair fall from your head ((he plays the first line of the song and then switches it off)). I don't think you want to hear more ((he laughs)). And if you are thinking now 'They stole it' I inform you that there are many Greek songs based on Turkish lyrics and [lyrics] by Nazım Hikmet (Fieldnotes, staff room, 30/11/06).

It is intriguing that Mr Andreas felt the need to account for this song with three different audiences, that is the 'good' class (B1), the 'wild kids' (C1) and his colleagues. Even more intriguing is that in all three cases he used the verb 'steal'. 'Stealing' is not a word normally used in the case when a song is adapted into another language. In fact, the Greek word διασκευή (adaptation/version) would have been a more suitable choice. Moreover, the adaptation or remake of a song is not unusual in general. Specifically in the Greek music scene, there are many Greek adaptations of American, British, Italian (and so on) songs, which are actually very popular, sometimes in both the original and the adapted version. Nonetheless, Mr Andreas appeared rather convinced that in each instance his audience would assume that the song was 'stolen'.

Mr Andreas' certainty that all three different audiences would have thought that the Turks 'stole our song' reveals how widespread he considered the discourse of the 'Turks stealing' to be, and points to the challenges he faced in his effort to refute it. His uneasiness and inconvenience, particularly in the class that he considered as less easy to handle, suggest that the stereotype he tried to argue against was, or at least he regarded it to be, a very powerful one. The hesitations, pauses and repairs that mark his speech reveal that he was in a somehow difficult situation, even though he did not meet any resistance in accomplishing his task. Still, although he gradually rejects the word 'stealing' and manages to replace it with the idea of 'collaboration', he does not manage to argue against the more general discourse of the 'Turks stealing', as evidenced by the subtle shift in his talk in C1 class, extract 5, line 9:

- 9 <δεν κλέβου:ν> (.) ε (.) δεν- εμ: (.)  
 9 <they don't steal> (.) eh (.) it's not- ehm: (.)  
 10 δε μας το έκλεψαν παιδιά οι Τούρκοι (.)  
 10 They didn't steal it children from us the Turks (.)

In line 10, Mr Andreas repairs his half-finished utterance of the previous line. This time, the phrase is fully articulated and actually pronounced with more confidence, notably without lengthened syllables, pauses or

hesitations. Comparing these two lines, it emerges that the element being remediated is actually the tense of the verb ('they don't steal' in line 8 becomes 'they didn't steal' in line 10), along with the addition of direct and indirect objects ('it'/'from us'). These grammatical and syntactical changes also change the meaning of the phrase, transforming it from a general statement to a more specific one. The fact that Mr Andreas had difficulties in expressing the first, suggests that he felt less safe or comfortable to challenge the fact that 'the Turks do not steal' in general. On the other hand, claiming that at least they had not stolen that particular song appears to be easier, since it can also be proven by the fact that many of 'their' lyrics have been used by Greek composers, as well as by the composer of the song in question.

Finally, the fact that in all three cases Mr Andreas chose to refer to the Turkish poet Nazım Hikmet, who was not related in any way with the particular song, to back up his argument is another indication of the difficulty he faced in arguing against the established negative representations of the Turks. Nazım Hikmet is a Turkish poet of international fame, whose lyrics have been used by well-known Greek composers, including the composer of that song. This provided Mr Andreas with a concrete example that he could use to refute the prevailing discourse of 'the Turks stealing' from 'us'. Moreover, Nazım Hikmet was actually persecuted by the Turkish Republic due to his communist views and to the fact that his poems were against the Turkish government, and he finally died in exile in Moscow. Mr Andreas told all these biographical facts to the students (some of whom already knew about Hikmet) and he even told them about a poem titled *Bedava* (Free) in which Nazım Hikmet mocked the Turkish government. Therefore, Nazım Hikmet was not represented as a typical example of the 'Turks' as a collective entity, but rather as an individual exception.

Mr Andreas' struggle *not* to openly argue against the stereotypically negative image of the 'Turks' and at the same time *not* to reproduce it in the classroom was also obvious in the second 'culture-lesson' I observed. This lesson was dedicated to Muslim traditions and Mr Andreas insisted on restricting the lesson's content to the Islamic religious practices of Arab Muslim countries. This discursive manoeuvre allowed him to draw on discourses of otherness familiar to the students, without, however, explicitly engaging in negative talk about the Turks/Turkish Cypriots.

### Talking about Muslim Customs and Traditions

This lesson took place at the end of the autumn term and from the onset Mr Andreas announced to each class that the lesson would be dedicated to Muslim traditions and celebrations. Throughout both sessions (in B1

and C1 classes), Mr Andreas consistently talked about 'Muslims'. He used the word 'Turks' mostly to distinguish them from 'Muslims' and to make it clear that the lesson referred explicitly and merely to the latter. This becomes clear in the extract below recorded at the beginning of the lesson in C1 class.

Extract 7:

- 1 Mr Andreas: Children (.) all the Turks are Muslims (.) almost ...
- 2 But when we say Muslims we do not mean the Turks
- 3 we mean all the Muslims who are almost all the Arabic-
- 4 the ... Arab countries

(Class C1, recorded lesson, 20/12/06).

In this extract Mr Andreas uses the word Muslim to signify the Arabs, a usual (con-)fusion in the Western discourses of the Orient (see Said 1978). However, although he repeated this clarification a couple of times during the lesson, the borders between the labels 'Muslims' (meaning Arabs) and 'Turks' were often blurred, and Mr Andreas occasionally exploited this ambiguity for talking about Turkish (Muslim) traditions without referring openly to or naming the Turks/Turkish Cypriots. This is evident in the following example, in which Mr Andreas talks about Muslim religious celebrations and in particular about the '*Kurban Bayram*'.

Extract 8:

- 1 Mr Andreas: During the first days of January they celebrate
- 2 the *Kurban*. *Kurban* means sacrifice that is
- 3 the feast of sacrifice. These days they have holidays ...
- 4 4–5 days of holiday And they slaughter ( ) sheep
- 5 and make a sacrifice (and of course) food.
- 6 These days they offer sweets.
- 7 If you happen to find yourself around the Occupied
- 8 [part of Cyprus] or in Turkey ...
- 9 These four days they offer sweets all the time

(Class B1, 20/12/2006).

Taking into consideration the fact that the lesson was supposed to be dedicated to the 'target-culture', we see that Mr Andreas uses here the ambivalence and confusion around the semantics of the word Muslims as a manoeuvre for indirectly teaching about the Turkish/Turkish Cypriot



culture. The students, however, did not seem to follow Mr Andreas' distinction and treated the two terms ('Turks' and 'Muslims') as synonyms. Even when Mr Andreas clearly talked about Muslims/Arabs, students still produced negative comments that specifically targeted the Turks. On those occasions, Mr Andreas deployed again the distinction between Muslims and Turks as a way to redirect the negative remarks towards merely the Islamic religion. An example of these discursive manoeuvres can be seen in the extract below.

Extract 9:

((Mr A talks about how hard it is for Muslims if Ramadan happens to be during the summer, when the days are longer and the weather is hot, but people still can not drink water nor can they wash their mouth until the sunset.))

- 1 Dora: They ((referring to Muslims)) are idiots
- 2 Ioanna: That is to say that Turks are brainless
- 3 Mr Andreas: I find this religion unreasonable too.  
((Mr Andreas goes on to talk about the Muslim religion))  
(Class B1, 20/12/2006).

In the extract above, Mr Andreas does not reprimand Ioanna for her negative comment. His reply, at first sight seems like an agreement with the students' previous statements. However, by substituting the word 'Turks' with the word 'religion', he subtly changes the topic, bringing it back to Islam. In a similar vein, in the following extract Kyriakos' describes the Muslim-Turks as racist (line 7) and dangerous people. Mr Andreas agrees with his comment but in line 8 shifts the blame from the people to the religion. Even though Mr Andreas expresses a rather strong negative view of the Islamic religion, in lines 28–30, we observe a more explicit attempt to exclude the Turkish people from this negative representation. The extract comes from the beginning of the lesson where Mr Andreas introduces the distinction between Turks and Muslims, arguing that although most Turks are Muslims there are still some of them who might be Christians.

Extract 10:

- 1 Mr Andreas: Er. (1.5) As you understand (.)
- 2 perhaps there are many (2) Crypto-Christians
- 3 Kyriakos: Aren't they scared Sir? Aren't they scared () -
- 4 Mr Andreas: But that's what I'm saying. There are many

- 5 who might be Christians and they don't say it  
 6 Kyriakos: Because it's like ... er. there are  
 7 racist people over there and things like that  
 8 Mr Andreas: The Muslim religion my children with all due  
 9 reverence towards religions with all the respect  
 10 towards religions, for me the Muslim religion  
 11 is a bit ... not a bit it is a silly religion  
 12 and this thing I'm saying is not racist  
 13 because all religions even Buddhists eh:  
 14 Monica: =they are linked to each other?  
 15 Mr Andreas: no! E. they say 'love one another'  
 16 I mean what does our religion say?  
 17 To love all the people, both foreigners  
 18 and our own people, both enemies and friends.  
 19 That's what it says.  
 20 That's what Buddhists say as well as Hindus.  
 21 All religions say that!  
 22 That peace and concord should prevail in the  
 23 world. The only religion in the world that  
 24 does not say this thing is Musl- the Muslim religion.  
 25 That is whoever is not Muslim is infidel  
 26 and the infidel ...is punished.  
 27 This is what they say (.) this is what their religion  
 28 says. They might say- maybe some Turks say  
 29 for example 'we want peace in the world'  
 30 but he says that as a Turk and not as a Muslim.  
 31 The Muslim religion is a religion  
 32 based on violence

(Class C1, 20/12/2006).

According to Said (1978, 255–83), shifting the idea of 'otherness' to the Muslim religion is a practice not unusual in Western discourses of the 'orient' and most significantly it often escapes the 'racist' label:

... what has not been sufficiently stressed (...) has been the legitimisation of such atavistic designations by Orientalism, and more important for my purposes here the way this academic and intellectual legitimisation has persisted right though the modern age discussions of Islam, the Arabs or the Near Orient. For whereas it is no longer possible to write learned

(or even popular) disquisitions on either 'the Negro mind' or 'the Jewish personality', it is perfectly possible to engage in such research as the "the Islamic mind' or the 'Arab character' (Said 1978, 262).

By redirecting his talk to the Islamic religion or the Arab countries, Mr Andreas could avoid talking about the Turks whilst still drawing on negative discourses and stereotypes, which were not only familiar to the students, but also entrenched in a long tradition of binary oppositions between West and East, reason and insanity, development and primitivism (Said 1978, 300). Drawing on such discourses that have been established years ago and echo the hegemonic representation of the Orient in Western thought, Mr Andreas could talk about the negative aspects of 'the Others' as Muslims, without being considered 'racist' or 'nationalist', since his talk or comments concerned, as he claimed, certain facts, events or customs and not 'the Others' as people/human beings. This is also evident in lines 28–30 of Extract 10 above, where Mr Andreas allows for a potential positive representation of the Turks as 'peaceful' people, but this representation is presented again as an exception and is detached from the collective representation of Muslims (who are indirectly associated with violence).<sup>15</sup>

In all cases, the Muslim-Others were presented as different from 'us', and this difference was always evaluated as negative and inferior compared to the culturally superior 'us' by both the teacher and the students. This was revealed in the close reading of the extracts cited above, where both students and the teacher agreed that the Muslim religion was 'unreasonable' and 'silly' and the Turks/Muslims were 'racists' and 'violent'. The 'us' vs 'them' dichotomy appears to be also in line with the dominant educational discourses available to the students through formal schooling and in particular the teaching of history and literature (cf. Spyrou 2006; Papadakis Chapter 6).<sup>16</sup> More specifically, the students' explicit reactions against the Turks addressed to the teacher, as well as the manner in which Mr Andreas handled them, suggest that there is an

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<sup>15</sup> Throughout his talk Mr Andreas consistently talked about the Muslim religion and not the Muslim people. The only instance where he deviated from this was in line 27, 'this is what they say', which he immediately rephrased as 'this is what their religion says'.

<sup>16</sup> In Extract 5, Turkish music was also indirectly evaluated as 'unpleasant'. It would be very useful to have more information here regarding the ways in which children constructed representations of the Arab or Turkish cultures. However, as the discussion on these issues was limited in the classroom there are not enough data to have a comprehensive picture. Regarding Turkish Cypriots in particular, there were some positive representations by students who described them as 'hospitable', or as having preserved an authentic Cypriot identity. These representations, however, were met with resistance by other students (see Charalambous 2009).

institutional way of talking about the Turks that allows such discourses.<sup>17</sup> This institutional 'trope' that was based on the 'us'-vs-'them' dichotomous framework had emerged as a very powerful way of talking about the Turks from which Mr Andreas could not easily escape. Therefore, the way he found to deal with it was to limit any references to the people, that is, to the speakers of the Turkish language.

## Conclusion

This chapter looked at Turkish-language classes in a Greek Cypriot school, aiming to investigate the complicated issue of re-negotiating ethnic relations and long-standing discourses of animosity through Other-language learning. The analysis of 32 hours of Turkish-language lessons in two considerably different classes over the period of five months indicated that the Turkish-language teacher had to deal with several complexities as a result of the dominant representations of Turks/Turkish Cypriots circulating in Greek Cypriot political and educational discourses.

As this chapter revealed, Mr Andreas experienced general difficulty in negotiating a representation of the target-community in the classroom, as well as in finding a way to talk about Turkish-speaking people. These difficulties along with the students' reactions, either anticipated or interactionally performed, suggest that there is an 'established way' or a certain institutional trope of talking about the Turks/Turkish Cypriots in formal school settings which does not allow for a positive discourse to develop. The powerful representation of the Turks as 'The Other', which has been constructed through instruction, textbooks and national celebrations (for example Christou 2006, 2007; Hadjipavlou-Trigeorgis 2000; Papadakis 2008; Spyrou 2002, 2006) resists any reconciliatory discourse and may actually come into conflict with Turkish-language learning as a process that facilitates the two communities' rapprochement. Despite the Ministry of Education's discourses treating these classes as a way to 'bring the two communities closer', and the educational theories arguing for language learning and intercultural communication, the Turks/Turkish Cypriots were almost consistently erased from Mr Andreas' lesson, even when the lesson was about 'culture'. As the data analysis showed, during the two 'language and culture' lessons Mr Andreas managed to deflect the focus of the lesson from the Turks/Turkish Cypriots by using a Greek song with Turkish lyrics, and by restricting his talk to Islamic traditions of the Arab Muslim countries.

It is important to note here that I do not wish to argue that Mr Andreas was a racist, a radical or an extreme nationalist teacher. After all, he

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<sup>17</sup> On the contrary, positive remarks about the Turks/Turkish-Cypriots were silenced or whispered (see Charalambous 2012).

had chosen to study the Turkish language and he had Turkish Cypriot acquaintances. However, in his effort to a) avoid bringing 'politics' into the lesson or constructing an explicit representation of the Turks as the 'enemy', and at the same time to b) *not* argue against the official discourse, Mr Andreas occasionally drew on discourses of 'otherness' that appeared 'natural' and in line with the established institutional ideologies, but which did not explicitly address the Turks. Besides, the fact that Mr Andreas was always aware that the lesson was being recorded, along with his habit not to transcend any official 'guidelines', show that he did not believe at any instance that he was departing from official perspectives. Finally, students' negative (or even insulting) comments against the Turks can be seen as another explanation for Mr Andreas' preoccupation not to deviate from the official 'trope'. Having to face powerful discourses of inter-ethnic hostility and often people's (students' and colleagues') denigrating comments, Mr Andreas consistently tried to limit the 'Turkishness' of the lesson by focusing on the language and avoiding talking about its speakers.

Still, the findings of this study do not undermine the significance of the setting up of 'Other'-languages classes. The fact that the Turkish language was for the first time legitimized in the Hellenocentric context of Greek Cypriot education can indeed be regarded as an emblematic gesture and a first step towards the two communities coming closer (see also Charalambous and Rampton 2011). Furthermore, although students never expressed any positive representations of Turks or Turkish Cypriots in front of the teacher, outside the formal lesson, they did have access to discursive resources for constructing alternative representations (Charalambous 2009, 2012). Besides, all these students had chosen to learn Turkish despite the reactions they often had to meet from peers or even their families. Studies in different contexts have also pointed to the importance of language learning in reducing hostility and prejudice (for example Bekerman 2005; Genesee and Gándara 1999; Tankersley 2001).

By revealing the resilience of the institutional discourses and structures, the consequent complexities involved in representing the other community in the classroom during a formal lesson and the discursive resources available to teachers and students for constructing such representations, this study has implications both for the practicalities of organizing and better designing these courses, as well as for modern foreign language teaching theories which do not always take into account such contexts (see Charalambous and Rampton 2011). More research is needed for further generalizing and theorizing the results of this study.<sup>18</sup> Language ideologies, for example, and the ways in which they influence students'

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<sup>18</sup> A new three-year-long research project is currently being conducted (funded by the Leverhulme Trust) which aims to compare Other-language learning across time and across different institutional settings.

representations of the speakers of the language and the target-culture is a topic worth exploring further. In the Greek Cypriot society there are strong popular ideologies seeing the Turkish language as 'barbaric' and there were instances when both the teacher and the students of this study drew on such ideologies. On the other hand, there were students who expressed very positive, and perhaps exoticized, views of the Turkish language, which were sometimes associated with Greek-Turkish TV series. Besides investigating language ideologies, another area of future research is the comparison of Other-language learning across different institutions as well as across the two different communities. Such research can shed further light into the potential of Other-language learning in contributing to reconciliation and peace education.

## Appendix

### *Appendix 1 Transcription conventions*

()	inaudible word
( text )	speculation regarding a rather inaudible text
[	
[	text overlaps
(.)	pause less than a second
(...)	Text omitted
(number)	number indicates seconds of pause
...	the vowel of the last syllable is extended until the next word (used in the English translation)
:	elongated vowel (marked in the original text)
((text))	comments
{ text }	words that are necessary for the text to make sense, or words from the original
-	interrupted speech
=	no pause between turns
underlined	Emphasized words
CAPITALS	words pronounced louder and with emphasis
<i>italics</i>	indicates different language/variety from the rest of the transcript. The specific language is noted in the introductory notes in the beginning of each extract.
< text >	indicates talk that is delivered slower than the usual rhythm

° text °	indicates a syllable/phrase that is pronounced quieter
hh	laughter tokens
'text'	text pronounced as quoting someone else (usually marked as such by a change in the pitch of the voice)

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## Chapter 8

# Greeks' Attitudes to Turkish Features in their Language

Peter Mackridge

### Introduction

The study of language attitudes shows that language is felt to be a symbol of belonging to a group. Such attitudes are closely associated with a sense of identity.<sup>1</sup> Together with Orthodox Christianity, the Greek language is felt to be the chief component of Greek national identity (Mackridge 2009; for a thorough discussion of the close link between Greek language and identity see Charalambous, Dragonas and Frangoudaki, Chapter 7 and Chapter 14 respectively). Identity is often defined negatively, in opposition to Others, and Greeks have long thought of Turks as the Others *par excellence*. This is because the whole of the present-day territory of Greece (with the exception of the Ionian Islands) formed part of the Ottoman Empire for periods varying between 100 and 500 years, according to region. As Muslims, the Turks were the dominant people within the empire, and Greeks thought of themselves as being unjustly subjugated to them. Greeks have traditionally referred to *Tourkokratia* (Turkish rule) and the 'Turkish yoke' rather than Ottoman rule. The Ottoman period is thus considered to be an inescapable but shameful phase of Greek history, from which the Greek people liberated themselves in the War of Independence (1821–30). For generations, Greek school books, teachers, politicians and other opinion-formers have promoted a crude antithesis between 'civilized' Greeks and 'barbarous' Turks, which demonized the latter. However, the study of the interpenetration between the Greek and Turkish languages reveals that the relationship between the two peoples, today as in the past, is deeply complex and contradictory.

In this chapter I explore ways in which the study of language can lead us to a more nuanced and critical perspective on the relationship between Greeks and Turks. First I present the historical background to language contact between Greek and Turkish. Then I introduce the ideological

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<sup>1</sup> I should make it clear that my chapter is not based on any particular theory, or even on systematic research into the topic, but on my 50 years' experience of the Greek language and its speakers.

context in which Greeks' attitudes to Turkish features in their language has developed. I go on to present a brief overview of the Turkish features that are used in Greek today (vocabulary, derivational morphemes and semantic convergence). In addition, I provide some examples of loanwords from Turkish that have disappeared from Greek in the last 200 years. I then deal briefly with the features of Turkish loanwords that make them recognizable as such by Greeks, and I provide some examples of Greek jokes based on wordplay involving Turkish loanwords. I conclude that there are two coexisting but contradictory Greek attitudes towards Turkish loans: whereas on an intellectual and ideological level (the level that has been influenced particularly by their formal education) Greeks might consider such words to be shameful stains on the Greek language, on an emotional level they often feel that certain Turkish loanwords speak directly to their hearts.

### Greeks' Contact with the Turkish Language

Of all the Orthodox Christian populations of the Ottoman Empire, the Greeks had the closest contacts with Turks, because there were Greek-speaking populations throughout the Balkans and Asia Minor, including an especially large concentration in Constantinople/Istanbul, the capital of the empire itself, where members of certain Greek families reached the highest echelons of the Ottoman administration. However, for about 80 years after the compulsory exchange of minorities between Greece and Turkey under the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923, very few Greeks heard the Turkish language being spoken.<sup>2</sup> More recently Greeks have renewed their contact with Turkish through the Turkish serials that have been shown on Greek television, beginning in 2004 with the serial known in Turkish as *Yabancı Damat* (The Foreign Bridegroom) and in Greek as *Τα Σύνορα της Αγάπης* (The Frontiers of Love), which tells the story of a Greek man (who speaks Turkish because his family is from Istanbul) and a Turkish woman who fall in love and, having overcome various obstacles and prejudices, eventually get married. Greeks I have spoken to about these Turkish serials have told me how surprised they were to find that the Turkish actors and characters 'look just like us and behave just like us – the same gestures, everything'.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> It should be clarified that the Lausanne population exchange was carried out on the basis of religion rather than language, and there were many Christians transferred from Turkey to Greece who were native speakers of Turkish, just as there were Muslims transferred from Greece to Turkey who were Greek native speakers. For this reason there are still Greeks alive today who were brought up speaking Turkish at home with their families, just as there are Turks who were brought up speaking Greek.

<sup>3</sup> For a study of language, identity and politeness in *Yabancı Damat* see Bayraktaroğlu and Sifianou 2012.

Nevertheless, they found the language totally impenetrable, though they told me it sounded attractive and musical. I should add that there is no genetic relation between Greek and Turkish: Greek is an Indo-European language, whereas Turkish belongs to the Turkic family.

The impact of this serial on Greek audiences was such that on 4 October 2005, the day after Turkey had agreed to begin negotiations with a view to joining the European Union, the Athens newspaper *Eleftherotypia* published the following headline in a mixture of Turkish and Greek:

**ΑΝΕΡΓΙΑ: ΑΝΑΚΟΙΝΩΣΙΑΝ 9,6% ΕΝ ΜΕΣΩ ΑΜΦΙΣΒΗΤΗΣΕΩΝ • ΣΕΛ. 24**

**ΕΛΕΥΘΕΡΟΤΥΠΙΑ** ΜΕ ΓΥΝΑΙΚΗ ΜΕΝΕΤΕ ΘΥΕΤΕΣ ΣΤΑ ΓΕΓΟΝΟΤΑ

ΤΡΙΤΗ 4 Οκτωβρίου 2005 ΑΠΟΓΕΥΜΑΤΙΝΗ ΔΕΞΙΜΕΥΤΗ ΕΦΗΜΕΡΙΔΑ ΕΤΟΣ 31ο • Αρ. φ. 9.079 ΤΙΜΗ 1€ (ΕΚΔΟΧΗ ΜΕ VCD 1,5€)

**ΣΗΜΕΡΑ: ΟΛΑΪΣΑ ΠΡΕΠΕΙ ΝΑ ΞΕΡΕΤΕ ΠΑ ΤΑ...**

**Εμβόλια**  
Η πάμφθην ασπίδα  
• Καρδιολογία / Νέοι πριν από τα ταξίδια  
• Τα φάρμακα / Κατάλυση στα πόδια  
• Διατροφή / Τρόπος μάγειρας σε ασθένεια

**& MAZI ένα Video CD από το DISCOVERY HEALTH CHANNEL**  
**Εξωσωματική γονιμοποίηση**  
ΤΟ VIDEO CD ΜΕΤΑΦΕΡΕΤΕ ΣΤΟ ΑΥΤΟΜΑΤΟ ΤΗΛΕΟΡΑΣΗ ΚΑΙ ΜΕΤΑΦΕΡΕΤΕ ΤΟ

**ΕΠΙΘΕΩΝ ΣΤΟ ΠΑΣΟΚ...**  
**«Ως εδώ και μη παρέκει», αλλά για ποιους;**  
Με επίθεση στο ΠΑΣΟΚ «απάντησε» ο πρωθυπουργός για διαρκή γαλιών παιδιών, στην Κ.Ο. της Ν.Δ. Βουλευτής αρνησαν σιμύες για υπουργούς και κρατικούς αξιωματούχους. Για το φαινόμενο διαφθοράς ο Κ. Καραμανλής είπε: «Ως

**Η ΤΟΥΡΚΙΑ δέχθηκε σκληρούς όρους – Αρχίζουν διαπραγματεύσεις**

**HOŞ GELDİN**  
**αλλά... γιαβάς γιαβάς**

Figure 8.1 Headline in *Eleftherotypia*, 4 October 2005

The next day the same newspaper published the following explanatory note:

‘Hoş Geldin but yavaş yavaş’ was our yesterday’s headline, which means, ‘Welcome, (Turkey), but (you will walk into the EU) slowly slowly’. After ‘The Frontiers of Love’ and Mr Baklavacıoğlu [the Turkish heroine’s father], we’ve learned a bit of Turkish too ...

While ‘Hoş Geldin’ is written in Turkish, ‘yavaş yavaş’ is printed in Greek transliteration, probably because this Turkish loan is often used in colloquial Greek.

## Attitudes: Ideological Context

Before we look at Greek attitudes to Turkish features in Greek, we need to look at what these features are. However, even before we do that, we need to know something about the ideological context that surrounds these Greek attitudes. Most importantly, because of the prestige in which the ancient Greek language has traditionally been held throughout the Western world, and because the Greek Orthodox Church uses an ancient (though not Classical) form of Greek in its services, there has always been a puristic tendency in written Greek. The temptation to 'purify' Modern Greek by bringing it closer to Ancient Greek has been encouraged by the relative closeness between spoken Modern Greek and the ancient language, especially in vocabulary and morphology.

When Greece became independent from the Ottoman Empire in the 1820s, Greek intellectuals saw the presence of words of foreign (and especially Turkish) origin as being stains on their language and as shameful reminders of the subjugation of the Greeks to foreign empires. Of all the foreign occupations (Roman, Venetian and so on), Greek intellectual and political leaders felt that the Ottoman was the most shameful, because they considered the Turks to be Orientals and therefore – unlike themselves – non-Europeans. From the beginning of the Greek War of Independence in 1821 until 1974, the official language used by the Greek state was a 'purified' form of Greek (*katharevousa*) that excluded almost all words that had entered Greek from foreign languages in post-Classical times.<sup>4</sup> Thus words of Turkish origin were by definition absent from official discourse, and their use became stigmatized as a sign of vulgar and uneducated speech. The situation in Greek is similar to that in other Balkan languages, both in terms of the actual words of Turkish origin that are to be found in these languages, and in terms of their stylistic status: they have suffered what Kazazis (1972) calls 'stylistic demotion', and for this reason they tend to be confined to colloquial speech.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> The history of the Greek language controversy – the competition between alternative forms of Greek to be accepted as the standard written language – is too complex to be summarized here. This controversy lasted from the late 18th century until 1974, when *katharevousa* (a hybrid consisting of linguistic features from both Ancient and Modern Greek) was replaced by demotic (the spoken language) as the written language for almost all purposes; for details see Mackridge (2009).

<sup>5</sup> Modern Turkish has been subjected to a similar on-going process of linguistic purification with the purpose of replacing foreign words, particularly words of Arabic and Persian origin; see Lewis (1999).

## The Turkish Features in Modern Greek

The most perceptible Turkish features in Modern Greek are vocabulary items. Contemporary Greek contains a large number of words that have entered the language from Turkish (T). Dimasi and Nizam (2004) have counted 870 such words in one of the standard dictionaries of contemporary Greek (*Lexiko* 1998).<sup>6</sup> Ninety per cent of these are nouns. Examples of such words will be given in the following section.

There are also three Greek derivational morphemes based on Turkish that are still more or less active:

(a) *-τζής* (< T *-ci* etc.) forming nouns denoting a man who practises some trade:

*μπετατζής* 'concreter' (< pl. *μπετά* of *μπετόν* 'concrete' < Fr. *béton*)

*φορτηγατζής* 'lorry driver' (< pl. *φορτηγά* of *φορτηγό* 'lorry, truck')

Compare the adjective *ετοιματζίδικος* '(of clothes etc.) ready-made' (< pl. *έτοιμα* of *έτοιμος* 'ready'), perhaps based on T *hazırcı* 'seller of ready-made clothes' > *hazır* 'ready' (Kazazis 1972, 104)

(b) *-ιλίκι* (< T *-lik* etc.) forming a noun denoting an office or rank:

*υπουργιλίκι* 'the job of being a [government] minister' (< *υπουργός* '[government] minister')

(c) *-ής* (< T *-î*) forming colour adjectives:

*ασημής* 'silver[-coloured]' (< noun *ασήμι* 'silver', cf. T *gümüşî*, adj. from noun *gümüş* 'silver')

*λαδής* 'olive-green' (< *λάδι* '(olive-)oil', cf. T *zeytunî*, adj. from noun *zeytun* 'olive').

In phonology and inflectional morphology, Turkish influence has been minimal: all loanwords from Turkish have been fully integrated into the Greek phonological and morphological system, which normally involves, among other things, adding a Greek morphological suffix to the

<sup>6</sup> Some of these words are native to Turkish, while others were borrowed by Turkish from Persian, Arabic or even Greek. Since I am dealing with words that have entered Greek from Turkish, I am not concerned with their ultimate origin. Millas 2008 lists 4,660 words that (with slight formal modifications) are common to Greek and Turkish. Some of these pairs of common words are the result of borrowing by Greek from Turkish, or vice versa, while others have been borrowed by both languages from the same source language.

Turkish word. But before going on to look at some sample vocabulary, I shall mention some features where possible influence from Turkish is imperceptible to those who do not know both languages.

There are many instances of semantic convergence between the two languages. Semantic convergence occurs when bilingual speakers alter the meanings of certain words in one language so that they correspond more closely to the meanings of equivalent words in the other language. In Greek and Turkish, semantic convergence is chiefly manifested in two areas: (a) clusters of the same figurative meanings attached to the equivalent words in both languages, and (b) idiomatic expressions, including certain wishes and proverbs. Here are a few examples out of the hundreds of instances of each phenomenon:

(a) *T açmak* – Gk ανοίγω (verb) ‘open’, but also, among many other meanings: ‘turn on (electrical appliance)’, ‘whet (appetite)’, ‘roll out (pastry)’, ‘(of weather) clear up’

*T oldu* – Gk έγινε ‘it became’, ‘it happened’, ‘it was done’, but also ‘done! OK!’

*T toz* – Gk σκόνη ‘dust’ and ‘powder’

*T tütün* – Gk καπνός ‘smoke’ and ‘tobacco’

(b) *T az çok* – Gk λίγο πολύ ‘more or less’ (lit. ‘little much’)

*T eline sağlık!* – Gk γεια στα χέρια σου! ‘God bless the cook!’ (lit. ‘health to your hand[s]!’)

*T ucunu bulmak* – Gk βρίσκω άκρη ‘get to the bottom of’ (lit. ‘find [its] end’, based on trying to find the end of a piece of string, etc.)

*T nereden nereye* – Gk από πού κι ώς πού; ‘how on earth? who would have thought it?’ (lit. ‘from where [and] to where?’).<sup>7</sup>

The same or similar semantic convergences can be traced in the other Balkan languages, and it is usually impossible to know in which language the particular expression originated. However, Kazazis (1972, 96–7, 114) claims that many of these Balkan ‘loan translations’ are of Turkish origin; he calls them ‘covert Turkisms’, while Newton (1962) writes that ‘it may eventually prove that the Turkish conquerors provided the origin of many of the turns of speech which weld together the Balkan tongues’.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Millas (2008) lists expressions and proverbs that are common to both Greek and Turkish – common in terms of meaning, but not in terms of form.

<sup>8</sup> For further examples see van Hasselt (1972). A loan translation is an expression adopted by one language from another in more or less literally translated form.



## Greek Vocabulary of Turkish Origin

### *The Situation in the 19th and 20th Centuries*

Two Greek texts dating from the 1830s are valuable records of Turkish-origin words used in Greek at the time, most of which have subsequently dropped out of the language. The first of these is the *Memoirs* of Makriyannis, a hero of the War of Independence, who taught himself to write after the war was over. His language and style are close to the spoken language of his time and place, though it does display some influence from written varieties. The second is the dictionary by Vyzantios (1835), which defines the meanings of Modern Greek words by providing equivalents in Ancient Greek and French; it also includes a very useful Appendix of words of foreign origin, labelled 'to be banished'. Here are some examples of words from the first half of the 19th century which, at least in their literal meanings, have since been 'purged' from the language (the standard modern equivalents – all of native Greek origin – are given in brackets):

(a) Makriyannis (Kyriazidis (ed.) 1992) (\* indicates that Makriyannis also uses the word so marked)

διασαχτοής < T *yasakçı* 'man who went in front to clear the way for a great person; guard for ambassador or consul'; the beginning of the Greek version is hypercorrected on the analogy of the Modern Greek preposition για 'for' < Ancient Greek διά

ζαπίτης < T *zâbit* '[Ottoman] policeman' (χωροφύλακας\* 'Greek policeman')

καζαντίζω < T *kazandı* (past of *kazanmak*) 'earn (money)' (κερδίζω: Makriyannis uses κερδαίνω 'win, gain')

τσασίτης < T *çaşit* 'spy' (κατάσκοπος\*; Makriyannis also uses σπιούνος < Italian *spione*)

χαζίρι (indecl. adj.) < T *hazır* 'ready' (έτοιμος\*)

χοσμέτι < T *hizmet* 'service' (υπηρεσία)

(b) Vyzantios (1835)

γιατάκι 'bed' < T *yatak* (κρεβάτι)

κουμπές < T *kubbe* 'dome' (τρούλος)

μουστερής < T *muşteri* 'customer' (πελάτης)

τζελάτης < T *cellât* 'executioner' (δήςμιος).

Readers of modern Greek literature encounter large numbers of words of Turkish origin, many of which are practically unknown in the spoken language today; this applies especially to the novels and short stories of the so-called Generation of 1930, many of whom were born in the Ottoman Empire. All these writers were proponents of the demotic movement, which encouraged them not only to make full use of the resources of the colloquial language in their writing, but also to employ words and usages that marked them out as coming from a certain region (for example Istanbul, Asia Minor, or the islands of Crete and Lesbos). In addition, *rebetika* songs, which flourished in the first 50 to 60 years of the 20th century and enjoyed a resurgence of popularity from the 1970s onwards, contain many words from Turkish that are no longer used in the everyday language.

### *The Situation Today*

Here are some basic words that are included in the list that Vyzantios (1835) labelled 'to be banished' but are still in common use in Greek today:

γλεντάω < T *eğlendi* (past of *eğlenmek*) 'have fun'

ζάρι < T *zar* 'die (i.e. dice)'

καπάκι < T *kapak* 'lid'

κεφτές < T *köfte* 'meat-ball'

μεζές < T *meze* 'starter, snack'

μπακάλης < T *bakkal* 'grocer'

παπούτσι < T *papuc* 'shoe'

πατσάς 'tripe' < T *paça* 'sheep's trotters'

ταβάνι < T *tavan* 'ceiling'

τσάντα < T *çanta* '(hand)bag'

χαλβάς < T *helva* 'halva (kind of sweet)'

χάπι < T *hap* 'pill'.

There are native Greek equivalents for most (though not all) of these words, but they are not nearly so commonly used as the words of Turkish origin. Most of the words in this list are what Kazazis (1973, 394) calls 'stylistically neutral', in other words they do not in themselves have vulgar or comic connotations, and although writers of *katharevousa* (the old official language) would try to avoid them, they might have found themselves

forced to use them for want of an intelligible equivalent. I would also add the following words that are still used today:

[α]σιχτίρ < T *siktir* or *hassiktir*<sup>9</sup> (the T word means ‘get yourself fucked’, though most Greeks don’t realize this; it is used in Greek as a vulgar way of expressing indignation)

άντε < T *haydi* (there are equivalents of this in all the Balkan languages, with a multitude of idiomatic uses, starting with the imperative ‘go!’; Greek etymologists tend, unconvincingly, to assert that they originate from Ancient Greek)

πούστης < T *puşt* ‘passive partner in a homosexual relationship’ (often used as an insult)

κολομπάρας < T *kulampara* ‘active partner in a homosexual relationship’<sup>10</sup>

ρουσφέτι ‘political favour’ < T *rüşvet* ‘bribe’

χαράτσι < T *harac*, in Ottoman times ‘tax paid by non-Muslims in lieu of military service’, but used in Greek today for any tax that is felt to be oppressive and unjust, e.g. the new property tax imposed by the Greek state in 2011 and levied through an additional charge on domestic electricity bills in an effort to reduce the national debt.

In addition, a large number of Greeks have surnames of Turkish origin (cf. Kazazis 1972, 100–101), for example Kazazis < T *kazaz* ‘silk manufacturer’, Seferis < T *sefer* ‘expedition’, Kavafis/Cavafy < T *kavaf* ‘maker or seller of cheap shoes’, and Kazantzakis < T *kazancı* ‘maker of cauldrons or boilers’, as well as hundreds of names ending in -ογλου < T -*oğlu* ‘son or daughter of’. This last set of names is typically borne by people whose forebears were Turkish-speaking Christians in Asia Minor and were expelled to Greece during the exchange of minorities in the 1920s. There is also the prefix Χατζη- (<T *haci*) found in many Greek surnames (for example Haji-Ioannou), indicating that one of the bearer’s ancestors had made the *hac* (Hajj), meaning the pilgrimage to Jerusalem rather than to Mecca. By contrast, the only Greek forename name of Turkish origin that I know of is Sultana, which for understandable reasons is rapidly becoming a rarity.

<sup>9</sup> Thanks to Bengisu Rona for suggesting the form *hassiktir* as the more probable origin of the Greek term.

<sup>10</sup> Thanks again to Bengisu Rona for confirming that Turkish, like Greek, is able to make a linguistic distinction between the ‘active’ and ‘passive’ partner.

## How can Greeks Tell that a Word is of Turkish Origin?

All Greeks are aware of certain linguistic features in their language that are not found in Ancient Greek and therefore may be attributed to foreign (and possibly Turkish) influence. Among the tell-tale signs is the presence of the clusters /ts/ and /dz/ (often from T <ç> and <c> respectively), or words beginning with a voiced stop /b d g/ – even though these phenomena have also developed in certain words that are descended from Ancient Greek, as well as being found in words from other foreign languages.

### Attitudes: Some Evidence

For generations, Greeks have been brought up to believe that they are different from Turks – indeed, as different as it is possible for two peoples to be. They have been taught (at school and elsewhere) that the Turks are oriental barbarians, while they themselves are the descendants of the Ancient Greeks, who gave Europe and the world its civilization, its arts and its sciences, along with much of the vocabulary associated with these discourses. They have been told that they speak a language which (at least in its ancient form) is the most perfect instrument of knowledge, invention and communication known to man. They have been taught that they are uniquely privileged to be the heirs and guardians of this precious heritage, which is admired by the whole world, and that they should therefore avoid using features that are ‘foreign’ to the Greek language (for a further discussion of how these dominant discourses have been reproduced through education in Greece and Cyprus respectively, see Chapter 3 by Millas and Chapter 6 by Papadakis).

In 1975, shortly after the Turkish invasion of Cyprus, Yakovos Dizikirikis published a book entitled *Να Ξετουρκέψουμε τη Γλώσσα μας* (Let’s De-Turkify our Language). The author was a Greek from Istanbul, long since settled in Greece, who was bilingual in Greek and Turkish. He was a life-long supporter of the demotic Greek language against the official *katharevousa*, and back in the 1930s, inspired by the Turkish language reform, he had even published articles urging that Greek be written in the Latin alphabet. In this last book of his, the 80-year-old author, like Vyzantios 140 years earlier, included tables of Turkish words that ‘must be immediately ostracized without fail’ from the Greek language (Dizikirikis 1975, 38). Since Turkish culture is inferior to Greek, he wrote, such words ‘defame us (μας δυσφημίζουνε) in a humiliating manner’ (Dizikirikis 1975, 13). He even argued that if every Greek father could get his children to address him with the Ancient and Modern Greek word *πατέρα* ‘father’ instead of the colloquial word *παμπά* ‘dad’ (<T *baba*), this would demonstrate the historical continuity of the Greek

race (Dizikirikis 1975: 58). Like other language purists, this writer failed to see the coexistence of more than one word for the same concept as a potential source of stylistic richness. One wonders why he didn't begin his efforts at purification by Hellenizing his own surname: Dizikirikis is from the Turkish phrase *dizi kırık* 'his knee is broken'.<sup>11</sup>

Whereas Greeks have been taught that they should view Turkish influences as contemptible and shameful, how they actually feel about words of Turkish origin is a different, and far more complicated, matter. On the intellectual and ideological level they remember what they have been taught, while on the emotional level they feel that certain words of Turkish origin speak directly to their hearts. Kazazis (1972, 111) described these as *mots de coeur*,<sup>12</sup> and Greek friends have told me that they find many loanwords from Turkish to be familiar, close, warm and emotional. The newspaper columnist Andreas Pappas has described Turkish loanwords as 'Turkish delights' and has written that Greeks tend to use them 'when we want to express basic, primal emotions such as joy, pain and sexual desire' (Pappas 2004a, 2004b).<sup>13</sup> Indeed many Greeks feel that such words help to define them as Greeks. In his introduction to Dimasi and Nizam's book, Paparizos describes the following as words that are 'difficult if not impossible to remove from the Greek vocabulary, for the simple reason that they clearly express a fundamental aspect of the spiritual make-up (ψυχοσύνθεση) of the modern Greek' (Dimasi and Nizam 2004, 7). In this list the English meanings refer to the Greek words, while the meanings of the Turkish words are often markedly different:

εργένης 'bachelor (unmarried man)' < T *ergen*

καβγάς 'quarrel' < *kavga*

καφενές 'café' (almost always used in the semi-Hellenized form  
καφενείο) < T *kahvehane*

κέφι 'high spirits' < T *keyif*

λεβέντης 'fine upstanding man' < T *levend*

μάγκας 'streetwise young man' < T *manga*

μεράκι 'intense desire; loving care' < T *merak*

<sup>11</sup> It was after the Turkish invasion of Cyprus that Greeks started calling Turkish coffee 'Greek coffee', a usage that has since become almost universal in Greece.

<sup>12</sup> Literally 'heart-words'. The fact English has to resort to a French phrase for this beautiful concept is somewhat similar to Greeks using words from Turkish.

<sup>13</sup> In the discussion after I had given the paper on which my text is based, Alexandra Georgakopoulou commented that the Turkish language is perceived by Greeks as being 'secret' and 'forbidden' and therefore intriguing. She also spoke about the associative meanings and emotional resonances of Turkish loanwords in Greek.

μπουζούκι 'bouzouki' < T *bozuk* 'broken, in disrepair'

νταής 'bully-boy who also tends to be cowardly' < T *dayı*

Ρούμελη 'Central Greece' < T *Rumeli*

τεμπέλης 'lazy; a lazy person' < *tembel*

Of these, καβγάς and κέφι figured in Vyzantios's list of words 'to be banished'.

We have already seen that there are positive and negative attitudes to words of Turkish origin in Greek. On the positive side, they are felt to be warm, familiar and emotionally expressive, while on the negative side they are considered to be contemptible and shameful.

Two personal experiences will help to illustrate positive Greek attitudes to words of Turkish origin. One occurred in Athens, when some friends invited me home to dinner. At one point my friend Kostas encountered some difficulty with the corkscrew, whose mechanism was slipping. I said to him, 'Is that what you call "play"?', using the word τζόγος (< Venetian *zogo* 'play, game'). 'Yes', replied Kostas, 'but there's a more Greek word: χαβαλές'. Kostas, a retired high-school teacher of Ancient Greek, was amused when I reminded him that this frequently used colloquial word that he described as being 'more Greek' is actually of Turkish origin (<T *havale* 'transfer, assignment'). The multifarious meanings of this Greek word are quite different from the meanings in Turkish; they seem to derive from a sense of temporarily suspending one's sense of responsibility, and the word is often used to mean having an enjoyable and relaxing time with one's friends. Many Greeks see χαβαλές as being a Greek institution; indeed, one website asserts that 'χαβαλές is in the Greeks' DNA' and describes it as 'the quintessence of the Greek way of life'.<sup>14</sup> For this reason the word is untranslatable, not only into other languages (possibly even including Turkish), but also into more formal varieties of Greek.

The second experience occurred while I was conversing with a monk in Crete. When I used the 'pure' Greek word for 'guest' (φιλοξενούμενος), the monk interrupted me and said, 'Ah, but we have an Ancient Greek word for that: μουσαφίρης. It's far more expressive, because it shows that the guest φέρει τας Μούσας "brings the Muses"'. In fact, μουσαφίρης has nothing to do with Ancient Greek and bringing the Muses, but is from Turkish *misafir*. The important point about this instance of folk etymology is not that this unsophisticated monk believed that a loanword from Turkish was from Ancient Greek, but that he felt it to be evocative and full of emotional connotations, in contrast to the cold formality of the ancient form φιλοξενούμενος, which was revived in the 19th century.

<sup>14</sup> See [http://www.slang.gr/lemma/show/xabales\\_3999](http://www.slang.gr/lemma/show/xabales_3999).

Because of the fact that the Greek language and the Greek Orthodox Church chiefly inhabited Ottoman lands from the 15th to the 19th century (and in many areas as recently as the 20th century), positive feelings towards words of Turkish origin tend to be associated with Greeks' view of themselves as Ρωμιοί/*Romioi* (what the Ottomans called *Rum*), that is, Orthodox Christians, as opposed to their view of themselves as Έλληνες/*Hellenes* (citizens of the Greek state and descendants of the pre-Christian Greeks). The travel writer Patrick Leigh Fermor (1966, chapter 3) famously described this complex self-perception as 'the Helleno-Romaic dilemma', although it is really a dichotomy, since it refers to the coexistence of two sometimes complementary and sometimes conflicting sets of attitudes and behaviours. The anthropologist Michael Herzfeld (1982, 20) has attributed this dichotomy to a distinction between Greeks presenting an image to outsiders ('an outward-directed conformity to international expectations') and Greeks talking among themselves ('an inward-looking, self-critical collective appraisal'). The Romaic aspect places the Greeks close to the Turks, since the Ottoman Empire was seen as protecting the Orthodox Church and its flock from Western Christianity (in both its Catholic and its Protestant forms), whereas the Hellenic aspect often (though by no means always) tends to be associated with a positive attitude towards (an albeit secular) Western Europe.

The positive attitude towards Turkish words is sometimes related to a nostalgia for an older Greek identity that existed before the coming of modernity, Europeanization and globalization. An indicative example is a passage in a text by the famous Greek novelist and short-story writer Alexandros Papadiamandis (1851–1911). When invited to contribute to an illustrated commemorative volume entitled (in Greek) *Greece during the Olympic Games of 1896*, instead of making connections between Classical Hellas and the modern world, as the editors of the volume would have liked him to do, he wrote a piece entitled 'Athens as an oriental city'. Papadiamandis' text includes a description of a small group of men with a guitar and a mandolin singing a midnight serenade under the window of two young women. His sensuous description of the scene is summed up in these words:

All this – the melody of the songs, the sounds of the guitar, the breath of the breeze, the whispering in the darkness and the scent of the flowers – produced a voluptuous, indescribable and ineffable fusion, which only the Turkish word *güzel* [beautiful] could come near to expressing (Papadiamandis 1988, 271; see also Tambakaki 2013).

This Turkish adjective, which would seem quite banal to Turkish-speakers, is perceived by Papadiamandis to be sensually evocative precisely because it is exotic – because it has connotations of another time and another place.



Even though Papadiamandis himself had never lived under Turkish rule, he seems to express a romantic nostalgia for a pre-modern Greece in which the Turks protected the Orthodox faith of the Greeks from the incursions of Western European culture.

The old official language (*katharevousa*), which was formally abolished in 1976, was characterized by a huge amount of semantic convergence with and literal translation from Western European languages. By contrast, the Turkish features of spoken Greek express Greece's position in the post-Ottoman Balkans, and they serve to differentiate this geographical area from 'the West'. They constitute pigments – or touches of spice – that contribute to the specific geographical and historical colour and flavour of Greek culture. Greek words of Turkish origin go together with the Turkish features of traditional Greek music and traditional Greek cuisine, which is why most Greeks feel (literally and metaphorically) at home with them. With reference to Greek culture in general, Herzfeld (1999, 235) writes that 'most Greeks acknowledge as "Turkish" (or at least *Romeiko*) much of what is most intimate – and thus the object of the greatest affection – in their everyday lives'.

### Turkish Jokes

Valuable evidence about Greek attitudes to Turkish features in their language comes from Greek jokes in which pseudo-Turkish words are put together to make phrases. I am indebted to the late Kostas Kazazis for introducing me to these jokes through his 1973 article. Kazazis drew the material for his article from a series of pieces in a popular Greek magazine of the early 1960s entitled 'Turkish lessons', but this kind of joke is still going strong 50 years later, by word of mouth and through the Internet. Not only are many of the original pseudo-Turkisms still being repeated, but new ones are being added. Since for non-Greeks these jokes require a laborious explanation which risks taking all the fun out of them, I shall content myself with just four examples.

Each joke takes the simple form of a question and answer: 'What's X called in Turkish?' (where X is some Greek word or phrase), and the answer is supposed to be the Turkish equivalent. When these jokes are written down, the pseudo-Turkish is always recorded in the Greek alphabet. A rudimentary and unsystematic knowledge of Turkish is used for inventing phrases that sound comic in Greek. In fact, most of the words used in these jokes are Greek words of Turkish origin that are stylistically marked in Greek as vulgar, old-fashioned, provincial, rural and so on (cf. Kazazis 1973, 395).<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> There are similar jokes in Greek about other languages, for example Italian, English, French and Russian. They follow the same format: 'how do you say x in

'What's a bra called in Turkish?' 'Μεμέ ζεμπίλ' (Kazazis 1973, 407).<sup>16</sup> The pseudo-Turkish phrase means literally 'titty-basket', using the Greek baby word μεμέ 'teat, nipple, breast' (< T *meme*) and the Greek word ζεμπίλι 'flat straw basket' (< T *zembil*). The humour is partly due to the fact that neither of the words used in this phrase is normally used, except in fun, in the language of urban Greek adults. The pseudo-Turkish phrase therefore sounds childish, old-fashioned and irremediably rural, an impression that contrasts with the modernity associated with the bra (at least in 1960!).

'What's Keats's "Ode on a Grecian Urn" called in Turkish?' 'Τιουνάν μαστραπά αμανέ' (Kazazis 1973, 404). The first word is Turkish *Yunan* 'Greek', the second is Greek μαστραπάς 'large vessel for liquids' (< T *maşraba*), while the third is Greek αμανές 'plaintive Oriental-style song', itself a conflation of Turkish *mani* 'a form of Turkish folk music' and Turkish *aman* 'mercy!' (because such songs include the refrain *aman aman*!). Here the humour results from what Kazazis (1972, 111) describes as the discrepancy between the elevated semantic content of the words and their low stylistic status, in other words the perceived discrepancy between the supposedly 'high' art of Classical Greek vase painting and English Romantic poetry and the supposedly 'low' art of Oriental songs that are associated with proletarian culture, and perhaps even with hashish-dens.

'What's television called in Turkish?' 'Μπανιστήρ ντουλάπ'.<sup>17</sup> The first word here is not a Turkish word at all, but μπανιστήρι 'peeping at sexual activity' (< verb μπανίζω < Italian *bagno*), but with the Greek morphological suffix /i/ removed to make the word appear Turkish; the second word is Greek ντουλάπι 'cupboard' < T *dolap*. Quite apart from the implication that the chief use of a television is for watching pornographic films, the humour is based on the 'primitive' sound of a phrase used to denote a modern invention.

'What's a Spice Girl called in Turkish?' 'Μπαχάρ χανούμ'. The first word is Turkish *bahar* 'spice' (Greek μπαχαρικά), while the second is Turkish *hanım* 'lady, woman' (cf. Greek χανούμισσα 'Turkish woman'). Whereas in Turkish this phrase would mean 'Mrs Spice', to a Greek it sounds as though it means 'spicy Turkish woman'.

For those British readers who find it difficult to see what is funny about these jokes, I can say they have a similar effect on the Greek ear as certain phrases of Pidgin English from the south Pacific islands may have on ours: for example 'Pikinini blong God' (a genuine phrase from the Melanesian Bislama language of Vanuatu meaning 'the Son of God') and 'nambawan pikinini blong Missus Kwin' (a phrase purported to mean 'the

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Italian?' However, the jokes about Turkish are a special case, in that they are more numerous and have a longer history than jokes about other languages.

<sup>16</sup> This phrase can still be found on Internet sites 50 years later.

<sup>17</sup> I heard this joke in 2005; it is still being repeated on recent Internet sites.

Prince of Wales', but perhaps invented by some British joker). The reason why we may find these particular Pidgin phrases funny is the discrepancy between the seemingly childish, simplistic and 'primitive' language and the solemnity with which one is normally expected to talk about persons of a divine or royal nature. This stylistic discrepancy or inappropriateness is similar to that which we find between the pseudo-Turkish phrases and their meanings in Greek. It is not a matter of Greek attitudes to the Turkish language as such, but attitudes to *Greek* words that are associated with old-fashioned or vulgar (or at least colloquial) speech. The example of Pidgin English leads me to suggest that Greeks see pseudo-Turkish as a kind of made-up Pidgin Greek. What is apparent from the 'Turkish jokes' I have quoted is that: (1) the words used don't actually have to be from Turkish, but should sound vaguely foreign and should have vulgar, old-fashioned or rural connotations; (2) the words are often made to sound foreign by the removal of their Greek inflectional endings; and (3) there is consequently a perceived lack of grammatical (morphosyntactical) connection between the words that make up each phrase.

Kazazis once carried out an experiment in which he took an Ancient Greek primer written by a Turk for Turks and showed it to some Greeks in order to gauge their reactions. We have to bear in mind: (a) that until the 1970s official discourse in Greece was couched in a rather archaic form of the language, and (b) that Greeks have been taught that the Greek language, from pre-Classical times to today, is a seamless whole. For these reasons, Greeks became accustomed to seeing Ancient Greek words and forms not in their diachronic dimension, as belonging to the past, but in a synchronic context, as bearing connotations of respectability, education and elevated style. Thus, on seeing the Ancient Greek word *ἀμαξα* (carriage) being rendered into Turkish as *araba* (cart, carriage, car), Greek readers were struck by what they saw as the stylistic discrepancy between the posh Greek word and its Turkish equivalent, since in Greek *αράμπος* evokes images of a slow-moving ox-cart rather than an ancient carriage. In the same primer, the Ancient Greek word *πατήρ* (father), with its seemingly 'learned' ending and inflection, is glossed in Turkish as *baba*. The incongruity between the 'respectable' Modern Greek words of Ancient Greek origin and the 'vulgar' Modern Greek words of Turkish origin caused Greek readers of the primer to burst out laughing. Kazazis sums up their reactions to the primer as follows: 'the Turks' serious words are our Greek funny ones'. One of Kazazis' informants even went so far as to exclaim: 'How can they expect to enter into the ancient Greek spirit with words like these?' (Kazazis 1975, 164–5). Such attitudes are a consequence of the 'stylistic demotion' of Turkish words in Greek.

Another humorous example that helps sum up the argument of my chapter is a cartoon that appeared in the Greek magazine *Tachydromos* in 1984, while Greek television was showing a Greek serial based on the novel *Hadji-Manuil* by Thrasos Kastanakis (1901–67), a Greek writer

born in Istanbul. The action takes place in Istanbul, and Greek viewers were faced with the unusual experience of hearing some of the characters speaking Turkish, and of hearing the Greek characters using a number of unfamiliar words of Turkish origin when speaking Greek.<sup>18</sup> This cartoon clearly shows that Greeks could potentially perceive Turkish to be both a comic and a vulgar language.



Figure 8.2 Caption. Cartoon by Costas Mitropoulos in *Tachydromos*, 16 February 1984

Note: Reprinted with the kind permission of Costas Mitropoulos.

The cartoon depicts a Greek family watching an episode of *Hadji-Manuïl*. The little son is gleefully watching the screen, out of which there emerges an incoherent string of Turkish and almost-Turkish words: *buyurum Hadzi-Manuïl kardas tamam yasinin oskeldim Selim biliyorum*. These represent the following Turkish items:

*buyurun* 'please; come in; sit down; help yourself'  
*kardaş*, dialect form of *kardeş* 'brother'  
*tamam* 'OK'

<sup>18</sup> This experience was repeated 20 years later, with the success of the 2003 Greek feature film *Πολίτικη Κουζίνα* (called 'A Touch of Spice' when released outside Greece). The Greek title means 'Constantinople Cuisine'.

*yaşasın* 'long live!'  
*hoş geldin* 'welcome'  
*biliyorum* 'I know'.

The father is saying to the mother: 'Take the child away! If it goes on like this, we're going to hear an *ασιχτίρ* (get yourself fucked)'. Turkish is presented here as being a language that is potentially unsuitable for Greek children. However, this is not due to the nature of the Turkish language itself, but to the way in which Turkish features in Greek have been stylistically demoted.

A similar cartoon appeared more recently:



Figure 8.3 Cartoon by Stathis Stavropoulos in *Epikaira*, no. 148, 16 August 2012

Note: Reprinted with the kind permission of Stathis Stavropoulos.

A couple are watching a Turkish television serial. The man says: 'I'm rather worried by this flood of Turkish serials on Greek television', and the woman happily responds with an incoherent series of Turkish and semi-Turkish words, which are all written in the Greek alphabet. The genuine Turkish originals of these words, all of which (apart from the second) are familiar to Greeks, are as follows, with an English gloss beneath them:

Yunan [...] hayvan hava haber, yavaş yavaş, aman aman!  
(Greek [...] animal air/tune news, slowly slowly, mercy mercy!)

The second word (*bulhturum*) does not seem to correspond to anything in Turkish. Meanwhile the cat mutters the Islamic Arabic phrase *Allahu Akbar* 'God is the Greatest'. Here again the cartoonist seems to be playing on Greek anxieties about being influenced by Turkish culture (which in the cat's case seems to involve conversion to Islam).

### Turkish Attitudes to Greek Words in Their Language

It would be interesting to conduct a study comparing the attitudes to Turkish words in Greek with attitudes to Greek words in Turkish. Judging from the study by Rona and Dedes (2007), Greek words in Turkish – unlike Turkish words in Greek – have not been ostracized from the higher registers of language.<sup>19</sup> Greek words have not been the subject of purges in Turkish in the same way that Arabic and Turkish words have.

Bengisu Rona (personal communication, 11 October 2011) has written the following about words of Greek origin in Turkish:

Many of the Greek-origin words are now indistinguishable from öztürkçe [standard Turkish] although that does not apply to fish, food and some other nautical or sea-related vocabulary (like the winds), where the Greek-origin words do have a clear 'flavour', but lack any pejorative associations; in fact on the contrary where there is an awareness of 'Greekness' in a vocabulary item the feeling is akin to chancing upon a long lost friend.

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<sup>19</sup> We may have to distinguish however between technical words of ancient Greek origin that are used in other modern European languages, and colloquial words that have entered Turkish from Modern Greek.



## Conclusion

By way of a conclusion, I would like to refer to a recent discussion about the use of a word of Turkish origin in a Greek newspaper.<sup>20</sup> In this discussion, the Turkish-origin word is viewed as denoting a negative phenomenon that is widespread in Greece. On 10 January 2012 the respected Athens newspaper *To Vima* placed the following headline at the top of an article in the financial section: 'The State is the biggest defaulter in Greece'. The word used for 'defaulter' was *μπαταχτοής* (< T *batakçı*). The response of one reader posted on the paper's website took this word for granted, and even used an abstract noun derived from it:

defaulting [*μπαταχτσιλίκι* < T *batakçılık*] is a national sport, of both government and governed, yet we'll forever keep saying someone else is to blame for our sorry plight.

However, another reader reacted quite differently:

What does 'μπαταχτοής' mean? Is it a Turkish word? True Greeks used to hope that Turkish words and expressions would have disappeared after 100 years of independence. And yet they are not just heard in cafés, they are even used in newspaper headlines. It seems that, even though the Greeks were the first in limited companies, banks, loans etc., they didn't have a word for the advanced concept conveyed by the Turkish word. What are we? Greeks or Turks?

First, this reader expresses (possibly feigned) ignorance as to the meaning of the word. Then he goes on to relate the national language (or at least its vocabulary) to national identity, even suggesting the possibility at the end that if Greeks use words of Turkish origin, they are Turks rather than 'true' Greeks. The sentence beginning 'It seems' is perhaps most revealing of all, since it suggests the possibility of a causal link between the use of Turkish words in the Greek language and the reprehensible behaviour of some of its speakers.

These two reactions to the use of a Turkish loanword in Greek sum up the contradictory attitudes that I have analysed in this chapter: the first respondent implies that the word of Turkish origin describes an experience that is so familiar to Greeks that it seems to refer to something deeply imbedded in their national character, while the second sees the loanword

<sup>20</sup> See <http://www.tovima.gr/finance/article/?aid=438192>. Greek *μπαταχτσιλίκι* means 'not paying your debts', whereas, according to the website <http://tureng.com>, T *batakçılık* means 'fraudulence, fraudulent dealing'.



as something so alien to the true Greek identity that it should be effaced from the Greek language.

There is ample scope for further fruitful research into the sociolinguistic status of Turkish loanwords in Greek. This topic needs to be more systematically researched, testing the reactions of a number of Greek informants to a range of Turkish loanwords. For the purposes of such a survey, the words themselves could be divided into categories in a number of different ways. One way would be to divide them according to whether they refer to concrete items or to abstract concepts such as emotions. Another would be to distinguish between loanwords that have exact native Greek equivalents and those that do not; loans belonging to the latter category could unequivocally be said to enrich the Greek language. A third way would be to distinguish between those loanwords that have the same meaning in Greek as they have in Turkish and those that have developed a different meaning or meanings in Greek; in this case the latter category would show how such loans have been adapted to express concepts that are particularly characteristic of Greek society.

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# Chapter 9

## Early Literature of the Asia Minor Disaster and of the War of Independence: Where Greek and Turk have yet to Meet\*

Natasha Lemos

### Introduction

Greeks and Turks certainly met in the war years between 1919 and 1922 under the unhappiest of circumstances. They continued to meet on the pages of fiction and memoirs inspired by the war and its aftermath but only as each side separately imagined the encounter. And just as these two literatures were separately conceived, so they have been separately consumed. Even though much Turkish writing has found a Greek readership and vice versa, early works with a seminal influence on the way the war-time events which inspired them were themselves subsequently perceived in each country remain after almost a century largely untranslated into the language of the 'other' and little known to its wider public.<sup>1</sup> In the literary recreation of their last great conflict Greeks and Turks have yet to meet. The purpose of this chapter is to effect a short introduction.

My aim is to sketch the emergence of the early works and to attempt to identify the features which have made them enduringly popular in their own country and unattractive to publishers in the other. In this respect the chapter will present a particular case of a general condition that affects Greco-Turkish relations to this day: the enduring hold of quite divergent narratives concerning events which constitute the cardinal moment of both nations' 20th-century history and in which their fates were conjoined. The most important features of these narratives concern in my opinion the image

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<sup>1</sup> For succinct lists of translated works see Hidirolglou (1997) and Çokona (2008).

of the self, which has been relatively neglected by scholars, rather than the image of the 'other', a matter to which a certain amount of attention has been paid.<sup>2</sup> This self is presented as the victim with victimhood epitomised by the sufferings of innocent inhabitants of Anatolia, the scene and purpose of the war. Each nation's narrative is, moreover, not just a story about the past; writers used it, as I hope to show, to speak to their own times and the enduring popularity of the works suggest that it continues to speak to the times of its readers. In some respects this function of the narrative resembles that of myth in ancient literature.

I will focus on two works, *To Noúμεγο 31328* (Number 31328) by Elias Venezis and *Yaban* (The Outsider)<sup>3</sup> by Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, both canonical works in their genres. I compare the original newspaper serialisation (1924) of *Number 31328* with its later (1931, 1945 and 1952) book forms. As well as attempting a general characterisation of the radical revisions made in the book, I draw attention to the association Venezis expressly made between the narrative in the book and the experience of the German occupation 20 years later. As regards *Yaban* I suggest that the generic material was not meant to be part of another war-time story, but was used to explore concerns which the author thought timely when the novel appeared (1932), chief among them the relationship of the educated class to the mass of the peasantry; and that the novel's canonical status has distracted readers' attention not only from its purpose, but also from the novel's superlative literary merits which quite transcend its historical interest.

## Background

It has by now<sup>4</sup> become a scholarly cliché that the same series of events is the 'War of Independence' (*İstiklal Harbi* or neologically *Kurtuluş Savaşı*) for the Turks<sup>5</sup> and the 'Asia Minor Disaster' (*Μικρασιατική Καταστροφή*) for the Greeks. The general public in each country, nonetheless, may have only a dim awareness that a different narrative of those events prevails in

<sup>2</sup> See, for instance, Millas 2001, in which the author traces the image of the 'other' through a long list of works, also Chapter 3 by Millas for a discussion of the 'other' in Greek and Turkish literature.

<sup>3</sup> A word of Persian origin, it can mean desert or wilderness, or (adjectivally) wild or savage. In a provincial meaning, it means a stranger or the world of strangers outside the family or social circle (Redhouse 1999, 1233). Yakup Kadri expressed the wish to leave the title untranslated (Fidan 1989, 8; Jacobson 1971, 71) and disparaged the obvious 'Stranger/Etranger' as misleading. Of translations of the title he thought the Italian *Terra Matrigna* (Stepmother Earth) best.

<sup>4</sup> Following Hirschon's conference paper of 1998, see Hirschon 2006, 13–14.

<sup>5</sup> During the early days of the conflict, when the outcome was still uncertain, the war was also called 'National Struggle' (*Millî Mücadele*).

the other. It is true that works less likely to perturb the other's narrative, in particular those written many years after the events themselves, have crossed the linguistic divide; for example Dido Sotiriou's *Ματωμένα Χώματα* (Bloodstained Earth) of 1962 with its underlying message that simple folk got on fraternally until politics or imperialists intervened was translated in 1970 and enjoyed great popularity. But neither public has any sense of the literary genre which came to shape dominant perceptions of the events in the other country.

Consistently with the names given to the war and the ensuing exchange of populations literature inspired by them has come to be known as 'The Literature of the Asia Minor Disaster' (*Η Λογοτεχνία της Μικρασιατικής Καταστροφής*) and as 'The Literature of Independence' (*Kurtuluş Edebiyatı*) in Greece and Turkey respectively. Each label denotes a genre of which the production and popularity with readers began contemporaneously with the events themselves and has continued to the present.<sup>6</sup> In both countries the genres are fairly clearly delimited and do not include everything inspired by the subject. The characteristic works consist of continuous prose narrative factually or fictionally reporting direct experience.

In the search for immediacy both literatures not only resort to first person narrative but also to linguistic registers that are close to the vernacular. The publication in serialised form of novels which eventually became classics in their genre made them also accessible to a wider public. In Turkey, this linguistic choice is linked to more general modernising concerns; the internal conflict between the Ottoman old and the nationalist new plays a prominent part in the narratives. In Greece, by contrast, the accepted narrative has very little room for political divisions that were no less real or important than in Turkey.

### *The Early Literature of the War of Independence*

The writers of the early period were all witnesses of the events. The most prominent among them, Halide Edip (Adivar) (b. Istanbul 1884–d. Istanbul 1964) and Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu (b. Cairo 1889–d. Istanbul 1974),<sup>7</sup> were young but recognised literary figures at the time of the war. They were ardent supporters of the emerging resistance movement in Anatolia and there is a clear continuum between their journalism and activism for the national cause<sup>8</sup> and the novels they published during and after the war.

<sup>6</sup> For instance, the last part, *Çıplak Deniz, Çıplak Ada* (Bare Sea, Bare Island), of Yaşar Kemal's tetralogy, *The Story of an Island*, was published on 5 October 2012.

<sup>7</sup> For a succinct introduction to both writers see Kurdakul (1992), 2, 69–108.

<sup>8</sup> In Halide's case not merely fleeing Istanbul for Ankara and being sentenced to death *in absentia*, but in a pioneering intrusion into a man's world getting herself appointed honorary corporal so she could be at the front.

Prominent examples include Halide Edip's *Ateşten Gömlek* (Shirt of Flame)<sup>9</sup> of 1922 and *Vurun Kahpeye* (Strike the Whore), which appeared first in serialised form in 1924 and then as a book in 1926, and Yakup Kadri's *Yaban* of 1932. This activism included the investigation and publication of Greek atrocities which they undertook together with Yusuf Akçura (b. Simbirk 1876–d. Istanbul 1935) on the instructions of İsmet Pasha after the Sakarya victory (Adıvar 1928, 307–10).<sup>10</sup> About a year later, in 1922, there appeared a book entitled *İzmir'den Bursa'ya, Hikayeler Mektuplar ve Yunan Ordusunun Mes'uliyetine dair bir Tedkik* (From İzmir to Bursa: Stories, Letters and Investigations Pertaining to the Greek Army's Responsibility) which is a collection of stories of the victims of war retold by Halide Edip, Yakup Kadri, Mehmet Asım Us (b. Gördes 1884–d. Istanbul 1967) and Falih Rıfkı Atay (b. Istanbul 1894–d. Istanbul 1971) which had originally appeared in the newspapers, *Vakit* (Time) and *Akşam* (Evening). The purpose of the book is made clear in the introduction, which in contrast to each story is not attributed to any one of the authors and should accordingly be regarded as a collective statement.

In this book the authors wished to bring together their personal impressions from their journey through the scorched earth between İzmir and Bursa among the hundreds of thousands of oppressed Turks who were subjected to all sorts of crimes committed by the Greeks ... The purpose of this book's publication is not to convert those against us to our side, neither is it to reignite the wrath and hatred in the hearts of the nation. It is to enlighten us about the oppression we the Turks ourselves were subjected to and of which we are more ignorant than anybody else (Adıvar et al. 1922, 3–4).

The book was reissued in the Latin alphabet in the early 1970s with a preface by İnci Enginün. She quotes Fevzi Lütfi who explicitly emphasises the birth of a nationalist literature in a literature of suffering:

There was up to now a nationalistic yearning in Turkish Literature but nobody could perceive what this was. Essentially this could not be found either by chance or with logic. The book 'From Bursa to İzmir' is the herald

<sup>9</sup> The literal translation is 'Shirt of Fire' but the author refers to it as *Shirt of Flame*, an expression which conveys unredeemed suffering (Adıvar 1928, 256).

<sup>10</sup> Although he did not serve for long (Adıvar 1928, 312), Yakup Kadri puts his participation in the investigation of Greek atrocities to use in the framing device of *Yaban*, a preface which claims that the ensuing narrative was from a charred diary found by the investigators of Greek war crimes (Karaosmanoğlu 2006, 15–16). For the Sakarya Campaign between 23 August and 12 September 1921, see Llewellyn-Smith (2005), 227–34.



of this yearning. The authors found it in the ruined roads of the Motherland and inside its anguish and they put it to use (Adivar et al. nd, 7).

Interestingly, despite the casting of the Anatolian peasant as victim there appears to be no systematic attempt of a kind familiar from later practice in Greece to record experiences of the victims of the war in their own words.<sup>11</sup> Instead we read words from the skilful pens of the *Kurtuluş* authors describing their own observations.<sup>12</sup>

The journalistic material produced in the war years has been reproduced for successive generations of readers, again in contrast with the Greek journalism produced in the war years themselves. For example, Halide Edip's *Vurma Fatma* (Do not Strike, Fatma) which appeared in *From Izmir to Bursa* (Adivar et al. 1922, 7–21) was also published in the same year in her collection entitled *Dağa Çıkan Kurt* (*The Wolf who Took to the Mountains*) which has remained in print (Adivar 1989, 5–10). Similarly Yakup Kadri's article, *Yunan Barbarlarının Yaktığı Köyler Ahalisine* (To the People of the Villages Burnt by the Greek Barbarians) (Adivar et al. nd, 89–92), is used as a prologue to the second (1942) and subsequent editions of *Yaban* but the word Yunan is eliminated from the title (Karaosmanoğlu 1945, 9–12). Some stories have also had an enduring presence in school books (Hidiroglou 1997, 26).

Yakup Kadri also collected articles he had written for the newspaper *İkdam* (Perseverance) in war-time Istanbul for a book under the title *Ergenekon*<sup>13</sup> which first appeared in 1928 and subsequently had an enduring print history. In a new preface to the 1964 edition of *Ergenekon* Yakup Kadri quotes and reflects on his 1928 preface which itself looks back

<sup>11</sup> The best-known oral history enterprise in Greece is by the Centre for Asia Minor Studies which began collecting refugee stories in the 1930s. The project continued for 25 years (Tenekidis 1980, λ'). A selection of accounts was published in two volumes (Apostolopoulos 1980) and (Kitromilides 1982), which bore the title *Η Εξοδος* (The Exodus). For a discussion of the selection of excerpts and methodology of 'The Exodus', see Kitromilides (1982), κγ' - μ' and Balta (2003), 47–55. Extracts from 'The Exodus' have been translated into Turkish by Demirözü in 2001 (Demirözü 2011, 144) and Umar (2002).

<sup>12</sup> One of the stories, *Teslim Teslim* (Surrender Surrender) by Yakup Kadri (Adivar et al. nd, 45–50) has the peasant victim tell his story in response to questioning.

<sup>13</sup> *Ergenekon* is an epic myth related to the Göktürks, purportedly the ancestors of the modern Turks, and to their fights against the Tatars in Mongolia in a mythically indeterminate past (Şükrü 1993, 77–8). It was made famous by Ziya Gökalp, the leading figure of Turkism, who in 1912 used this material in a narrative poem also entitled *Ergenekon*, addressed to Turkish youth (Tansel, 1952 89–94). The subject of Halide Edip's story (*The Wolf who Took to the Mountains*) mentioned above is based on the same myth.



to his war-time self. He still feels the 'sacred fire of the National Struggle' and believes that the newspaper articles reprinted in the book came from 'a power above my will'. But, if in 1928 they still seemed 'fresh and in season', in 1964 after many disappointments they seem to belong to a dream whose interpretation with characteristic ambivalence he leaves to the readers (Karaosmanoğlu 1973, 5–6). Yakup Kadri's preface of the same year, 1964, to a re-edition of his 1934 half-satirical, half-utopian novel, *Ankara*, expresses a similar tribute to the war-time spirit and regret at subsequent disappointment (Karaosmanoğlu 1964, unnumbered).

Recurring themes in the Turkish genre include: an emphasis on Anatolia as the heart of the nation; the sufferings of its inhabitants at the hands of the invading Greeks who vary in characterisation between the loathsome and the despicable; the abandonment of those inhabitants by the old regime to poverty, ignorance and superstition; the commitment of enlightened persons with a nationalist outlook to their improvement (with a significant sub-type consisting of the devoted woman teacher); the dynamism of Ankara in contrast to the decadence of Istanbul; the sometimes express association of the internal enemy, the ağa, the imam, the itinerant religious charlatan with the external enemy, the Greek. Notable in this regard is the dominant if not exclusive presence in the genre of the Western front and the Greek as enemy, despite the fact that the national movement fought hard on other fronts and against a number of enemies (Ozil 2011, 116–7).

The emphasis on Anatolia as the homogenous national homeland may explain the near absence or non-explicit presence of the Muslim refugee (*muhacir*) from the Balkans, Crete or the Caucasus in the Turkish genre of this period.<sup>14</sup> This is otherwise surprising given the substantial numbers of such refugees as a consequence of the wars with Russia and the Balkan states, the efforts that had gone into resettling them and the refugee background of a number of significant figures in the national movement. Moreover, the representation of the sufferings of such refugees at the hands of the Christians would have been consonant with other features of the genre.

### *The Early Greek Literature of the Asia Minor Disaster*

The Greek case differs in that the early exponents of what came to be recognised as the literature of the Asia Minor Disaster were themselves

<sup>14</sup> Millas (2004, 221–34) locates the earliest reference to *muhacir* in Reşat Nuri Güntekin's *Ateş Gecesi* (The Night of Fire) of 1942 but the same author's *Çalikuşu* (The Wren) of 1922 has the heroine playing with *muhacir* children (Güntekin 1993, 25). One story by Yakup Kadri, *Muhacir Kerim Ağa*, originally of 1921 and reissued in *Milli Savaş Hikayeleri-Ergenekon III* (Stories from the National Struggle – Ergenekon III) of 1947 has a *muhacir* as subject (Karaosmanoğlu 1965, 84).

direct victims of the war rather than just participants and observers as in the Turkish case. The names which have endured are those of Stratis Myrivilis (pen name of Efstratios Stamatopoulos, b. Mytilini 1892–d. Athens 1969), Stratis Doukas (b. Ayvali 1895–d. Athens 1983) and Elias Venezis (pen name of Elias Mellos b. Ayvali 1904–d. Athens 1973).<sup>15</sup> Myrivilis and Doukas had themselves fought in the Asia Minor campaign, while the younger Venezis had barely survived captivity in the Turkish labour battalions after the Greek defeat. They also differ from their Turkish counterparts in having no metropolitan recognition as writers before the war; this they gained chiefly through their war literature after the end of the 1920s. Although Myrivilis was first published in Mytilini in 1913 and the teenage Venezis had before 1922 some of his early work printed in periodicals published in Constantinople and Smyrna (Valetas 1974, 106–7, also Mackridge 1992, 225 and Mackridge 2004, 236), neither had the recognition of writers like Halide Edip or Yakup Kadri.

During the war the Greeks, just as the Turks, had tried their hand at atrocity propaganda. For example the journalist K. Faltaitis reported for the newspaper *Εμπρός* (*Forward*) on the suffering of the non-Turks in Asia Minor and his reports were published in book form in 1921 under the title *Αυτοί είναι οι Τούρκοι* (*These are the Turks*) (Faltaitis 1921). But unlike the Turkish case there was no continuity between this kind of publication and the subsequent literature of the Asia Minor Disaster.

Doukas, Myrivilis and Venezis each achieved literary celebrity through a single work, respectively *Η Ιστορία Ενός Αιχμαλώτου* (*A Prisoner's Story*) (1928), *Η Ζωή εν Τάφω* (*Life in the Tomb*) (1930) and *Το Νούμερο 31328* (*Number 31328*) (1931). Retouched by each author's hand in successive editions they have remained in print ever since. Versions of *Life in the Tomb* and *Number 31328* had appeared in serial form in the Mytilini newspaper, *Καμπάνα* (*The Bell*), edited by Myrivilis himself in 1923/4 and 1924 respectively. While Myrivilis and Venezis enhanced their celebrity by a substantial subsequent output, Doukas in the eyes of the public at least remained known only for his first book.

Doukas's book presents itself as the record of what the author heard from a Greek who had escaped from Turkey after the end of the war pretending to be a Turk.<sup>16</sup> Venezis's is an account of his own experience in the Turkish labour battalions in 1922/3. Myrivilis's is more overtly fictional but with the narrative form of a diary purportedly left by a sergeant killed in 1918. The historical background to the novel is not that of the Greco-Turkish war of 1919–22; but the historical background counts for little in the novel and its exploration of life confined in pointless death could use

<sup>15</sup> Beaton (1999, 131–40) supplies a succinct introduction to their work.

<sup>16</sup> A Turkish translation by Osman Bleda of this relatively anodyne work appeared in 2003.

any war as background. Myrivilis turned to the aftermath of the Greco-Turkish war in his next novel *Η Δασκάλα με τα Χρυσά Μάτια* (*The Schoolmistress with the Golden Eyes*) (1933). The protagonist is a returning soldier from the war and the persistent theme is the psychological scars the war had left on him.

A remarkable fact is that, while these first or early works of writers who had no prior fame have become canonical, they are not the earliest examples of their genre. A claim to priority could be made by an anonymous work published in 1923, reprinted in 1924 and then almost completely forgotten<sup>17</sup> until a reprint in 2006: *Από την Αιχμαλωσία. Κατά το Ημερολόγιο του Αιχμαλώτου Αεροπόρου Β.Κ.* (*From Captivity: According to the Diary of the Captured Airman V.K.*). The work, as its title suggests, purports to be based on the diary of a Greek airman captured by the Turks. G. Zevelakis in his introduction to the 2006 reprint convincingly argues that the author was Markos Avgeris (pen name of Georgios Papadopoulos b. 1884–d. 1973), who was already a recognised literary figure. Why the book was forgotten for so long is not yet very clear. Zevelakis suggests that Avgeris, who later turned much more decisively to Marxism, disowned it and gives the narrator's criticism of Bolshevik backing for Mustafa Kemal as the reason; to this one could add the narrator's overt Venizelism, his more general commitment to Greece's Christian *mission civilisatrice* in Asia Minor and contempt for the Turks. The narrator also for the most part observes rather than undergoes suffering (as a prisoner of war he has relatively favourable treatment and in the period before the Greek defeat it could be characterised as chivalrous) and such suffering as there is is only one theme in the book; he strongly emphasises and deplores political dissension on the Greek side and attributes the defeat to the royalist leadership. In these respects the book is very different from those that were later to become popular.

### ***Yaban and Number 31328***

I have selected two works, *Yaban* and *Number 31328*, for more detailed comment. This is not only because of their literary merits and their canonical status, but also because they illustrate the diachronic significance of each nation's narrative. Both novels remain in print and are still widely read in their respective countries. Both authors have Asia Minor origins. In the 17th century the Karaosmanoğlu family had established themselves in Manisa where a family *konak* (mansion) was burnt down in the Greek retreat in 1922 (Neyzi 2008, 114–5) and were prominent enough to have attracted the notice of Byron (Byron 1917, 260–261). The value of their protection or the fear of their tyranny is variously mentioned in Christian

<sup>17</sup> With the exception of its discussion in Doulis 1977, 49–54.

narratives (Sakkaris 2005, 45; Kontoglou 1991, 21). Yakup Kadri was born in Cairo, spent some childhood years in Izmir and settled in Istanbul in 1908.

The Venezis family hailed from Cephallonia and moved to Ayvalı<sup>18</sup> after 1821, but the novelist's maternal grandfather was an important landlord who came originally from Lesbos. Venezis himself was born in Ayvalı, moved as a child to Mytilene with the persecutions of 1914, moved back in 1919 and survived about 14 months in the Turkish labour battalions before being shipped to Mytilini. He was one of only 23 survivors out of 3,000 men who were taken from Ayvalı at the end of the war (Stergiopoulos 1993, 338).

Both novels share the form of narration in the first person which is meant to convey a lived experience. In the absence of extrinsic evidence it would be impossible to tell which novel is fictional and which autobiographical. *Yaban*, which is in fact fictional, opens with what purports to be an editorial note of a kind that can be found in novels as different as *Treasure Island* or *Lolita* to affirm the authenticity of the ensuing narrative. The editorial note explains that what follows is the content of a charred diary found by the committee investigating Greek war crimes, mentioned in the previous section in this chapter. Such a committee did indeed exist, and Yakup Kadri was for a time a member of it. *Number 31328* which is in fact autobiographical opens in the 1924 serialised version with an authorial preface so surreal that it suggests fiction; only the newspaper's editorial introduction (*Kampana* 47, 5 February 1924) tells us that it is in fact real.

Neither novel has been fully translated into the other language. Only the last chapter of *Yaban*, in which Greek troops sack the village, has been translated into Greek by Pavlos Hidirolou. The translation originally appeared in the literary journal *Néa Eortía* (*New Hearth*) (Hidirolou 1997, 860–869) and was subsequently reprinted in a short book on Yakup Kadri (Hidirolou 1995, 47–80) aimed at demonstrating Yakup Kadri's strong anti-Greek prejudice. Whatever Yakup Kadri's views on the Greeks, no one could understand *Yaban* from the last chapter alone as this analysis seeks to illustrate. As for *Number 31328*, Turkish readers have recourse only to a 52-page combination of summary and selective translation which Herkules Millas includes in a short book about Venezis and his hometown (Millas 1998, 80–132).

### *Number 31328*

*Number 31328* in the version read today appeared in Athens in 1952 (Venezis 2008). This revised edition which appeared in 1945 (Venezis 1945). The 1945 edition in turn was preceded in 1931 (Venezis 1931) by an

<sup>18</sup> Turkish Ayvalık on the coast opposite Lesbos was Greek Ayvalı.

edition which gives Mytilini as the place of publication but Athens as the place of printing. There are occasional differences of detail among these editions and I will draw attention to some of them; but the overall narrative is substantially the same. It differs markedly, however, from an original version under the title *No 31328* (printed in Turkish numerals to represent the prisoner tag that Venezis was actually given) which was serialised in 1924 in the Mytilini newspaper *Καμπάνα* (*Bell*) edited by Stratis Myrivilis. The 1924 version is not completely accessible; it is, at least where direct comparison is possible, about a quarter the length of the later book.<sup>19</sup>

The 1952 version adds a distinct new tinge by introducing chapter headings from the Psalms taken from the text of the Septuagint, as read in church, which are obviously chosen to encapsulate the ensuing narrative.<sup>20</sup> For example the heading of the first chapter in which the narrator's sorrows begin is from Psalm 18: 'The sorrows of death compassed me. The sorrows of hell compassed me about'. The heading of chapter eleven in which he is saved by a kindly Turkish doctor is from Psalm 9: 'the LORD also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble', while the heading of the last chapter in which he leaves captivity is from Psalm 78: 'He had commanded the clouds from above and opened the doors of heaven'.<sup>21</sup> These quotations from the Psalms characterise the sufferings of the narrator as sufferings of God's faithful servant whose hopes are reposed only in Him. This chord of traditional piety is somewhat dissonant, however, with the sharpness and sarcasm of a text which, but for the occasional touches,<sup>22</sup> was left unchanged from the 1945 edition. Why, or even if, Venezis was content with this remains a matter for further research. His gradual move from strong, if for professional reasons disguised,<sup>23</sup> radical sympathies to more establishment positions which has been noted and in some cases

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<sup>19</sup> For the reader's ease of reference I will normally cite *Number 31328* in a current edition (Venezis 2008), the text of which reproduces the 1952 edition. Unqualified references to the 'book' will be to any of the 1931, 1945 and 1952 editions of which the relevant passage can be taken as identical, unless expressly indicated.

<sup>20</sup> Interestingly Avgeris (2006, 182) at the Greek defeat quotes from *Lamentations* in the Septuagint original.

<sup>21</sup> The English is the King James version whose sense is not exactly the *Septuagint's*.

<sup>22</sup> For an example of style changes in 1952 Venezis reverted to the exact words of the 1931 ending by omitting the penultimate sentence of the 1945 edition: 'Που δεν μπορεί, θα γίνει φλόγα ... (It can't help it, it will become a flame). For an example of content changes, as noted by Kastrinaki (1999, 165–74), the reference in chapter 7 to Greek reprisals is further blunted in 1952 having been substantially blunted in 1945.

<sup>23</sup> In an unpublished and undated letter to Myrivilis in the Myrivilis Archive (Gennadeios Library, Personal, folder 17, subfolder 2) Venezis supports him against

deplored by critics (Kordatos 1962, 605; Kastrinaki 1999), does not alone explain the artistic choice made.

The author's preface to the 1945 edition says that he worked over the text three times in 1944 after finishing his novel *Αεολική Γη* (Aeolian Earth) in response to horrors of the present (Venezis 2008, 21–3). There are in fact few changes between the 1931 and 1945 editions, even fewer of which are significant.

In the narrative form of the book *Number 31328*, the story is told in the first person by the 18-year-old Elias who was taken captive and sent to the labour battalions after the end of the Greek-Turkish war in September 1922. His captivity lasts for 14 months. Elias survives, with the dice loaded heavily against him on repeated occasions, and is eventually shipped off from his homeland in Turkey to a very doubtful redemption in the metropolitan motherland, Greece. The title comes from the prisoner number that is assigned to him at a late stage of the ordeal. The narrative makes clear that once you got a number your chances of survival substantially improved since knowledge of your existence was now shared with Greece and agencies of the League of Nations. 'Joy, joy!' exclaims the narrator when he is finally handed a tin tag with his number (Venezis 2008, 210). The title emphasised the irrelevance and dispensability of a man whose chances of survival materially improved once he became a cipher.

The book consists of a straight-forward narration of a succession of episodes in the author's ordeal vividly described in a consciously spare, brutal and sarcastic language which was something of an innovation in Greek prose in 1931. It is nonetheless carefully shaped as a work of art. A prominent example of this artfulness is the framing image that begins and closes the work. It begins on the morrow of the Greek defeat with the now famous words of sarcasm, '1922. Η Ανατολή γλυκύτατη πάντα, γιά σονέτο – κάτι τέτοιο' (1922. Anatoli meaning ambiguously either 'the East' clearly referring to Anatolia as well or 'dawn' – most sweet always, for a sonnet – something like that) (Venezis 2008, 25).<sup>24</sup> It ends with Elias on the ship taking him from captivity just after he has had to tell his friend that the friend's family is dead. 'Soon the sun will rise', says the friend indifferently, having been asked if he feels cold. He does not use the word 'anatoli' or

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accusations of 'fascism' by Ριζοσπάστης (Radical) but explains that his own position at the Bank of Greece prevents him from writing openly to the newspaper.

<sup>24</sup> The sarcasm is toned down in the 1945 edition. The 1931 edition characterised the book on its title page as a Ρομάντσο (Romance); this is omitted in 1945. Also, while both 1931 and 1945 editions share the second sentence: Όλα ήταν ήμερα και αβρά εκείνο το φθινόπωρο (Everything was calm and dainty that autumn), the 1931 edition went on with a third sentence, cut out in the subsequent 1945 edition: Πολύ αβρά – βαρώνη, βαρωνίσκη Στάφ (Very dainty – baroness, little baroness Staff).



its cognates to refer to the rising sun. Elias sees an 'indeterminate line in the sky that will become a flame' (*Κοιτάζω βαθιά αυτή την απροσδιόριστη γραμμή που πάει να γίνει φλόγα*) (Venezis 2008, 319), the word 'flame' chosen to recall their ordeal and the destruction of the life they left behind.

There are a number of consistent themes that traverse the narrative. The most striking is the brutalisation by captivity of the captives themselves. Elias feels 'cruel joy' when someone else is picked for death (Venezis 2008, 53); the prisoners feel relief when their barefoot march is paused to allow the guards to rape some girls (Venezis 2008, 114); put to removing a pile of human bones from view before the arrival of a League of Nations inspector they turn it into play (Venezis 2008, 281). Another is the 'universalist' stance of the author. The dedication of the 1945 edition is to 'my tortured mother and to all the tortured mothers of the world' (Venezis 2008, dedication page). Elias receives the occasional kindness from a Turk (Venezis 2008, 172–4), but the Greek prisoners who have managed to obtain favourable treatment from the Turks and to act as the ruling class in the camps are totally disgusting: Turkish resistance to the Greek occupation is quite understandable and referred to in terms of admiration (Venezis 2008, 108), evils perpetrated by the Greeks are not entirely ignored (Venezis 2008, 95, 186). The most disagreeable and uncharitable set of prisoners is a collection of Greek priests (Venezis 2008, 112).

Consistently with an overtly non-nationalistic outlook, the word 'Greece' (Ελλάδα) is not used in the book and 'fatherland' (πατρίδα), while occasionally used for a particular locality or *memleket* by the Christians, is only used to refer to Greece by a sarcastic Turk. 'The Greek' (ο Έλληνας) or 'the Greeks' (οι Έλληνες) are referred to as interlopers (Venezis 2008, 48). As the prisoners are 'skimmed' (ξάφρισμα) for instant death at the beginning of the book (Venezis 2008, 46), the Turks pick on a man who tries to escape death by claiming he is an Italian citizen; but Elias remembers that when the Greeks came (in the third person, as if they were strangers) the same man, a hotelier, welcomed them and, 'not finding a flag to wave used a bed-sheet smelling of doubtful things and shouted: "Long Live Liberty!"' (Venezis 2008, 44).

The earlier serialised 1924 version is very different from all the book versions. It is astonishing that the opening of the book, which made it famous, is completely missing. The serialised version has a much rougher demotic in keeping with the standards of the newspaper and in narrative style is much more introspective and reflective and for the most part avoids the sarcastic flippancy which colours the book. By contrast the book cuts out most of the narrator's own thoughts and carries the story along with dialogue and sentences describing action. These stylistic changes apart, it is possible also to see major changes to the narrative. In the remainder of this section I will present three illustrative examples of differences between the 1924 serialisation and the later book and then discuss their overall effect.



The first example is the episode at the beginning of chapter seven of the book. The captives have arrived in Bergama to the horror of one of them, a watchmaker, because he fears vengeance for reprisals carried out by the Greeks and in which he had a part. After they are thrown into a tobacco warehouse a Turkish officer comes in, greets the watchmaker by name and offers him tobacco and brings food. The officer is described in half admiring half sarcastic terms as 'one of the palicars who did not bow their heads under Greek occupation, took to the mountains and spent pride as if it had no use' (Venezis 2008, 108). It then turns out that they had lived together before the war, that their wives had been like sisters and the Turk's wife had been killed during the war (it is not clear exactly by whom or how deliberately). The watchmaker begs for mercy but to no avail. The officer leaves and later in the night the watchmaker is led away without being allowed to see his family again.

In the book the watchmaker, his wife and child joined the captives at the end of chapter two. Of the wife, the narrator remarks, 'Τὴν ἤξερα. Ἐπαιζε καὶ πιάνο' ('I knew her. She also played the piano') (Venezis 2008, 68), a sarcastic touch that emphasises the reversal of their fortunes. Things get much worse in chapter four in which the wife is the victim of violent multiple rape before the eyes of her child in a gutted church (Venezis 2008, 79–81). The only element which this narrative has in common with the 1924 version is the rape scene in the church. But in the 1924 version this is not just mindless violence but part of a threat to induce the watchmaker to reveal the whereabouts of buried treasure. When he reappears at the end of the night he tells his companions that he was taken to a Commandant (Διοικητής) who forced him to dig for it at random. When the search proves fruitless he is returned to other captives and thinks that the threats against him may become real. After an interval the other captives including the narrator are led to the next stage of their journey but the watchmaker, his wife and child are kept behind, and the narrator learns no more of them (*Kampana* 2(55), 1 April 1924).

For any consideration of *Number 31328* as the testimony of a lived experience, this episode is one of the most puzzling: other narrative divergences between the 1924 version and the book can be explained away as omissions or differences of emphasis, but here we have two stories associated with an identified individual which are materially inconsistent.

The second example also comes from chapter seven of the book, the scene in which the priests of Ayvali are thrown into the tobacco warehouse (Venezis 2008, 111–4). This is one of the very few episodes which is related at greater length in the serialised original of 1924 (*Kampana* 2(55), 1 April 1924) than in the book and, significantly, it is also one where there are material differences between the 1931 (Venezis 1931, 76–8) and the 1945 versions (Venezis 1945, 82–4). In the serialised original the appearance of the priests who are mostly fat and old provokes laughter. We are told

that one of them, a deacon, used to send love songs to rich girls. Another one used to use 'pretentious speech' (ελληνικούρες) to impress 'silly women' (γυναικούλες). The priests scramble after tobacco, even ignoring the narrator's warning that the cigarette paper consists of torn pages from the Bible. Finally, they thank him and give him many blessings from their leprous heart. In the book all this has been omitted. The 1931 edition introduces them as 'a vast collection of bellies' (ήταν ένα τεράστιο συγκρότημα από κοιλιές), who throw themselves onto the food. In 1945, they are presented as more pitiable. Instead of the ironic 'holy federation of Ayvali' (ιερή ομοσπονδία του Αιβαλιού) of 1931 they have become 'the reverend fathers of Ayvali' (οι γέροντες του Αιβαλιού). Instead of falling down and screaming all together 'to order' (επί παραγγελία), they now screamed 'from pain' (απ' τους πόνοους). They no longer sniff the food and their greed is excused by hunger.

The third example comes from a passage in the 1924 version, a part of which corresponds to a scene in chapter six of the book. Common to both is a scene more horribly depicted in the original: the sight of a Christian woman in tatters having suffered multiple rape with the disgusting remains of the dead child which she had been forced to give birth to in the fields. In the book the rape is merely suggested and the decomposing remains of the baby are omitted (Venezis 2008, 102). Furthermore omitted altogether from the book is the narrator's reference in the 1924 original to the visible signs of death and devastation. The book also leaves out the tale of his companion, a former soldier in the Greek army, who tells the narrator not only that in the retreat Greek soldiers had burnt everything in sight but that he personally had poured petrol on to a woman and set her alight and in a previous attack had torn out the veins of a sick captive (*Kampana*, 51, 4 March 1924).

In terms of narrative content the changes between successive versions can be summarised as follows. A specific Greek atrocity graphically narrated by its perpetrator is omitted in the reworking of chapter six of the book. The image of the priesthood in chapter seven is upgraded in two stages from the contemptible to the merely pitiable. The story of the watchmaker is more complex. A simple tale of violence and venality in which the watchmaker's family are the only victims is turned by the book into a tale of retaliatory but indiscriminate violence in which each side perpetrates crimes on the other,<sup>25</sup> foiled by a flashback to an idyllic time of coexistence before the war.

In terms of stylistic changes the ruminative nature of the original version fitted the aims of the newspaper. *Kampana* was a newspaper with a distinct political line. It was in favour of the Plastiras 'revolution' and consequently

<sup>25</sup> Kastrinaki (1999, 165–74) observes the way in which the references to the Greek reprisals in Bergama are toned down in successive editions of the book.

Venizelist in political affiliation while severely critical of party politics. It was also a crusading newspaper. One of its causes was quite specifically the interests of ex-servicemen and political hostages whose individual interests the Greek state served, in the newspaper's opinion, only by the criterion of party political advantage (Matthaiou 1985, 213–32). Indeed, on 4 March 1924 *Kampana* carried on its front page with a banner headline an open letter from Venezis himself to Myrivilis on the issue of hostages. These were people still in the same position as Venezis had been. Venezis does not refer to his own experience, but gives a general account of the neglect and indifference, which allows extensive mistreatment of a large number of persons to go unremarked. Regardless of Venezis' literary merits, when there were still men who had not returned from Turkish captivity, it made perfect sense for the newspaper *Kampana* to commission Venezis to recount

his impressions of the living hell of slavery through which he passed in the hope that we will see finally an 'artistic expression' of this terrible life which many thousands – alas – of Greeks had the dark fortune to undergo but which no one was able up to now to recount (*Kampana*, 47, 5 February 1924).

For this purpose a more internal account of the slave's reflections on his sufferings made sense. This was stressed in the preface of each installment, which opened with the phrase 'what the man with this number who was enslaved in the war went through'.

In terms of content it could be argued that the 'revolutionary' stance of *Kampana* could accommodate satire of the priesthood. The same stance which was strongly anti-monarchist could also accommodate the recognition of Greek army atrocities in the retreat which took place under a monarchist army command. For a separate illustration of the strength of *Kampana's* anti-monarchist feelings I refer to its publication of a telegram sent by a monarchist general after a battle with the Turks in which, as the newspaper reports, 90 per cent of the Greek dead were Venizelist: 'We brought into contact the internal and external enemy and obliterated both' (*Kampana* 52, 11 March 1924).

Venezis expressed admiration for Doukas' *A Prisoner's Story*, which appeared in 1929 (Valetas 1974, 113) and it is possible that this was an influence on his changes to the narrative form for the book. In any event, Venezis in 1931 found a narration, which he could leave almost unchanged – even after three reworkings – to speak to the experience of the German occupation:

I saw then in the terrible spring and summer of 1944 how much The Number 31328, written after a great war, how much it had a kinship of

blood, a kinship of 'manner' twenty years later with the days of the new great war (Venezis 2008, 14–15).

It is perhaps unsurprising that the author set out in 1944 to revise his 1931 account of the horrors he suffered in 1922–23 in light of the contemporary sufferings of his country and that he found that almost no changes were needed. The remarkable thing is that the book continues to be a best seller in Greece with annual reprints after more than 60 years of peace. I would suggest that literary merit alone does not account for the enduring popularity of *Number 31328* in its book form; the work reflects and reinforces a self-image which because of the horrors presented, readers find rather consoling. The victim is one of *us* and his experiences epitomise those of *our* side. His sufferings are appalling and he did absolutely nothing to deserve them. He is broad minded-enough to rise above petty nationalism, to acknowledge the occasional kindness from the individual Turk but his story, particularly as reworked in the book, does not go as far as to threaten our perception of ourselves with any too specific picture of violence perpetrated by our side.

### *Yaban*

*Yaban* is an altogether more complex work. It was first published in 1932 in Istanbul and has remained in print ever since. Comparison of an early copy (confusingly dated 1933 on the cover but 1932 on the flyleaf) with a recent printing of 2006 does not reveal any significant linguistic divergences. I have not yet inspected an autograph which is listed in the Karaosmanoğlu archives and the list gives no date. A recent edition reproduces a page of manuscript in the Arabic script, but this is not conclusive evidence of composition before the alphabet reform because Yakup Kadri continued to use the old script.<sup>26</sup> It is consequently not clear how long before its publication *Yaban* was composed.<sup>27</sup> There is a possibility that it was in some sense conceived at about the time of the war. The purported editorial preface, with which the novel opens, refers to the work of the committee for the investigation of war crimes. As I mentioned earlier in this chapter, such a committee, on which Yakup Kadri served for a while with Halide Edip, did indeed exist. She herself relates in the preface to *Shirt of Flame*, first published in 1922, that she adopted the title of her novel from Yakup Kadri (Adivar 1943, 3–4). In her memoirs she writes that Yakup Kadri was contemplating an Anatolian novel with the title *Shirt of Flame* and that she

<sup>26</sup> See the photograph of the Ottoman manuscript on page 7 of *Yaban* (Karaosmanoğlu 2006, 7) corresponding to parts from pages 130–131 of the original edition of the book.

<sup>27</sup> For a detailed discussion see Coşkun (2003), 118–9.

had told him in jest that she will finish it before him (Adivar 1928, 256). Moreover, in an interview given by Yakup Kadri in the Turkish newspaper *Milliyet* (*Nation*) on the occasion of the death of Halide Edip, it is made clear that he wanted to write a novel with the title *Ateşten Gömlek*, but he gave in to her request to use the title for her own novel and wrote *Yaban* and *Ankara* instead (Yücebaş 1964, 119).

That Yakup Kadri may have thought of the form of the novel as early as 1921 is intriguingly suggested by the fact that Halide Edip chose a diary form for *Shirt of Flame* in contrast to the simpler direct narrative of her other war-time novel, *Strike the Whore*. It seems nonetheless unlikely that Yakup Kadri had simply pulled a finished old composition out of a drawer in 1932 since he published three substantial novels in the interval – *Kiralık Konak* (*Mansion for Rent*) in 1922, *Hüküm Gecesi* (*Night of Judgement*) in 1927 and *Sodom ve Gomora* (*Sodom and Gomorrah*) in 1928 – and four years passed between the appearance of the last of them and *Yaban*.

Amid the more direct titles of well-known *Kurtuluş* novels, such as *Shirt of Flame*, *Strike the Whore*, *The Star of Dikmen*, *Green Night*, *Blood and Faith*, the ambiguous *Yaban* stands out at once. The plot of the novel is in a certain sense very simple. The narrative purports to be the record in a lost notebook of an educated native of Istanbul, Ahmet Celal, who has moved to a village near a tributary of the Sakarya before the 1921 campaigning season. It takes in his observations of life in the village, his encounters with the Greek invaders and nationalist army as well as his personal feelings. At the end of the novel the narrator goes missing, presumed dead.

The novel exhibits some tropes common to other works of the genre such as the aridity of the land (Karaosmanoğlu 2006, 22, 32, 171), the poverty and squalor of the Anatolian peasants (Karaosmanoğlu 2006, 19), the grip of superstition on them exploited by charlatans and scoundrels, their inability to believe that the national struggle has anything to do with them as well as the horrors visited on them by the Greek army (Karaosmanoğlu 2006, 27, 41, 54, 76, 153).

However, in contrast to a prominent trend of the time in the genre the novel has no shining example of womanhood except for the narrator's mother who exists only in his reveries and whom he cannot imagine in the village (Karaosmanoğlu 2006, 99–100). Emine, with whom the narrator falls in love, is a simple peasant (Karaosmanoğlu 2006, 61). Emeti kadın is kind but ignorant (Karaosmanoğlu 2006, 122) while Zeynep kadın is confined to the everyday struggle for survival: so much so that the struggle for national independence falls beyond her (Karaosmanoğlu 2006, 54). Cennet meanwhile is not merely adulterous but flees with a deserter (Karaosmanoğlu 2006, 59, 90–91).

Most strikingly the cast of characters does not include a single heroic figure of the national movement. Conversely it presents Ahmet Celal, the narrator, as an anti-hero. Although he fought in the Çanakkale he is now

a cripple. Although he dreams of confronting the Greeks and dying at their hands, this does not happen (Karaosmanoğlu 2006, 123); instead he is almost killed by a stray Turkish bullet (Karaosmanoğlu 2006, 129). Both Greek and Nationalist officers who pass through the village think he is almost mad (Karaosmanoğlu 2006, 130, 157). He refuses to accompany the Nationalist forces in the direction of Ankara, imagining that his presence will be like that of a tail-less dog he remembered from his desert campaign (Karaosmanoğlu 2006, 132). His reaction to a group of enemy soldiers provokes laughter (Karaosmanoğlu 2006, 172).

One of the most powerful themes in the book is the divide between Ahmet Celal and the class from which he springs and the villagers. His everyday habits seem to them ridiculous. Amid their disabilities his own is completely unremarked (Karaosmanoğlu 2006, 19). The villagers appear to him as expressionless as a bundle of towels and less understandable than birds or cats (Karaosmanoğlu 2006, 35). Conscious of this Ahmet Celal rails against his own class for neglecting the peasantry and leaving them in their wretched condition. The significance of this theme of alienation is emphasised by the delirious dream at the very end of the book. After they escape the sack of the village by the Greek troops, the village girl, Emine, tries to tend his wound; Ahmet Celal imagines that the gap between the Turkish villager and the Turkish intellectual has been healed. And yet it is only a dream, because a page later Emine cannot go on and leaving her behind he heads off into the unknown (Karaosmanoğlu 2006, 197–8).

It is no coincidence that Yakup Kadri came to publish in 1932 what was ostensibly a *Kurtuluş* novel, the strongest theme of which is the divide between the Istanbul intellectual and the Anatolian peasant. This was the year he became active in the *Kadro* movement, which promoted the idea that Turkey needed the direction of an enlightened *avant-garde*, such as its members conceived themselves to be. Yakup Kadri was also the responsible editor of its eponymous journal. Much of the material in *Kadro* is about economics, but it is possible to extract a few themes directly relevant to the imagined world of *Yaban*. The first and most obvious is the physical condition of the peasantry. The second is the ideal of the unity of the leading classes with the peasantry, *halka doğru* (to the people). The third, connected with this, is the notion of internal or autochthonous development and a rejection of superficial Westernisation both in culture and in economics. The second and third of these themes dominate the half-satirical, half-utopian novel which Yakup Kadri published next after *Yaban*, *Ankara*. This novel, which appeared in 1934, contains merciless satire of the superficial Westernisation of the Kemalist regime and the gulf between its leading class and the peasantry. While professions of undying loyalty to the regime allowed the *Kadro* movement to operate for a couple of years, eventually Atatürk decided in 1934 to shut it down and Yakup Kadri was packed off as ambassador to Tirana (Karaosmanoğlu 1955, 22–23).



At an early point in *Yaban* Ahmet Celal exclaims:

Instruction, education, good upbringing are transitory things and it is not possible for the individual to be transformed for the better while the environment remains unchanged. From this anodyne remark we can address the issue of understanding why all the movements for reform and westernisation in Turkey have ended in failure (Karaosmanoğlu 2006, 26).

Although Ahmet Celal here sounds like a Kadroist before his time, his own case is meant to exemplify the failure of the old intelligentsia while his physical incapacity could be interpreted as an objective correlative of this failure. Educated, deeply familiar with Western and Turkish literature and very concerned at a certain level for the villagers, he is nevertheless incapable of doing anything for them. This, together with the delusional features of the narration, suggests to me that the picture of village life is not meant to be objective, as most critics have understood it, but a refraction in the mind of Ahmet Celal which is symptomatic of the failure of the old style Istanbul intellectual to engage with it and to understand it.

The contrast with Neşet Sabit, the intellectual in *Ankara*, is striking. Whereas Ahmet Celal is the son of a Pasha (a high-ranking official), the origins of Neşet Sabit are obscure; whereas Ahmet Celal is obviously a man of property, Neşet Sabit has to work for a living; while Ahmet Celal is lost in despair and cannot communicate with the people, Neşet Sabit has a consistently positive outlook and succeeds eventually in writing in the language of the people and gains their approval. From the utopia of part three of *Ankara* one can infer that it is the lyrical optimism and engagement with the people of Neşet Sabit which Karaosmanoğlu thinks must replace the exhausted pessimism embodied by Ahmet Celal. The comparison of *Ankara* and *Yaban* suggests that the formation of the 'correct' leading class in the present, a central preoccupation of the *Kadro* movement, is key to understanding both novels.

If remoteness from the people and a failure to engage with them is a vice, it seems in *Yaban* to be shared by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk himself. Ahmet Celal wonders whether, perched on a rock in Ankara, the great shepherd can do much for the village or for him. There are only three other references to Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in the entire work. In one he appears during a reverie of Ahmet Celal as a star in the sky (Karaosmanoğlu 2006, 75); from the two others we see what little impression he makes on the ordinary people (Karaosmanoğlu 2006, 27, 92). Such criticism may be buried in the narrative or the narrator's delusion, but it reads like criticism nonetheless.

It can also be argued that, just as political criticism of the present in *Ankara* is veiled by the use of satire applied to the past and utopian fantasy



to the future, so in *Yaban* direct criticism is made permissible not only because it is disguised in a story set in the period of the national struggle and put in the mouth of a character who lived in the past but is also represented as partly deranged. In this respect I argue that the tropes of the *Kurtuluş Edebiyatı* are used to veil criticism of the present.

Although I believe it possible to identify a message in *Yaban*, it must be said at once that as a work of art it transcends the props from which it is constructed, the miseries of the peasantry, the sufferings of war and the uselessness of the educated class of the traditional type. From its ambiguous title (who or what is *Yaban*: Ahmet Celal, Anatolia and its inhabitants or the invading Greeks?) to the fine detail of its narrative structure (in which the narrator loses all sense of time and the order of actual historical events is distorted) it induces like few other novels a sense of hallucinatory alienation. Its priority in European literature has been insufficiently recognised. Its overt subject has been an obstacle to a Greek translation; insularity has kept it unavailable in English.<sup>28</sup> But even in Turkey its canonical place in *Kurtuluş Edebiyatı* has deflected attention from its merits as well as its principal theme.

### Concluding Remarks

I have emphasised three principal themes in this study. The first is the continuing existence of quite different narratives in Greece and Turkey in relation to the single series of events between 1919 and 1923. This is exemplified in two early works, each of which is enduringly popular in its own country and almost unknown in the other. The second theme is the cardinal importance in this narrative of the image of the self as victim rather than the image of the 'other'. The third theme is the use of the narrative by authors to speak to concerns at the time of composition. These three themes are linked by an emphasis on later history as the key to understanding literary works which on their surface appear to be straightforward narrations set in the war and its aftermath. For the better understanding of the diachronic significance of this literature, the tracing of authorial variants is a fruitful field of research and the study of unpublished material left by the authors of this literature, which promises much has yet to begin because the material has either only recently been made accessible or has yet to be. The full translation into the other language merely of the two books discussed in this chapter, an undertaking which has not been attempted in 80 years, could enable the wider public in Greece and Turkey to see the other as that other sees itself.

<sup>28</sup> Jacobson (1971, 3–256) includes a translation of the whole of *Yaban* in his thesis presented to the University of Utah, but it remains unpublished.

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PART III

Discourses of Inclusion  
and Exclusion Revisited

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# Chapter 10

## The Convention of Lausanne (1923): Past and Current Appraisals

Konstantinos Tsitselikis

### Introduction

The Greek-Turkish exchange of populations of 1923–24 needs to be situated in the political and strategic context of the simultaneous reconstruction of the two neighbouring countries in the aftermath of the Greco-Turkish War (1919–23) and their consolidation as nation-states. In Lausanne, land and population constituted the risk factor in the diplomatic negotiations between Turkey and Greece, the British Empire, France, Italy, Japan, Romania and the Serbo-Croat-Slovene state. Throughout the negotiations, Greece and Turkey manipulated the population statistics in order to support their respective claims of population ties to the other's land or nation within the new borders. The delegates at the Conference of Lausanne, which had stipulated the dismantling of the Ottoman Empire and the creation of the modern Turkish state signed the Convention of Lausanne on 30 January 1923. The Convention of Lausanne legally regulated the fate of approximately two million people in a non-reversible and compulsory way. For the first time in history, the international community accepted and imposed an uprooting, thereby finalising the consequences of the Greco-Turkish War. On 24 July 1923, the negotiations were concluded with the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne, which drafted the new frontiers in the Balkan region and regulated the relations between Greece, Turkey and the powers (France, Great Britain, Italy, the US). After a 12-year period of military confrontation, the two states inaugurated a new era of peace. One of the crucial issues the Treaty of Lausanne regulated was the legal protection of minorities, who were exempt from the Population Exchange between Greece and Turkey according to religious affiliation. If ethnic homogenisation was the common aim of both states, definite uprooting was not an easy task to fulfil without the consent of the populations concerned. Important decisions concerning who would be exchanged and who would remain within the newly drafted borders and the legal ramifications and political ideologies that shaped these decisions have been at the very centre of public and academic debate since the early days of the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne.

This chapter aims at discussing how the ‘unmixing’ (Triadafilopoulos and Vogel 2006, 182) carried out through the Population Exchange between Greece and Turkey was perceived in public and academic discourses. The chapter takes a diachronic perspective charting some of the early discussions immediately after the signing of the Lausanne Convention to contemporary time. It investigates the Population Exchange as a key aspect of Greek-Turkish relations and as a process which although short-lived marked the future of both states and their respective populations. The process of turning land, population and private wealth into a national asset irrevocably marked the perceptions of the two populations, their élites and other third parties concerned. In this context, the non-exchanged, namely the Greek-Orthodox and the Muslim minorities, were seen as second-class citizens in both countries. Antagonism between the two states was common practice. Sometimes real, other times symbolic, it played a key role in bilateral relations throughout the 20th century. Indeed, the Population Exchange engendered complex interdependent perceptions with deep repercussions, the effects of which can still be felt today. Since the early 2000s, historiography on the Population Exchange in both countries has shifted perspectives and has started revisiting the past. This process of revisiting the past has had the effect of challenging dominant discourses and long-standing worldviews on both sides of the Aegean. Studying diachronically the public and academic discourses on the Population Exchange as common trauma and experience can shed further light to the relationship between Greeks and Turks and can bring forth points of ideological, political and psychological convergence and divergence that have shaped this relationship.

### **Ethnic Engineering: To Eliminate or to Create Minorities?**

The discussion of an exchange of populations between Greece and Turkey in 1923 was not new. The exchange had first been discussed in 1914 and then at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, but it had never been implemented. Notwithstanding, a similar exchange of populations had already been implemented between Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire. The issue of the Population Exchange came to the forefront of the negotiation process again after the defeat of the Greek army in 1922, the thwarting of the *Megali Idea*<sup>1</sup> and the ascension to power of Mustafa Kemal Pasha in Turkey. The Conference of Lausanne took on

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<sup>1</sup> ‘Megali Idea’ (Μεγάλη Ιδέα, [Great Idea]) was the political programme whose aim was to incorporate territories with Greek populations into the borders of the modern Greek state. It was pioneered by the Greek politician Ioannis Kolettis in the mid-19th century.

the task of defining the foundation of a new Turkish state and its borders with Greece. In fact, it established a new era for the two neighbouring countries, by imposing the creation of ethnically pure states, without the consent of the populations concerned. The compulsory nature of the Population Exchange undoubtedly functioned as the most drastic means for the achievement of ethnic homogenisation. This process resulted in the near annihilation of ethnic and religious minorities and the deminoritisation of the territory and economy (Aktar 2003, 79). Moreover, each minority was considered dependant on its neighbouring 'mother country' while each nation-state accumulated valuable human resources in its own territory.

At the Conference of Lausanne, the proposal regarding the Population Exchange took centre stage. The compulsory nature of the exchange was decided in view of the advantages gained for both countries, namely the departure of minority populations along with the recovery of resources from the establishment of the refugees and those exchanged. Greece and Turkey signed the Convention under the auspices of the League of Nations, which imposed the compulsory displacement of the Greek-Orthodox population of Turkey and the Muslims of Greece and prohibited *de jure* the return to their ancestral homes.

The process of uprooting was completed in 1930. It had started prior to 1922 with a series of immigration and expulsion waves, which had taken place on both sides of the Aegean, for example in 1912–13, 1914, 1918–19. Using contemporary terminology, the exchange was a humanitarian disaster. Before the Convention was signed, '130,000 Turks had left Greece' and between 1913–23, 900,000 Greeks followed in the opposite direction (Ladas 1932, 711–5). As a direct result of Article 1 of the Convention, approximately 360,000 Muslims of Greece had to leave their homes and move to Turkey. By mid-1925, 192,000 Greek-Orthodox and 335,000 Muslims had been mutually exchanged and settled in Turkey and Greece respectively (Aarbakke 2000, 52; also Yıldırım 2002, 215–97; Pekin 2005; Rossi 1930; and Oran 2003 for detailed accounts). The exchange was finalised with the Greco-Turkish agreement on 10 June 1930, which settled the issue of the refugees' property, without, however, their substantial economic reimbursement. The numbers above show, in their silent way, the cost in human suffering and reflect the consequences of the violent clashes of the opposing nationalisms in the early 20th century.

In effect, the Convention regulated *de jure* what was partially a *de facto* reality for hundreds of thousands Greek-Orthodox and Turkish-Muslim refugees who were banished or had decided to immigrate from 1913 onwards from Asia Minor and Thrace (Pentzopoulos 1962). As Greek political leader Eleftherios Venizelos had emphasised:

...the Convention of Lausanne is not an agreement for the exchange of Greek and Muslim populations but an agreement for the departure of the Muslim populations of Greece since the Greeks had been chased out of Turkey.<sup>2</sup>

Indeed, the decision to implement the Convention was taken in order to serve the political interests of Greece (for example, retaining the seat of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Istanbul) and Turkey (for example, forbidding Greek-Orthodox refugees to return or to claim their properties) and not of those immediately concerned (Clark 2006, 102–5).

For political reasons, which were of mutual concern to both sides, Article 2 of the Convention exempted from the exchange the Muslims of Western Thrace and the Greek-Orthodox population of Istanbul.<sup>3</sup> The Greek-Orthodox populations of the islands of Imbros (Ιμβρος) and Tenedos (Τένεδος) were also exempted. The exemption of these populations automatically meant their minoritisation within their respective nation-states with long-lasting political, legal and ideological implications (for a cogent discussion of the educational implications of the minorisation of the populations, see Chapter 14 by Dragonas and Frangoudaki and Chapter 13 by Ozil; see Chapter 11 by Kamouzis on the Patriarchate; and Yanardağoglu's Chapter 12 on Greek minority media).

The most important exemption to the Convention made by the Mixed Committee regarding the Muslims of Greece were the Albanian-speaking Muslims. More than 30,000 Muslims who were able to prove their Albanian descent were allowed to remain in their homelands: they were established for the most part in Epirus (Tsamouria) but also in Macedonia and Thessaly. In Turkey, the exemptions revealed a latent ethnic criterion that determined the exchanged and the non-exchanged. The Greek-speaking Arabs residing in the region of Kilikia were exempted after the mediation of France and the protests of the Patriarch of Antioch Gregorius IV as well as other Orthodox minorities in Turkey (for example Albanians, Bulgarians, Serbs and Rumanians). However, the ethnic criterion prevailed in the case of some Greek Evangelical Christians and Catholics who were expelled and forced to migrate.

In effect, the exchange of populations constituted a radical solution to a bilateral, minority issue, which had resulted in military confrontations and wars, inter-ethnic clashes and the shifting of international borders.

<sup>2</sup> *Atlantis* (Ατλαντής), New York, 18 March 1929, reported in M. Belli (1940), *The Economic Aspects of the Compulsory Minority Exchange between Greece and Turkey*. MA diss. University of Missouri. 1940, 6.

<sup>3</sup> PCIJ (Publications of the Permanent Court of International Justice), 'Exchange of Greek and Turkish Populations', Opinion No. 10, Series B, 21.2.1925, also Alexandris 1992, 112–7.

In this context, Yıldırım argues that the Population Exchange based on religion served to accomplish the ethnic homogeneity of the state through eliminating the minorities, perceived as the enemy from within (Yıldırım 2002, 322). Nevertheless, the Population Exchange did not prevent subsequent clashes between Greece and Turkey for the next 90 years after the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne. Indeed, there have been intense crises between the two countries, which, although have not led to immediate military conflict, have triggered significant tensions.

In the aftermath of the Population Exchange, Greece focused on its internal stability and development, condemning those responsible for the Asia Minor Catastrophe and undertaking the economic and social absorption of the refugees. As Hirshon (2003, 10) points out, especially in the case of Greece,

... the exchange of population is a continuous long-term process of economic, cultural, political and social redefinition and integration through the considerable amount of refugees. This influenced the Greek state deeply and fundamentally all the facets of society.

On the other side of the Aegean, the newly established Turkish state focussed on imposing a new political and social programme with the purpose of transforming the Ottoman structures and revitalising the country's economy after constant conflict and territorial shrinking.

## Early Critiques

Early judicial critiques have pointed out that the Lausanne Convention, which officially implemented legal ethnic-cleansing policies,<sup>4</sup> was of questionable legality as it did not take into consideration the free will of the populations concerned and therefore contravened their fundamental human rights (Seferiades 1928, 327; Tenekides 1924; Barutciski 2003, 24). Rather, the discourse of the 'cohesion of the race' was hidden behind the religious criteria for the exchange. In one case, the High Administrative Court of Greece was asked to adjudicate whether an Armenian refugee living in Greece could acquire Greek citizenship under the relevant legislation of the Treaty of Lausanne. The argument of descent was deployed by the High

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<sup>4</sup> The term 'ethnic cleansing' refers to policies that aim at the elimination and uprooting of parts of the population based on their ethnicity with the purpose of homogenising the nation-state. For instance, the Muslims of Greece constituted 13 per cent of Greece's population in 1913, but only 1.7 per cent after 1924. In 1914, the Greek-Orthodox in Turkey constituted 8 per cent of the overall population; two years later, they were less than 1 per cent.

Administrative Court to deny citizenship. In its 1931 decision the High Administrative Court stipulated that 'it is obvious that the Agreement of Lausanne and the relevant legislation in relation to ethnic exchange refers to Greeks and Turks in accordance with descent and not of any "other descent"'.<sup>5</sup> Thus, in its decision the High Administrative Court used the category of 'Greek' and not that of 'exchangee', thereby discriminating against those refugees who were not 'of Greek descent' and barring their access to the special legal status provided by the Treaty of Lausanne.

The compulsory nature of the exchange did not only constitute a violation of fundamental human rights as we know them today, but also as they were perceived at the time the Convention was drafted. Arguments based on political realism were used in Lausanne, ignoring the interests of Greek and Turkish citizens. The rights of the individuals whose fate was negotiated were ignored with the consent of the participating countries. Thus, the final agreement consisted of a monumental act of governmental violation of their citizen's interests (Meindersma 1997, 636; Thornberry 1991, 51). Criticism from international law experts at the time was harsh. According to Tenekides (1924, 86),

... the compulsory exchange comprises the foremost serious violation of personal freedom and the right to property, as well as a sad regression of international law. This leads us to an aggressive and previously unheard of understanding in relation to the war since defeat is equalled to the destruction of the population whose property has been looted by the victor and the population itself is forced into exile or slavery.

In a similar vein, Seferiadis (1928, 327) argued that the enforcement of a compulsory exchange of populations was in opposition to notions of respect and dignity of the individual and encroached on the international law on minority protection at the time:

Thus, every agreement which tries to violate the positive international law, the universal standards for ethical behaviour and fundamental human rights should be recognised as invalid due to its illegal content.

As another international law scholar put it, 'populations can not be treated as a herd of animals where somebody can negotiate control over them' (Fauchille 1925, 566). These arguments illustrate that the discussion of the ethical and juridical legitimacy of the Population Exchange during the 1920s had a strong reference to human rights and the importance of the people's will to determine their own destiny as citizens and as human

<sup>5</sup> High Administrative Court (Συμβούλιο της Επικρατείας) 454/1931, Themis (Θέμις) vol. MB, 742.

beings. The arguments put forth resonate with those by Stephanos Ladas, who published his monumental work on the Greco-Turkish and Greco-Bulgarian Population Exchanges in 1932. Ladas conducted his research in the field during the Population Exchange. He provided a detailed account of the role of the supervising Mixed Committee and of the implementation of the Convention on the ground. His analyses included the economic repercussions and bilateral cooperation or antagonism between Greece and Turkey as well as a detailed comparison between the Greek-Turkish and Greek-Bulgarian Population Exchanges.

## Reproducing National Discourses

In subsequent decades, dominant historiographic accounts tended to ignore certain aspects of the Population Exchange, still deemed taboo until present time. These aspects concerned the common historical and cultural past, which was hitherto conceptualised as exclusively belonging to the Greeks or the Turks. Ethno-cultural unmixing served the consolidation of both nations, which were imagined as progressing through history in a linear and unidimensional manner. This was possible because dominant discourses ignored the ethno-catharsis that had taken place. Moreover, questions such as the following were approached mainly through the lens of national interest: how did the Population Exchange serve the dominant nationalist ideologies? How was the law applied on the one hand for the eradication of minorities and on the other hand for the protection of those who would become minorities? How were the exchangees and the non-exchangees treated in the respective countries? With few notable exceptions, hegemonic Greek and Turkish historiography focussed, as was expected, on the exchangees of its 'own' side: Pentzopoulos (1962), Kitromilidis and Alexandris (1984–1985), Koufa and Svolopoulos (1992), Kitromilidis (1992) and Arı (1995) avoided the pitfalls of the nationally biased, mainstream Greek and Turkish narratives.<sup>6</sup>

The Grecocentrism and Turkocentricism of each nation's dominant historiographical production was reproduced ideologically in two ways.<sup>7</sup> First, the Population Exchange as a topic of investigation was studied in a one-sided manner, which ignored the mirrored 'other'. Second, the very

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<sup>6</sup> Mihri Belli (1940) was one of the early scholars to examine the population exchange beyond nationally biased argumentation from a leftist internationalist point of view.

<sup>7</sup> Grecocentric historiographies emphasised the elimination of Hellenism in Asia Minor from an essentialist perspective (see, for instance, Fotiadis 2009 among others) while Turkocentric historiographies foregrounded the uprooting of the Muslim populations of the Balkans, represented *ex posteriori* as Turkish (Arı 1995).



same phenomenon was investigated through national filters, as part of each country's national history and process of state-building. According to these narratives, the Population Exchange was represented as a success story in which both states successfully incorporated and integrated hundreds of thousands of refugees (Mavrogordatos 1983; Ari 1995). Greek- and Turkish-centred research focused mainly on issues pertaining to settlement, the economy, demography and politics in parallel monologues with no interaction or dialogue between the two sides.

As a result, the outcome of the Population Exchange, as used ideologically in Greece and Turkey, legitimised the argument that henceforth both countries could deal with their minorities as an exemption to the paradigm of citizenry. Along these lines, each country invoked the discourse of national interest, which was placed under political and institutional control. The Population Exchange also set a convenient threshold for recognising only those minorities named in the Treaty of Lausanne (July 1923), notably the Muslims in Greece and the non-Muslims in Turkey, thereby creating a political argument for denying the existence of all other minorities.

Thus, although the coexistence of religious, linguistic and ethnic minorities was an unobjectionable phenomenon in Greece and Turkey (Ottoman Empire) until 1923, after the Population Exchange the unmixing of populations was considered as a natural phenomenon that had always existed as such. This phenomenon was linked to the dominant monolingual, mono-religious and mono-ethnic ideologies, which silenced the multiethnic realities in both countries. The studies that were published sporadically from 1940 to the late 1990s addressed different aspects of the Population Exchange, particularly with reference to law and politics. Even though they became canonical references on the Population Exchange, they reflected the dominant nationalist ideologies. These, in turn, shaped mainstream public discourses, reproduced in popular history and history school books. These discourses highlighted the purity of the nation, the lost homelands and depicted Greeks and Turks as the enemy who had either lost or won the Greco-Turkish war of 1922 respectively (for further discussion, see Papadakis, Chapter 6, and Millas, Chapter 3).

### **Ideological and Representational Shift**

Since the early 2000s, there has been an ideological and representational shift in the historiography of the Population Exchange. This shift needs to be situated in the context of the broader Greek-Turkish rapprochement and the end of the latest crisis, which commenced with the conflict over the island of Imia/Kardak in 1996. The discussions for Turkey's ascension to the European Union and the lifting of the Greek veto for an eventual Turkish full membership provided the space for this ideological and representational

shift to occur. As a result, a new wave of historical, political, legal and anthropological research emerged which sought to re-examine the Population Exchange. This line of research attempted to break away from nationalist stereotypes and approached the Population Exchange in a non-ethnicised manner, taking into account the other side. Rather than adopting a unilateral perspective, these studies investigated the Population Exchange through a narrative that sought to combine and compare – or at least did not ignore – the other side. In particular, the Population Exchange and its consequences were examined under a new light, one which often considered in parallel both Greek and Turkish experiences through interdisciplinary perspectives. Ninety years after the Population Exchange was decided, its causes and consequences seem to be again at the forefront of academic discussions.

The analytic and interpretative shift in scientific research overlapped with a renewed interest in the Population Exchange by the wider public too. In Turkey, the public debate about the roots of the third generation of the 'exchanged ones' (or 'emigrants') emerged in the early 2000s within the context of the broader processes of Greek-Turkish and the EU-Turkish rapprochement. The discussions of family roots in the Balkans and Greece were no longer seen as a form of stigma but as legitimate topics. In Greece, public interest in the origins of the descendants of the refugees had been sustained through hundreds of associations spread all over the country and the dominant mainstream discourse about the 'lost motherlands'.<sup>8</sup>

It is important to note that throughout the 20th century public debate about the refugees' lost homelands in Greece and Turkey had followed different trajectories. In Greece, public interest and discussion had been present for a long time fostering a powerful collective memory of the 'lost motherlands'. In Turkey, however, the process of national homogenisation had silenced public discussion until the late 1990s. Since then, a culture of dialogue and openness has commenced in Turkey. Around the same period, changing perceptions towards Turkey brought forth a new discourse vis-à-vis the Population Exchange in public debate in Greece too. Nevertheless, there is resistance to this discourse by a number of refugee associations and politicians, especially with reference to Pontus. As a result, claims for the national celebration of the Pontian Greek genocide continue to dominate public discourse.

Since 2000, a number of edited collections based on collaborations between groups or individual scholars from Greece and Turkey<sup>9</sup> as well

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<sup>8</sup> 'Lost motherlands' (Χαμένες Πατρίδες) is an all-inclusive term used to denote all the territories, which were imagined as part of greater Greece. In the context of the population exchange, 'lost motherlands' refers to the territories in Asia Minor and the Pontus region, which the Greek-Orthodox populations were forced to abandon.

<sup>9</sup> A case in point is the edited volume by Pekin (2005). This volume comprises the conference proceedings organised by the *Lozan Mubadilleri Vakfı* (Lausanne

as the work of individual scholars have paved the way for revisiting the Population Exchange. This new line of inquiry sought to transcend nationalist discourses through an interdisciplinary approach drawing on history, legal and political studies and sociology to mention a few. To this end, it challenged the old, state-centric and nation-centric discourses on security, territorial expansion, national and linguistic homogenisation. For example, in Akgönül's (2008) edited collection political scientists and lawyers studying minorities illustrated how minority protection under the Treaty of Lausanne in both Greece and Turkey was linked to pre-Lausanne legal patterns and the principle of reciprocity. They argued that minority protection, which was the direct outcome of the Population Exchange, was mainly shaped by the experience of the Ottoman *millet* system. This resulted in creating a deviant reality for minorities. Both states conceptualised their respective minorities not as equal citizens but mostly as Christians (in Turkey) or Muslims (in Greece), on whom they were able to impose exclusive discriminatory measures under the guise of national and security concerns. The studies aptly demonstrated that the existence of ethnic/religious otherness did not constitute the reason for subsequent conflict but the platform on which competitive politics were to be played out. As other recent research has shown, nowadays minorities in Greece and Turkey are becoming increasingly more visible while interventionist policies and the principle of reciprocity still remain in place (see also Akgönül 1999; Oran 2004; Tsitselikis 2012).

Furthermore, Clark (2006) foregrounded the common experience of the exchangees and their descendents which until then had been largely represented in the context of Greek and Turkish national narratives. Yıldırım (2002) provided a cogent critique of the nationalist narratives of success of the Population Exchange, which had prevailed on both sides of the Aegean.<sup>10</sup>

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Treaty Emigrants Foundation) and published in Turkish. This was followed by a collected volume edited by Tsitselikis 2006, which included several contributions from the conference in question along with invited articles that were published in Greek. The contributors included B. Oran, D. Kamouzis, R. Hirschon, E. Kanetaki, N. Agriantonis, N. Marantzidis, A. Aktar, S. Anagnostopoulou, N. Andriotis, E. Babül, H. Berktaş, E. Voutira, D. Kourtovik, E. Macar, I. Millas, E. Balta, L. Baltiotis, S. Pekak, T. Triadafilopoulos and T. Vogel and O. Yıldırım. Another recent publication worth mentioning is the edited collection by Hirschon 2003. The contributors to this edited volume published in English were: A. Alexandris, T. Veremis, E. Kontogiorgi, M. Barutciski, A. Aktar, B. Oran, A. Yerolympos, E. Voutira, V. Colonas, V. Stelakou, T. Koker, S. Koufopoulou, I. Millas, P. Mackridge and S. Gauntlett. Last, LMV with Greek and Turkish partners organised a second conference in October 2013.

<sup>10</sup> An example of such studies is the monograph by Mavrogordatos (1983). His study constitutes an outstanding analysis of Greek politics of the period in the context of the success narrative of the population exchange.

In Turkey, the Lausanne Treaty Emigrants Foundation (*Lozan Mubadilleri Vakfi*, henceforth LMV) has played a key role in opening up a space for this academic and public discussion. Founded in 2001, the LMV aims at supporting the culture, art and folklore of the Lausanne exchangees, conducting research on the Population Exchange and the history of the period, sustaining friendship and cooperation between Greece and Turkey, establishing a culture of peace and lastly developing solidarity between the first generation of exchangees and their descendents. The foundation undertook several European Union projects drawing on oral history with the purpose of collecting narratives from the last survivors of the Population Exchange.<sup>11</sup> The foundation also published a bibliographical guide (Pekin and Turan 2002)<sup>12</sup> and, as mentioned earlier in this section, organised two conferences on the Population Exchange from an interdisciplinary perspective bringing together Turkish, Greek and other scholars.<sup>13</sup>

In Greece, the Centre for Asia Minor Studies (Κέντρο Μικρασιατικών Σπουδών) has collected and made accessible to researchers important archival material. Since its inception in 1930 by Oktavios and Melpo Merlie, the Centre for Asia Minor Studies has aimed at documenting the narratives of the refugees and collecting material artefacts from their homelands. Over the years, the Centre has contributed to academic debate by publishing a number of studies and a collection of archives (photographs, music, documents) tracing the history of refugees from their homelands to their new country. The most important publication of the Centre on the Population Exchange has been edited by Pashalis Kitromilides in 1992.<sup>14</sup> These works have been complemented by a number of recent academic publications in law, history, political science and anthropology (Tsitelikis 2006, Zaikos 2009, 21–46, Liakos 2011).<sup>15</sup>

In addition, research on minority issues in Greece and Turkey since 2000 has raised pertinent questions regarding the role of the state and the principle of equality through citizenship (Christopoulos 2012). This approach was reflected in the three conferences jointly organised by KEMO (Κέντρο Ερευνών Μειονοτικών Ομάδων) and LMV in Komotini and Istanbul in 2004 on minority education, religion, NGOs and the media in Greece and

<sup>11</sup> For further details with regards to publications, documentaries, compilations of music and other project outputs, see [www.lozanmubadilleri.org.tr](http://www.lozanmubadilleri.org.tr).

<sup>12</sup> Note that Clark's (2006) monograph also provides a thorough and up-to-date annotated bibliography of studies concerning the Greco-Turkish war, the Conference of Lausanne and the population exchange.

<sup>13</sup> See footnote 9 for details of the contributors.

<sup>14</sup> For more information on the Centre's publications and other outputs, see [www.kms.org.gr](http://www.kms.org.gr).

<sup>15</sup> Liakos' (2011) edited collection includes contributions by D. Stamatopoulos, A.M. Tsetlaka, K. Katsapis, A. Ozil and H. Exertzoglou.

Turkey as well as in the 1st Conference on the Greek-Orthodox community in Turkey organised by the Association of Graduates of Zografeion in Istanbul, in 2006 (Gavroglou and Tsitselikis 2011).<sup>16</sup> These recent studies and conferences have contributed to the emergence of a new discourse on minorities and citizenship in both countries, which has moved away from nationally biased assumptions. It has resulted in broadening university research, facilitating Greek-Turkish academic cooperation and ultimately contributing to the creation of more democratic societies on both sides of the Aegean. It is important to note that this new discourse on minorities and citizenship has not been established yet nor has it been accepted without any resistance by the broader public, the political and media establishment.

The renewed interest in the Population Exchange has revealed a significant difference between the two countries. Public debate and academic publications on the Population Exchange in Turkey are far less compared to Greece. It is my contention that this imbalance can be interpreted in the context of the dynamics that characterise the on-going development of national ideology in both countries. Turkish national ideology looks into the future in its quest to consolidate a common identity whereas Greek national ideology looks into the past and defines the national 'self' by revisiting the traumas of history.

The renewed interest in the Population Exchange shows that the distant, traumatic experience continues to occupy and attract public interest and academic discussions in both Greece and Turkey. If anything, the ideological and representational shift outlined in this section can provide a precedent for other issues which tantalise Greek-Turkish relations: the air space, territorial waters, oil exploitation in the Aegean and the Cyprus Issue continue to be examined by both mainstream academia and public opinion through the filters of national security concerns. Powerful ideological polemics in both Greece and Turkey continue to divide academia. Nevertheless, this ideological and representational shift based on the premise of Greek-Turkish dialogue has illustrated that interdisciplinary inquiry can provide us with the interpretative and methodological tools to reconsider the Population Exchange beyond national interests and stereotypes.

## Concluding Thoughts

The Population Exchange belongs to the core themes of Greek and Turkish national historiographies. These, in turn, have seen it as integral to the

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<sup>16</sup> For further details on recent publications on minority issues in Greece, see the monographs and collective volumes published by KEMO in [www.kemo.gr](http://www.kemo.gr). For publications on democratisation and human/minority rights in Turkey published by TESEV (Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation), see [www.tesev.org.tr](http://www.tesev.org.tr).

formation of their respective national narratives. It has lived on as part of the collective memory of millions of people on both sides of the Aegean. As this chapter sought to illustrate, however, over much of the 20th century, particularly after the 1950s, the Population Exchange received limited attention in academic and public discourse. It was not until the early 2000s that academic and public discussion in the Population Exchange was renewed.

In 1923, Greece and Turkey temporarily froze history and implemented non-contemporary relations on their citizens, whom they treated as subjects with no rights. Immediately after the exchange, they saw them as citizens with rights. This freezing of history presents a challenge to contemporary researchers as they seek to unravel the components which formed and finally consolidated the ideological formation of both countries and served to contextualise the present. These concerns are illustrated in recent publications with a focus on the comparative investigation of the emergence and development of Greek and Turkish nationalisms (Özkırmı and Sofos 2008), the role of religion in nation-building in Greece and Turkey (Grigoriadis 2012) and the interaction between history and geography in the creation and consolidation of the two nation-states (Diamantouros, Dragonas and Keyder 2010).

In both Greece and Turkey, national homogenisation has been considered as a legitimate goal which is to be achieved regardless of cost to human life. This ideological stance has survived over time and has been transformed into a powerful hegemonic discourse. The recent representational and ideological shift outlined in this chapter has sought to challenge mainstream collective beliefs. Methodologically, this challenge has been addressed through national and international collaborations between Greek, Turkish and other scholars and through interdisciplinary approaches. It remains to be seen whether this line of research will ultimately alter mainstream nationalist discourses and perceptions and have a robust effect on future research. What is certain is that instead of being silenced, concealed or embellished, the study of the Population Exchange has become normalised, paving the way for other contentious topics to be discussed.

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# Chapter 11

## Incorporating the Ecumenical Patriarchate into Modern Turkey: The Legacy of the 1924 Patriarchal Election

Dimitris Kamouzis

### Introduction

In February 1925, approximately a month after the expulsion of Patriarch Constantine VI from Turkey, *The Times* published the following editorial:

At first sight it would seem that the Turkish Government are now seeking to obtain by indirect means of disputed legality the end which they purported to renounce at Lausanne [...] Then follows the bold assertion that 'the Patriarchate is a Turkish institution and its constitution carries the obligation of nominating a Turkish citizen as Patriarch' [...] The Turkish Republic has deprived it of these rights and privileges, and it has suffered it to live on, but it can no more be called a 'Turkish institution' than the Papacy could be called an 'Italian institution' (*The Times*, 5 February 1925).

If one were to read this article today, unaware of the publication date, the reader would most probably assume that it is referring to the debate regarding the lack of Turkish citizens among the Greek Orthodox higher clergy, who could potentially succeed Patriarch Bartholomew I on the ecumenical throne. The noticeable similarities lay in the fact that the issue of the patriarchal election and especially the discussion about the criteria for an acceptable patriarch encompass the key questions related to the status of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Constantinople throughout the post-1923 period: is it a Turkish or an Ecumenical institution? Does it hold a religious or a political role? Should it be treated as a domestic or an international affair?

In order to address these questions the chapter re-examines the 1924 patriarchal election and subsequent expulsion of Patriarch Constantine VI<sup>1</sup> and traces its legacy on the patriarchal issue today,

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<sup>1</sup> For the earliest study of this issue, see Alexandris (1981).

namely the Patriarchate's effort for the official and definite recognition of its legal personality and ecumenical character by the Turkish state in conjunction with the unobstructed operation of its religious and cultural institutions. The analysis focuses on the contrast between official positions and behind-the-scenes negotiations with regards to the exchangeability and citizenship status of the prelates in an attempt to challenge established views about the policies of Greece and Turkey towards the Patriarchate and vice versa. Ultimately, by highlighting the 'grey areas', the complexity and ambivalence of the relations between these three poles of authority, the chapter aims to assess the degree of the Patriarchate's incorporation into the Republic of Turkey.

### **Resetting the Criteria for an Acceptable Patriarch: Non-exchangeability and Turkish Citizenship**

The decision regarding the future of the Ecumenical Patriarchate was taken during the Lausanne Peace Conference (1922–23). Initially, the Turkish delegation at the Sub-Commission of Minorities demanded the removal of the Patriarchate from Turkey on the grounds that it was a political institution, bringing negotiations to a deadlock (Parliamentary Papers, 1923, Turkey. No. 1, Cmd. 1814, 321, 323). Turkish objections focused specifically on Patriarch Meletios IV whose open and active support to former Greek Prime Minister Eleftherios Venizelos and the irredentist plan of the *Megali Idea*<sup>2</sup> had stigmatized the Patriarchate as an instrument of Greek foreign policy. Consequently, the Turkish representatives asked Venizelos, the head of the Greek delegation, to remove Patriarch Meletios from his post as a precondition for allowing the Patriarchate to remain in Istanbul (Mavropoulos 1960, 194–5; Alexandris 1992, 145, 147).

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<sup>2</sup> The Greek Revolution of 1821 and the consequent establishment of an independent state in 1830 and an autocephalous church in 1833 split the Greek Orthodox *millet* and for the first time divided the Greeks into two categories, the autochthons (αυτόχθονες), those born within the 1830 boundaries, and the heterochthons (ετερόχθονες), those born outside the Greek kingdom. The term *Megali Idea* (Μεγάλη Ιδέα, Great Idea), coined by the Greek politician Ioannis Kolettis in 1844, was used to describe an ambitious political plan, the liberation and incorporation of these outside Greeks into a greater Greek state. The ideological support to Greek irredentist policy was provided by the work of the historians Spyridon Zampelios and Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos, who employed history in order to establish an uninterrupted continuity of Greek national existence between ancient, Byzantine and modern Greece; see Dimaras (1977), 467–84; Skopetea (1988), 257–8; Veremis (1990), 11; Matalas (2003), 158–9, Clogg (2004), 47; Özkırımlı and Sofos (2008), 84.

On 10 January 1923 the Phanar communicated a telegram to the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs delineating its main positions on the issue. They argued that prior to Meletios' resignation there should be an official guarantee in the treaty securing in a legal manner the status and rights of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Turkey. In addition, the Patriarchate maintained that it did not consider it proper to be portrayed as depending on Athens with regards to its affairs, because this gave credence to Turkish allegations that it was an 'institution of Greek rather than inter-Christian (διαχριστιανικών) interests' (DHAMFA 1923 5/2: Ecumenical Patriarchate to Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs [GMFA], 29 December 1922/10 January 1923).

At first glance, this statement seems inconsistent with the open alignment of the Church with Greek nationalism during 1919–22. Bearing in mind though the burning of Smyrna once the victorious Kemalist forces took control over the city after the defeat of the Greek army in the summer of 1922, the atrocities committed against the non-Muslim population – mostly Greeks and Armenians – and the subsequent violent displacement of hundreds of thousands of Greeks from Asia Minor,<sup>3</sup> one can understand the eagerness of the Patriarchate to put its recent past behind and disassociate itself from Greece.

On the day of the Patriarchate's dispatch, the patriarchal issue was discussed at the main Commission of the conference. The decision taken was that it would not be relocated, but would have to confine itself to purely religious affairs. However, this remained only a verbal obligation and was not included in the final terms of the treaty (Parliamentary Papers, 1923, Turkey. No. 1, Cmd. 1814, 326, 333; Alexandris 1981, 334; Alexandris 1992, 88–90, 93). Despite the Patriarchate's reservations Venizelos also consented to Meletios' removal without receiving any official guarantees from the Turkish side, because he believed that this would open the way for a rapprochement between the Patriarchate and the authorities (Alexandris 1992, 145).

On 30 January 1923 the Convention concerning the Exchange of Greek and Turkish Populations was signed at Lausanne by the Government of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey and the Greek government. With regards to the people who would constitute the two officially exempted minorities in Greece and Turkey, Article 2 of the convention stipulated that the Greek inhabitants of Constantinople and the Muslim inhabitants

<sup>3</sup> The Oral Tradition Archive (Αρχείο Προφορικής Παράδοσης) of the Centre for Asia Minor Studies holds a significant number of detailed first-hand accounts of these events provided by first generation Asia Minor Greek refugees. Part of these oral testimonies has been published by the Centre in three volumes entitled *Η Έξοδος* (The Exodus) (1980, 1982, 2013). Some of these testimonies have also been translated into Turkish; see Millas and Demirözü (2001); Umar (2002), 127–93.

of Western Thrace would not be included in the compulsory exchange of populations between the two countries.<sup>4</sup> According to the same article:

All Greeks who were already established before the 30<sup>th</sup> October, 1918, within the areas under the Prefecture of the City of Constantinople, as defined by the law of 1912, shall be considered as Greek inhabitants of Constantinople (Parliamentary Papers, 1923, Treaty Series No. 16. Cmd. 1929, 175).

The negotiations were deemed successful by the Greek government as a letter communicated to the Ecumenical Patriarchate on 2 February 1923 indicates:

The Government however considers that the preservation of the Patriarchate and the Greek population in Constantinople is not a small success and hopes that once peace is established and the State regains in time its past strength and prestige, happier days will arise for Hellenism as a whole (DHAMFA 1923 5/2: GMFA to Ecumenical Patriarchate, 20 January/2 February 1923).

However, from the beginning the Patriarchate encountered serious difficulties in assuming its new non-political role because of Patriarch Meletios' refusal to officially resign from the patriarchal throne. The Holy Synod tried several times to approach the Turkish authorities and discuss the issues of the patriarchal election and the transfer of the Patriarchate's administrative powers to lay councils of the Greek Orthodox minority. Still, Ankara ruled out any possibility of negotiations as long as Meletios, who had already left Istanbul in July 1923, officially retained his position (Εκκλησιαστική Αλήθεια, 14 July 1923, 13 October 1923; AEP, Code A/93: p. 395, no. 3788, 4 August 1923; Alexandris 1992, 145, 147, 150–151). Eventually, on 15 October 1923 the Holy Synod managed to bring about Meletios' official abdication, which created the conditions for a better communication between the Patriarchate and the Turkish government and resulted in the granting of state permission for the election of a new patriarch (Εκκλησιαστική Αλήθεια, 13 October 1923; Mavropoulos 1960, 197; Alexandris 1992, 154–5).

On 6 December 1923, Gregorios Zervoudakis, the Metropolitan of Chalkedon, was elected as Patriarch Gregorios VII. On the day of his election the prefecture of Istanbul issued a special decree (*Tezkere* no. 1092) according to which eligibility for the office of the patriarch was restricted to Greek

<sup>4</sup> In accordance with Article 14 of the Treaty of Lausanne (24 July 1923), the Greek inhabitants of the islands Imbros (*Gökçeada*) and Tenedos (*Bozcaada*) were later also exempted from the compulsory exchange; see Parliamentary Papers, 1923, Treaty Series No. 16. Cmd. 1929, 21, 175.

Orthodox prelates holding the Turkish citizenship and exercising their ecclesiastical duties in Turkey. Gregorios' candidacy was approved by the Turkish government, who considered him a trustworthy person due to his moderate attitude during 1919–22 (Alexandris 1992, 155; Macar 2003, 123–4).

With Gregorios' election Ankara attempted to incorporate the Ottoman tradition of the Porte approving the candidates for the patriarchal throne into the new state apparatus.<sup>5</sup> It could be argued that the state was going through a transitional period where Ottoman institutions and practices existed side by side with the secularization policies of the newly founded Republic of Turkey. Headed by Mustafa Kemal and inspired by the French Revolution the Turkish Westernist-modernist political élites embarked after 1923 on a systematic effort to undermine the Ottoman past and the attachments of the society to the 'old' traditions. Cultural and religious reforms based on the principle of secularism were hailed as the chief avenue for modernization. This 'powerful and inexorable dedication' to secularist modernism resulted in a series of secularizing changes imposed from the top by the ruling *Halk Fırkası* (People's Party, later *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi* [Republican People's Party]), including the abolition of the Caliphate on 3 March 1924. Unable to expel the Patriarchate in a similar fashion, the Turkish government had no other choice but to make the necessary adjustments in order to outwardly 'revamp' it and present it as part of the new secular nation-state, a policy followed also with other Ottoman institutions that could not be banished or abolished (Kasaba 1997, 24–5; Karpas 2000, 2; Karpas 2004, 220–223, 229).

In this context, state approval regarding the potential patriarch depended officially on the exchangeability status and citizenship of the candidate as these were stipulated in the Exchange Convention and the *Tezkere* respectively. Nonetheless, the Turkish policy of reassuming absolute control over the Phanar combined with Gregorios' death in late 1924 revealed how fragile this consensus actually was and brought again to the surface the thorny question of the Patriarchate's undefined status.

### **A Common Greco-Turkish Front vis-à-vis the 'Intransigence' of the Patriarchate**

In early 1924 the Turkish authorities began to investigate the past of the prelates at the Phanar on the basis of their exchangeability status. On

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<sup>5</sup> The legitimization of the patriarch's authority over the Orthodox population came in the form of a *berat*, an official document describing the privileges attributed to him by the sultan. In all the *berat* the Ottoman state retained its right to appoint and relieve the patriarch of his duties, demonstrating that the power of the Patriarchate emanated from Ottoman rule; see Konortas (1998), 45, 162, 166, 344.



11 June 1924 Patriarch Gregorios tried to alert the Greek government, arguing that the inclusion of the metropolitans in the Population Exchange would result in the dissolution of the Holy Synod and obstruct the normal operation of the Patriarchate (DHAMFA 1924 B/35/12: Gregorios to Roussos, 11 June 1924; Alexandris 1981, 335–6).

The key representatives of the Greek diplomatic authorities in Turkey seemed divided over this issue. Kimon Diamantopoulos, the Greek consul in Istanbul, and Georgios Exindaris, the president of the Greek delegation in the Mixed Commission for the Exchange of Populations (henceforth MCEP), urged Athens to reach an understanding with the Turkish government claiming that Ankara violated its international obligations towards the Patriarchate by demanding the exchange of the prelates (DHAMFA 1924 B/35/12: Diamantopoulos to GMFA, 17 October 1924).

On the other hand, Ioannis Politis, the Greek *chargé d'affaires* in Ankara, addressed on 9 November 1924 a long memorandum to the Foreign Minister of Greece Georgios Roussos, where he challenged the argument that the exclusion of the metropolitans from the exchange was an obligation Turkey had undertaken in Lausanne. He maintained that although the Turkish delegation had consented to allow the Patriarchate to remain in Istanbul as an institution, there was no mention whatsoever about the people representing it and referred to the example of Patriarch Meletios, who was 'sacrificed' by the Greek delegation at Lausanne in order to maintain the Patriarchate in Turkey (DHAMFA 1924 B/35/12: Politis to Roussos, 9 November 1924).

Politis also refuted the claims of the Holy Synod that if nine of its members were exchanged the institution would not be able to function. He revealed that in January 1923, while peace negotiations in Lausanne were still under way, the Greek delegation held a meeting with a representative of the Phanar. During this meeting the patriarchal representative rejected the idea of relocating the Patriarchate, arguing that the Holy Canons did not stipulate a specific number of prelates for the formation of the Holy Synod. Furthermore, he proposed a new division of the prefectures of Constantinople exempted from the exchange and the appointment *in partibus*<sup>6</sup> of metropolitans who represented dioceses outside Constantinople, in an effort to deal with the problem.

After criticizing the attitude of the clergy for not resolving the issue by dividing the existing prefectures as the representative had suggested,

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<sup>6</sup> *In Partibus Infidelium* (often shortened to *in partibus* or abbreviated as i.p.i.) is a Latin term meaning 'in the lands of the unbelievers', words added to the name of the see conferred on non-residential or titular bishops. Formerly, when bishops were forced to flee before the invading infidels, they were welcomed by other churches, while preserving their titles and rights to their own dioceses; see Herbermann et al. (1910), 25.

Politis claimed that the reason Turkey despised the Patriarchate was its relations with the Greek state and the sense of solidarity between the two, recently expressed by the support of the Phanar for Greek irredentism. His general approach on the issue of the Patriarchate was the following:

If the current policy of the Greek state is truly interested in convincing present-day Turkey that it abandoned its nationalist policy and it does not aim to preserve nationalist organizations in Turkey and also wishes for the establishment of a new type of relations with the Turkish state on the basis of mutual trust, I believe it is to its advantage to limit its demonstrations of interest towards the Patriarchate as a religious institution only to the absolutely and imperatively necessary level (DHAMFA 1924 B/35/12: Politis to Roussos, 9 November 1924).

Politis' account revealed a growing tendency among Greek diplomatic circles for a less interventionist Greek policy on behalf of the Patriarchate. In a sense the Lausanne Treaty had made official a pre-existing 'triad nexus' between Greece as the external national homeland, the Ottoman Empire/Republic of Turkey as a nationalizing host state and the Constantinopolitan Greeks as a national minority (cf. Brubaker 1996, 4–6, 58, 83, 111). The development of this 'nexus' began after the establishment of the Greek state in 1830 and gradually became consolidated during the emergence of Greek and Turkish nationalisms in the empire from the *Tanzimat* reforms (1839–76) onwards. After the ascendancy of the Young Turks to power in 1908 and especially after 1923, Turkey employed nationalizing policies in order to promote the language, cultural flourishing, demographic predominance, economic welfare and political hegemony of a Turkish core nation perceived as the legitimate owner of the state. The responsibility of the Greek state as an external homeland was expressed by monitoring and assessing the condition of its co-nationals in Turkey and taking action when it felt that their interests and rights were endangered by the policies of the Turkish state. The minority in Istanbul tried to balance between these two opposing poles of authority, since it was sharing citizenship but not (ethno-cultural) nationality with Turkey, and nationality but not citizenship with Greece. The Ecumenical Patriarchate constituted an integral part of this interacting triangular configuration as the symbolic and recognized authority of the Greek Orthodox of Istanbul.

However, according to Politis' position it becomes apparent that the Greek state wished to disentangle itself from this tripartite formation and gradually renounce its traditional role as the 'protector' of the Patriarchate. The tragic failure of the irredentist plan of the *Megali Idea* epitomized in the uprooting of approximately 1.5 million Greeks from Asia Minor forced Athens to re-evaluate its foreign policy and promote a general understanding with Turkey that would allow the rebuilding of a country

politically divided and financially ruined after ten years of warfare. In other words, Greece was not willing to allow the Patriarchate to become an obstacle in the path towards Greek-Turkish reconciliation.

On 17 November 1924 Gregorios died and a few days later Diamantopoulos reported that according to articles in the Turkish press the government would react only if an exchangeable or undesirable prelate was elected patriarch. Similar warnings were issued officially by the Turkish authorities to the prelates at the Patriarchate. As a result, Diamantopoulos started consulting with Exindaris in order to avoid a Turkish veto before the elections. The reason was that Constantine Araboglou, the archbishop of Dercos and main candidate for the ecumenical throne, was considered exchangeable since he had arrived in Istanbul in 1921 (DHAMFA 1924 B/35/12: Diamantopoulos to GMFA, 27 November 1924, Alexandris 1992, 160).

On 2 December Athens communicated its instructions to the Greek consulate regarding the forthcoming patriarchal elections:

You should state that the government does not have specific individuals in mind and would favor the election of any suitable candidate, but just wishes the Synod to choose a person with all the necessary qualifications according to the requirements of the Turkish government, in order to prevent providing even the slightest reason for the non-recognition of the elected prelate. For any opposite action the Synod will bear responsibility, because it now has absolute liberty to arrange such an election (DHAMFA 1924 B/35/12: GMFA to Greek Consulate, 2 December 1924).

At the same time, Hamdi Bey, a member of the Turkish delegation in the MCEP, asked Mavridis, one of the Greek delegates, whether he could urge the prelates not to elect an exchangeable patriarch, because this action would create friction between the two states (DHAMFA 1924 B/35/12: Mavridis to Roussos, 16 December 1924; Alexandris 1981, 337–8; Alexandris 1992, 159–60).

Despite the explicit warnings of the Greek and Turkish governments, as well as the Turkish press, the Holy Synod elected Constantine VI as the new patriarch on 17 December 1924.<sup>7</sup> Although the Phanar would be informally accused as narrow-minded, incendiary and out of touch with reality by both Greece and Turkey, its determination showed quite the contrary. The Patriarchate had realized that in the post-Lausanne political environment it constituted part of a general compromise between Greeks and Turks, who were mostly interested in maintaining peaceful relations

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<sup>7</sup> Even on the day of the election, Diamantopoulos pointed out to a member of the Holy Synod the dangers of electing an exchangeable patriarch. See DHAMFA 1924 B/35/12: Diamantopoulos to GMFA, 17 December 1924.

and rebuilding their states. This meant that the Patriarchate's interests were not placed on an equal footing with the potential benefits of a Greco-Turkish rapprochement. Furthermore, anything or anyone who could endanger this reconciliation process would become marginalized. During the negotiations in Lausanne the Phanar had remained under the shadow of Greece, while after the signing of the treaty all its requests for guidance were snubbed by the Turkish government. Thus, the patriarchal elections served as a pretext for the Patriarchate to remove itself from the middle of this triangular nexus, express a more autonomous stance and settle permanently the ambiguity regarding its status in the Turkish Republic.

### **Official Confrontation, Unofficial Compromise: Bridging the Pre-1919 with the Post-1923 Period**

A few days after the election, Politis met with the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Şükrü Kaya, who accused the Patriarchate of electing an exchangeable candidate in order to provoke and create incidents. He maintained that they should have contacted the government beforehand and conformed to its demands (DHAMFA 1924 B/35/12: Politis to Roussos, 26 December 1924). Turkish reactions were justified. The whole issue was very similar to the attitude of disregard and contempt that the Phanar had shown during the election of Patriarch Meletios in 1921.<sup>8</sup>

Politis challenged Şükrü Kaya's arguments. He employed the Kemalists' desire to break with the Ottoman past as a means to downplay the significance of the pre-war rights of state intervention in the patriarchal election and maintained that the Patriarchate was managed according to canonical law, not a *berat*, therefore prior contact was not necessary. He added that after the signing of the peace treaty, the Phanar did everything it could to get in touch with the government, but all its efforts were completely ignored (DHAMFA 1924 B/35/12: Politis to Roussos, 26 December 1924).

The Greek diplomat also referred to the difficulties of electing a non-exchangeable patriarch, since the Turkish government perceived all the members of the Synod as exchangeable. The Turkish Minister assured Politis that the government did not intend to persecute the Patriarchate. However, on the issue of the exchange of the metropolitans, he argued that

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<sup>8</sup> Meletios' election as patriarch had also irritated the Porte. On 19 December 1921, approximately a month after Meletios was elected, the Turkish Foreign Minister Yusuf Kemal had notified the British High Commissioner in Istanbul Horace Rumbold that the Porte considered the patriarchal election as null and void, on the grounds of breaking all the existing rules of conduct set up by Ottoman official decrees. See DBFP 1970, no. 489: Rumbold to Curzon, 19 December 1921.

this was an affair of the MCEP and that the Turkish delegation wished for the strict application of the convention.

Politis rejected this argument, asserting that Turkey had undertaken the obligation to allow the Patriarchate to remain in Istanbul. Although in his communication with Athens he had made a clear distinction between the institution and its members recognizing the right of Turkey to include the metropolitans in the exchange, Politis had no other choice but to officially employ the argument of the prelates in order to prevent their expulsion and cover the Holy Synod for its decision. He maintained that since the institution was composed of its members, expelling the patriarch and the Holy Synod would not allow the Patriarchate to function. This would mean a violation of the Treaty of Lausanne. Therefore, he urged the minister to instruct the Turkish delegates not to press for the exchange of the clergy. Finally, he claimed that the bilateral relations of the two countries already suffered from serious problems and it would be regrettable to add one more. Şükrü Kaya agreed and reassured him that everything would be taken care of (DHAMFA 1924 B/35/12: Politis to Roussos, 26 December 1924).

Yet, despite numerous discussions between the Greek and Turkish delegations, no solution was found. In addition, the ambiguous decision of the MCEP to confirm the exchangeability of Constantine in technical terms, while declaring at the same time its incompetence to take any further action owing to his religious status as metropolitan complicated things even more. As a result, on 30 January 1925 the Turkish authorities exiled Constantine to Greece, an action that caused the indignation of Greek public opinion (Alexandris 1981, 343–4, 347–8). Consequently, the Greek government

officially protested against the attack on the head of Orthodoxy, which painfully hurt the religious conscience of the Hellenic Nation and the Orthodox world, and against the threat posed to the rights and liberties of the Greek minority in Constantinople (DHAMFA 1925 B/35/2: Greek Legation in Ankara to the Government of the Republic of Turkey, 5 February 1925).

Following its official policy of exposing Turkey to the international community Athens decided to appeal to the League of Nations (Alexandris 1981, 353–6).

Although publicly the Greek government seemed determined to internationalize the problem, in private it disapproved of the Patriarchate's course of action. In February 1925, Greek Prime Minister Andreas Michalakopoulos expressed his complaints to Venizelos and asked for his assistance in promoting Greek views in Europe. He asserted that several times he advised the Phanar not to elect an exchangeable prelate,

but someone approved by the Turks. However, all of his suggestions were ignored (DHAMFA 1925 B/35/2: Michalakopoulos to Venizelos, 6 February 1925).

Venizelos shared Michalakopoulos' frustration and on two occasions refused to represent Greece at the Council of the League of Nations, characterizing the behaviour of the people in the Phanar as 'reprehensible' (DHAMFA 1925 B/35/3: Venizelos' telegram transmitted by Melas to GMFA, 12 February 1925). Reiterating Politis' views, Venizelos wrote in a telegram to Michalakopoulos:

Unfortunately the Phanar does not seem to understand the deep changes that have taken place with respect to the Eastern question for the past four years and more. It also does not understand that its relations with the Porte depend completely on the latter, almost like after 1453. Since it is unable to adjust to the newly created situation, it is heading towards complete destruction. The duty of the Greek Government here is to restrict the national damages within the narrowest boundaries possible and to separate its responsibilities from the policies of the Phanar, which seem to be lacking the element of reality (DHAMFA 1925 B/35/3: Venizelos' telegram transmitted by Nikolaos Politis to Michalakopoulos, 26 February 1925).

Officially, Turkey also assumed an uncompromising attitude on the issue. Şükrü Kaya stated to the press that Constantine's post as patriarch followed the decision for his inclusion in the exchange and argued that from the moment the MCEP verified his status as an exchangeable, the government had the obligation to apply the clauses of the convention exchange. In addition, he claimed that the Patriarchate was a matter of Turkish domestic affairs and made insinuations about its relations with Greece: 'The Republic of Turkey [...] cannot allow a foreign power to use any religious institution as a political instrument within its borders' (DHAMFA 1925 B/35/2: Politis to Michalakopoulos, 2 February 1925).

Similar views were expressed by Prime Minister Fethi Bey and the president of the Turkish delegation at the MCEP, Tevfik Rüştü Aras Bey. Accordingly, Turkey questioned the competence of the League to decide on an issue considered a Turkish internal affair and abstained from any discussions, forcing the Council of the League of Nations to request an advisory opinion from the Permanent Court of International Justice on whether it was competent to deal with this dispute (Alexandris 1981, 348–351, 355–6).

However, away from the public eye the Turkish authorities tried to reach an agreement with the Holy Synod. On 10 February Diamantopoulos reported that a number of bishops and lay members of the minority were pressing the Holy Synod on behalf of the Turkish government to dismiss



the current patriarch and elect a new non-exchangeable one. In return, the authorities promised to allow the members of the Holy Synod to remain in Istanbul (DHAMFA 1925 B/35/2: Diamantopoulos to GMFA, 10 February 1925).

On 23 February, the *vali* (prefect) of Istanbul Süleyman Sami called on these laymen and a member of the Synod in order to discuss the problem. Diamantopoulos commented on the meeting, arguing that Turkey was afraid of the decision of the League of Nations and was trying to promote a solution originating from the minority (DHAMFA 1925 B/35/2: Diamantopoulos to GMFA, 23 February 1925). The Turks, who on several occasions had expressed their misgivings about the level of international interference in their domestic affairs, were reluctant to allow an international body to decide on such a delicate issue. From Turkey's point of view, Greece was given the opportunity to defend the Patriarchate within the international context provided by the clauses of minority treaties and intervene in a matter belonging to Turkish domestic policy (cf. Kamouzis 2008, 56–8, 65–6).

Finally, Rüşti Bey suggested to Exindaris the following compromise: he would declare at the MCEP that he accepted the exemption of the metropolitans of the Holy Synod from the exchange, if the Greek government withdrew its appeal to the League of Nations. This solution was welcomed by Athens, which had not received the international support it had anticipated from the other European governments in challenging Ankara's policy. However, Athens accepted on the condition that the Turkish delegate would declare definitively all the metropolitans present in Istanbul as excluded and not only the members of the Holy Synod (DHAMFA 1925 B/35/2: Exindaris to GMFA, 25 February 1925; Michalakopoulos to Diamantopoulos, 25 February 1925).

Meanwhile, the *vali* of Istanbul held a meeting with a delegation of the Holy Synod, where he announced to them that they were exempted from the exchange and therefore they should request from the patriarch to abdicate as they had agreed. Following Diamantopoulos' and Exindaris' advice, the Holy Synod refused to proceed with the resignation of the patriarch before official documents guaranteed their exclusion (DHAMFA 1925 B/35/2: Diamantopoulos to GMFA, 10 February 1925; Diamantopoulos to GMFA, 24 February 1925; Michalakopoulos to Diamantopoulos, 25 February 1925; Diamantopoulos to Michalakopoulos, 26 February 1925; Alexandris 1981, 358–9). Ironically, the same people who had ignored the warnings of the Turkish and Greek governments and had elected an exchangeable patriarch were now using him as a trump card in order to secure their stay in Istanbul.

In April 1925 the *vali* offered to arrange for a non-exchangeable status for the metropolitans, and in return they should proceed immediately with a patriarchal election. Despite his complaints and protests both to



Michalakopoulos and the Synod, Constantine was finally forced to resign on 22 May 1925.<sup>9</sup> A few days later, the Turkish authorities confirmed that the exchangeable prelates could remain in Istanbul, while Greece agreed that the new patriarch should be approved by Ankara. Accordingly, Greece withdrew its appeal to the League of Nations and on 13 July Basil Georgiadis, a state-approved candidate, was elected as Patriarch Basil III. Soon after the election, 11 senior prelates of the Phanar were recognized as non-exchangeable (Alexandris 1981, 360, 363; Alexandris 1992, 166–8).

On the whole, during the Constantine affair the Greek government lost a unique opportunity to settle in an international forum the exact status of the Phanar, allowing Turkey to re-establish its pre-1919 control over the Patriarchate and represent it as a purely Turkish institution, thus undermining its international character (Alexandris 1981, 360, 363; Alexandris 1992, 166–8).

### **In Lieu of an Epilogue: The Imprint of the Past**

Between Basil's election in 1925 and the ascendancy of Patriarch Bartholomew I to the ecumenical throne on 22 October 1991, the only time the Turkish government demonstrated flexibility regarding the citizenship of a patriarchal candidate was with the election of Patriarch Athenagoras I in 1948. Athenagoras, who served as Archbishop of North and South America, was practically imposed on Turkey as patriarch by the US. Washington needed a reliable and loyal prelate to lead the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the only symbolic and internationally recognized Orthodox religious institution that could counterbalance the influence of the Russian Orthodox Church and thus Stalin's communist regime on the Orthodox populations of the Eastern Bloc. Turkey, in its effort to keep good relations with the US and benefit from the Marshall Plan, had no other alternative but to make an exception and provide the Ioannina born Athenagoras with the Turkish citizenship (Macar 2003, 183–91).

However, the deterioration of Greek-Turkish relations during the 1950s and 1960s due to the Cyprus question changed Turkey's attitude towards

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<sup>9</sup> Patriarch Constantine VI settled in Nea Philadelphia – one of the municipalities of Athens almost entirely composed of Asia Minor Greek refugees – until his death on 28 November 1930. On 1 March 2011, the relics of Constantine were brought to the Phanar from the First Cemetery of Athens following Patriarch Bartholomew's successful initiative for their return to Istanbul. The remains of the late patriarch were placed in a special crypt of the Patriarchal Cemetery at the Life-Giving Spring Monastery in Baloukli during a special memorial service on 6 March 2011; see Stavridis (2004), 525; *To Βήμα*, 24 February 2011; Patriarchate (2011).

the Patriarchate.<sup>10</sup> On 25 May 1970 the Prefecture of Istanbul issued a directive (*Talimat*) according to which the *vali* of Istanbul assumed the right to remove from the list of candidates for the throne the prelates considered objectionable by the Turkish government (To Βήμα, 29 November 2009; Archons 2011, 5; MFA 2013). Furthermore, in 1971 the authorities closed down the Theological School of Halki (*Heybeliada Ruhban Okulu*) following a law, which forbade as anti-constitutional all private schools of higher learning in Turkey. This decision had far-reaching consequences for the Patriarchate, which was unable to educate its clergy in Turkey and prepare potential future members for the Holy Synod and for the office of Ecumenical Patriarch (Alexandris 1992, 305; Alexandris 2004, 121).

In January 1983, Haralambos Sotiropoulos, Director of the Department of National Affairs of the Greek Central Intelligence Service (Κεντρική Υπηρεσία Πληροφοριών, now Εθνική Υπηρεσία Πληροφοριών, 1956–86), prepared for the Ministry of Interior a confidential report about Thrace, where he compared the policy of Greece towards the Muslim minority of Western Thrace with the policy of Turkey towards the Greek Orthodox minority of Istanbul. Despite his clearly biased approach in favour of Greek policies, Sotiropoulos' account on Turkish violations against the Constantinopolitan Greeks and their institutions was accurate. Referring to the Ecumenical Patriarchate he highlighted three major problems directly linked to each other: the non-recognition of the international status of the patriarch, the right of intervention of the Turkish authorities in the patriarchal election on the basis of the 1923 *Tezkere* and the 1970 *Talimat* and the closure of the Theological School of Halki (Sotiropoulos 1983, 12–13, 17, 24–5).<sup>11</sup>

During his enthronement address on 2 November 1991 Bartholomew announced the strong intention of the Phanar to pursue the opening of the Theological School of Halki by the authorities (Patriarchate 1991). Yet, despite numerous Turkish promises the situation remained unchanged (To Βήμα, 29 November 2009). As a result by 2000, there were just over 20 metropolitans with Turkish citizenship left in Istanbul. The old issue

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<sup>10</sup> On 16 April 1964 the American Consul John E. Merriam wrote in his report to the US Department of State: 'The Cyprus issue which has now deeply affected the pride of the Turkish nation has led many here to wonder whether Big Brother [the US] gives good advice. A complicating factor is our traditional protective attitude toward Christian minorities here, a policy Turks seem to tolerate in fair weather but not in foul. At the same time Turks here seem to want to find compensation for their loss of pride on Cyprus. They seek for it in moves against the Greek community and the Patriarchate, knowing full well that the latter has been close to the US. In the attack on the Patriarchate there is probably a good bit of the idea of getting back at Big Brother'; see Bali (2010), 77.

<sup>11</sup> This report was given to me personally by Haralambos Sotiropoulos, who passed away in April 2012, while this work was under way. The present chapter is dedicated to his memory.

of the inability of the Patriarchate to function due to the lack of prelates was resurfacing again. Alexis Alexandris summarized the magnitude of the problem as follows:

Given the legal obstacles for recruitment of Greek Orthodox bishops from abroad, the Ecumenical Patriarchate will find it extremely difficult to function in the future since there will be too few Greek Orthodox with Turkish citizenship to enter the ranks of the Church, and those few who are qualified will not be able to benefit from the proper training because of the closure of the Theological Seminary of Chalki (Alexandris 2004, 122).

The same year the Simitis government in Greece decided to follow a more assertive policy towards Turkey and in a sense become actively involved again in the affairs of the minority in Istanbul. Amongst the 18 Greek claims included in the relevant proposal put forward by the Minister of Foreign Affairs George A. Papandreou, the ones referring to the Ecumenical Patriarchate resounded Sotiropoulos' report 17 years earlier: the lifting of the citizenship restrictions regarding the election of the members of the Holy Synod and the patriarch, the recognition of the international character of the Patriarchate and the reopening of the Theological School of Halki (Ημερησία, 2 July 2000). In the end, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs officially adopted these proposals, but to no avail (MFA 2013).

The only noteworthy improvement came again in an unofficial and compromising form. In March 2004 Bartholomew appointed six non-Turkish clerics to the Holy Synod in order to deal with the pressing citizenship issue, a policy not officially approved, but eventually tolerated by Ankara. It seems that turning a blind eye formed part of a Turkish reciprocity-based approach linking the situation of the Patriarchate with specific complaints and requests addressed to Greece regarding the religious freedom of the Muslim minority of Western Thrace (*Hürriyet*, 05, 06, 09 March 2004; Grigoriadis 2009, 185–6, 189).<sup>12</sup>

The situation began to change in 2009. In April of that year US President Barack Obama visited Turkey and spoke in the Turkish parliament about

<sup>12</sup> The rights of the minorities exempted from the Greek-Turkish exchange of populations were stipulated in articles 37 to 45 of the Treaty of Lausanne (Parliamentary Papers, 1923, Treaty Series No. 16. Cmd. 1929, 29–35). Specifically article 45 introduced the principle of reciprocity in the treatment of these minorities: 'The rights conferred by the provisions of the present section on the non-Muslim minorities of Turkey will be similarly conferred by Greece on the Muslim minority in her territory'. However, in most cases article 45 was not interpreted as a basis for the mutual improvement of the life of these minorities, but was rather distorted and misused resulting in reciprocal discriminating policies against them by the host states; see Akgönül (2008).

the symbolic meaning of reopening the Halki Seminary, a gesture that would send an important signal inside Turkey and beyond regarding the state's intention to promote freedom of religion and expression (White House 2009). During his visit Obama met also with Patriarch Bartholomew, who stressed the importance of the School of Halki for the education and preparation of the clergy (Patriarchate 2009a).

On 15 August 2009 Recep Tayyip Erdoğan became the first Turkish Prime Minister to visit the island of Prinkipos (*Büyükdada*), where he met with Patriarch Bartholomew. As the Greek and Turkish press later revealed, during this meeting the two men came to an informal and secret understanding with mutual benefits, a fact that was partly confirmed by the spokesperson of the Patriarchate Father Dositheos Anagnostopoulos and İbrahim Kalın, Erdoğan's chief foreign-policy adviser (To Βήμα, 4 September 2010; *Today's Zaman*, 22 July 2010, 14 November 2010, 11 April 2011).

According to this alleged agreement Bartholomew would improve significantly the image of Ankara abroad with regards to religious freedoms, an important issue for Turkey's European prospects and its relations with the US. In return Erdoğan would promote a solution for the Patriarchate's problems, namely the acceptance of the patriarch's ecumenical character, the recognition of the Patriarchate's legal personality via the implementation of the judgment of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) for restoring the ownership of the Prinkipos Orphanage back to the Phanar, the granting of Turkish citizenship to foreign members of the Holy Synod and the reopening of the Halki Seminary. Apparently, President Obama had played a critical role in encouraging these behind-the-scenes negotiations during his visit in Turkey (To Βήμα, 4 September 2010; *Today's Zaman*, 22 July 2010, 14 November 2010, 11 April 2011).

At the same time, official European and American pressure on Turkey to promote reforms for the improvement of the conditions of its non-Muslim minorities increased. In October 2009 two separate reports, one produced by the European Commission (SEC [2009] 1334, 20–22) and one by the United States Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (BDHRL 2009), recognized that although some progress had been made in that direction, Ankara had not fully addressed the minorities' serious problems. Regarding the Patriarchate, both reports agreed on four issues: the legal recognition of its status, the acceptance of the ecumenical title of the patriarch, the restrictions applied to the clergy regarding Turkish citizenship and the closure of the Theological School of Halki. A month later, the American President repeated his commitment to the reopening of the Halki Seminary during an official meeting with Bartholomew in the White House (Patriarchate 2009b).

Bartholomew took advantage of the favourable international context and placed additional pressure on the Turkish government. On 20 December 2009 he gave a bold interview to CBS News show '60 Minutes',

where amongst other things he argued that the Turkish government would be happy to see the Patriarchate extinguished or moving abroad, that the closure of the Theological School of Halki was a crime, that Erdoğan and his cabinet had ignored all his requests for help and that he personally felt 'crucified' in Turkey (CBS News 2009).

Although his statements contradicted the spirit of his talks with Erdoğan in Prinkipos, by bringing the Patriarchate's problems into the political public discourse Bartholomew openly confronted Ankara's stagnating policy. Similar to the Holy Synod's decision to consciously elect an exchangeable patriarch in 1924, his remarks set things into motion, or, as *Today's Zaman* (25 December 2009) put it, created a 'chain reaction' in Turkey.

The government's immediate response was to criticize the patriarch with equally harsh words (*Today's Zaman*, 21, 22, 23, 25 December 2009). However, Ankara soon began to show tangible evidence of its desire to deal with the Patriarchate's appeals along the lines of the Bartholomew-Erdoğan understanding. In May 2010 Turkey put into action a policy of offering Turkish citizenship to foreign metropolitans in order to address the issue of the lack of hierarchs who could serve in the Holy Synod and eventually succeed Patriarchal Bartholomew on the throne. As a result, by the end of 2011 Turkish citizenship had been granted to 20 applicants (To Βήμα, 21 May 2010; *Today's Zaman*, 21 July 2010, 30 August 2010, 11 April 2011; Archons 2011, 5, 18; Amen 2010).

In November 2010 the Turkish government returned the Prinkipos Orphanage to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, complying with the ruling of the ECHR (To Βήμα, 3 November 2010; *Today's Zaman*, 29, 30 November 2010). Furthermore, the authorities have been seriously reconsidering the reopening of the Theological School of Halki, a matter that has been progressively viewed in a positive way in Turkish public opinion (*Today's Zaman*, 03, 04 January 2011, 27 March 2012, 29 January 2013; *Hürriyet*, 28, 29 January 2013; To Βήμα, 5 July 2012; Ta Νέα, 6 July 2012). An additional step to this direction was the resolution of the Directorate General of Foundations (*Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü*) to return 190 acres of land belonging to the Foundation of the Agia Triada Monastery in Halki, where the Theological School is situated (*Hürriyet*, 10 January 2013). Still, Turkish officials have repeatedly implied that the final decision regarding the Halki Seminary would depend on reciprocal gestures of goodwill by Greece vis-à-vis the rights and freedoms of the Muslim minority of Western Thrace (*Today's Zaman*, 29 January 2013; To Βήμα, 29 January 2013; *Hürriyet*, 30 January 2013).

On the other hand, Ankara has carefully refrained from recognizing the Patriarchate's legal status. In January 2011, a few days after his visit to the Phanar, Deputy Prime Minister Bülent Arınç was quoted stating that,

... the institution represented by Greek Orthodox Patriarch Bartholomew does not have a legal personality under current Turkish law [...] We are

seeking an arrangement that recognizes the existence of the patriarchate but doesn't offer a legal personality to it, in line with the Lausanne Treaty and our laws (*Today's Zaman*, 19 January 2011).

Turkey's improved stance towards the Patriarchate seems to fall into the general framework of the Justice and Development Party's (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*, AKP) 'neo-Ottoman' policy, which wants the Turkish Republic to embrace its multicultural, multireligious imperial past and pursue a more moderate version of secularism at home (Taspinar 2008, 14–15). In Erdoğan's words:

There have been times when people in our country were put under pressure for their beliefs, ethnic background, for the way they dress and their different lifestyles, but those days are over [...] This is Istanbul, where the adhan [call to prayer] and church bells sound together, where mosques, churches and synagogues have stood side by side on the same street for centuries (*Today's Zaman*, 29 August 2011).

The neutralization of the ultranationalist *Ergenekon* organization, which, among other activities, was plotting against the Patriarchate (*Newsweek*, 19 June 2011; *Today's Zaman*, 26 November 2009, 01 January 2010, 05 May 2011, 16 August 2011); the official invitation to Patriarch Bartholomew, a religious leader, to state the case of the Greek Orthodox minority before a sub-commission of the Turkish Parliament working on the revision of the country's constitution in February 2012 (Patriarchate 2012); and the subsequent visit of the principle exponent of neo-Ottomanism Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu to the Phanar (Onar 2009, 12–13; *Today's Zaman*, 04, 06 March 2012; Το Βήμα, 03 March 2012) constituted symbolic as well as practical expressions of Turkey's definite policy shift vis-à-vis the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

Even though the issue of the Halki Seminary remains a serious and valid cause of grievances, the Patriarchate's general response to these initiatives has been positive. On several occasions both Bartholomew and other members of the Phanar have publicly expressed their gratitude to the Turkish government and have praised Erdoğan and his cabinet for their improved minority policies to the US, the EU and the Greek government (*Today's Zaman*, 01 December 2010, 11 April 2011, 15 August 2011, 25 March 2012; *Milliyet*, 17 February 2013; Archons 2011, 16, 18, 28–9).

Athens has also welcomed this new Turkish attitude and seems to favour a direct understanding between Ankara and the Phanar. Paradoxically, the relatively fruitless Greek policies with regards to the Patriarchate and the Greek Orthodox minority combined with the severe domestic political and financial crisis has brought Greece closer to Politis' and Venizelos' less interventionist approach articulated almost 90 years ago. An additional



reason for this reserved position is the fact that Greece appears reluctant to modify its official minority policy towards the Muslims of Western Thrace on a *quid pro quo* basis despite considerable Turkish pressure (Τα Νέα, 3 September 2011; *Today's Zaman*, 29 January 2013; Το Βήμα, 29, 30 January 2013, 17 February 2013).

In principle the Greek approach is correct, because reciprocity (positive or negative) is in fact an outdated practice of dealing with the issues of the two minorities. However, taking into consideration specific instances of state discrimination against the Muslims of Western Thrace (Akgönül 2009, 208–11; Grigoriadis 2009, 179–82, 190), it could be argued that minority policies beyond reciprocity do not necessarily guarantee the wellbeing of these minorities. They also need to be up to European and international standards and regulated in accordance with international law and human rights conventions.

Today more than ever, the legacy of the 1924–25 events must be carefully assessed. The 1924 election of Patriarch Constantine VI signified a turning point in the traditional relations between Greece, Turkey and the Ecumenical Patriarchate. The new political situation created in Turkey after the victory of the Kemalist forces in the Greek-Turkish war, the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne (July 1923) and the emergence of a new Turkish national state out of the ruins of the Ottoman Empire meant that everything would be renegotiated. However, the opportunity to settle in an institutional and unequivocal manner the status of the Ecumenical Patriarchate was lost, making its incorporation into modern Turkey incomplete and its overall position uncertain.

A second opportunity of equal importance has presented itself now. The political circumstances for the implementation of a more modern, progressive and constructive minority policy have developed within the context of AKP's neo-Ottoman approach and Turkey's international commitments towards the EU and the US. Yet, despite its substantial steps forward, Turkey is still criticized by international organizations regarding its treatment towards its non-Muslim citizens (Venice Commission 2010; BDHRL 2010; BDHRL 2011; SEC [2011] 1201, 28–31).

In the case of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, an open and legal recognition and protection of its status would dispel any misgivings about Turkey's pledge to reform and pave the way for the institution's complete inclusion into Turkish society. The alternative options would be the parochial paradigm of backstage agreements between Ankara and the Phanar coupled with temporary measures like the exceptional attribution of Turkish citizenship to members of the higher clergy and/or a Greco-Turkish bargaining within the framework of the obsolete principle of reciprocity. Whether an official, legally binding and long-term solution or an informal, unstable and short-term compromise similar to 1924–25 will be the end result of the current on-going negotiations remains to be seen.



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# Chapter 12

## Cultural Identity in 'Fragile' Communities: Greek Orthodox Minority Media in Turkey

Eylem Yanardağoglu

### Introduction

The appropriation of community media by ethno-religious minorities raises questions about the relationship between media, ethnicity, identity and citizenship. Scholars consider minority media institutions instrumental for the transmission of memory and traditions and the survival of language and culture against the homogenizing effects of national or global cultures, especially in the case of 'fragile' diasporic communities (Dayan 1998).<sup>1</sup> This is of particular relevance to Greek community media in Istanbul,<sup>2</sup> which constitute the focus of this chapter. The non-Muslim minority communities in Turkey, namely the Armenians, Jews and Istanbul Greeks are the legacy of the Ottoman Empire's demographic make-up, which has dwindled dramatically over the 20th century. They were administered by one of the oldest system of governance of minorities, known as the *millet* system<sup>3</sup> in the Ottoman Empire (Preece 1997). Due to

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<sup>1</sup> One of the early treatments of diasporic media is found in Dayan's (1998, 105) analysis of what he calls 'particularistic media'. This concept refers to media, which are instrumental in 'transmitting memory and affiliation', particularly for 'fragile' communities, such as minority groups, immigrants, exiles and diasporas. Dayan employs this concept with special reference to communities, such as the Armenians, the Jews and the Kurds.

<sup>2</sup> In this chapter I use the social categories 'Istanbul Greek', '*Rum*' and 'Greek-Orthodox' interchangeably. Örs (2006, 80) explains this complex cultural identity as follows: 'In Turkey, they are officially categorized as a non-Muslim minority group called *Istanbullu Rum*, the Christian Orthodox residents of Istanbul; in Greece, as Constantinopolitan Greeks (*Konstantinoupolites/Polites*). The multiplicity of names in designating the *Rum Polites* is indicative of the difficulties in their categorization, or the inaptness of conventional categories to characterize this community'.

<sup>3</sup> The term *millet* literally means nation, but does not have the political connotation of the nation in the modern sense. It is a legal organization of religious

their historical entitlement to certain cultural rights, these communities boast an uninterrupted and diverse media and publishing tradition since the Ottoman period. Thus, compared with ethnic media practices, which emerged in Europe as a result of contemporary skilled and non-skilled labour migration, the non-Muslim minority media in Turkey have a longer history making them one of the oldest ethnic/minority media examples in Europe.<sup>4</sup>

The main development of the press in the Ottoman Empire took place in early 19th century as Western ideological influences, such as liberalism and nationalism, gained currency among the intelligentsia and state bureaucracy. The first official gazette of the empire, *Takvim-i Vekayi* (The Chronicle of Events, 1831), was published in this ideological climate in the languages spoken by the various communities, including Greek, Arabic, Armenian and Persian (Topuz 2003). Ethnic minority media in Turkey flourished in the second half of the 19th century. The first printing house was established by Jewish immigrants in Istanbul, in 1493. It mainly published religious texts as well as books in Spanish, Latin and Greek (Topuz 2003). The first Greek press was established in 1627 also in Istanbul (Karakaşlı 2001) and flourished during that period. It subsequently dwindled in the 1920s due to the Greek-Turkish wars and the Population Exchange between Greece and Turkey.

This chapter offers a critical appraisal of the development, decline and transformation of Greek community media in Turkey from the establishment of the modern Turkish state until the present day. It is my contention that studying the trajectory of Greek community media in Turkey constitutes a fruitful point of entry into understanding the dynamics and nuances of Greek-Turkish relations because it can reveal the interconnections between international politics and domestic policies and their impact on the social and cultural life of minority communities. Moreover, it can shed light on the different ways in which community members have responded to these external and internal policies and dynamics as active citizens/social actors, especially in the last two decades in the context of the greater democratization processes underway in Turkey. I show how community members responded to politics and

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communities (Greeks, Armenians and Jews) based on religion rather than ethnicity. As Zürcher (1998, 59) explains 'Christian and Jewish groups were incorporated into society by giving them a dhimmi (protected) status. In exchange for tax, they were allowed to live within the Muslim state'. The *millet* system became the constitutive legislation of the Ottoman state in the 15th century after the conquest of Istanbul. However, *millet* members were not treated as full Ottoman citizens until the 1850s, after the *Tanzimat* reforms (Karpat 1982, 145–62).

<sup>4</sup> See also Rigoni (2005) for a robust discussion of ethnic minority media in Britain and France.



policies, sometimes adapting to them while other times transforming them. Therefore, the study of Greek community media can be seen as a powerful way to investigate the processes of democratization with regards to the freedom of expression and the acknowledgement of cultural diversity and heritage in present-day Turkey.

Indeed, the fate of the minority communities and their media in Turkey has been dependent on the national and international political climate. It has been shaped by the historical and political conditions that led to the vilification of minority communities in recent history and the contradictions surrounding the acceptance of non-Muslims as Turkish citizens. The Greek Orthodox community felt the impact of these tensions most deeply. Nevertheless, despite its numerical encroachment, it continues to support two print media. Contrary to the general tendency of non-Muslim communities to remain 'silent', I would argue in this chapter that there is an increased 'openness' within the Greek community. As I illustrate, in recent years young, independent community members have become involved in new media initiatives with the purpose of increasing the visibility of the Greek community in Turkish public life as well as beyond the borders of Turkey.

To demonstrate the development and transformation of Greek community media in Turkey, I draw my primary data from the fieldwork I conducted in Istanbul between 2005–07. The fieldwork was part of my doctoral research, which focused on the mediation of cultural diversity in Turkey in general and the transformation of its minority media in particular during the aforementioned period of Turkish integration in the European Union (Yanardağoglu 2008). The primary data are comprised of in-depth interviews conducted during that period with editors of minority newspapers as well as prominent figures of the Jewish, Greek and Armenian minority communities. Responding to the most recent developments in Greek minority media, the data are supplemented by additional in-depth interviews in 2011–12 with Foti Benlisoy, one of the founders of the *Rum* publishing house *Istos* (Ιστός [The Web]), Mihalis Vassiliadis, editor of *Apoyevmatini* (Απογευματινή [The Evening]) newspaper and Andreas Rombopoulos and Alexis Kampouris, editor and assistant editor of *Iho* (Ηχώ [The Echo]) newspaper respectively.

In this chapter, first I present an overview of the sociopolitical context that has shaped minority politics in Turkey and has impacted on its minority media. Then, I briefly outline the historical development of the *Rum* media in Turkey by focusing on the two surviving newspapers in Istanbul, which I regard as the lifelines of the community. In this context, I consider the internal and external factors that shaped the development of these newspapers. Finally, I discuss some new initiatives in community media and assess their importance for the visibility and recognition of the Greek community in the public realm in Turkey and beyond.

## The Sociopolitical Context: Turkey and its Minorities

Riggins (1992, 16), in one of the key texts on the study of ethnic community media, suggests that any analysis of minority media must consider the social and political environment of the majority society, the international context in which minority demands or needs are situated as well as the socio-economic conditions of the ethnic minority community itself. Non-Muslims in Turkey are often placed in the category of traditional diasporas (Dayan 1998). However, they consider themselves to be autochthonous and have an uneasy relationship with the wider diaspora of Jews, Greeks and Armenians.<sup>5</sup> Subsequent to the Lausanne Treaty signed between the states of Greece and Turkey in 1923, the Greek community was recognized as a national minority and partially retained its self-governing group characteristics and community institutions. As a national minority, the Greek community retained the right for publications, broadcasts and education in its own language (see Ozil, Chapter 13, for a historical account of the development of educational institutions from the late 19th century until the present day).

In the early days of the Republic, a number of sometimes coercive cultural and economic policies sought to expedite the social integration of non-Muslim minorities and promote the demographic homogenization of Turkey. As I discuss in the remaining of the section, these Turkification policies (Bali 2003), however, led minorities to large-scale migration and their gradual decline. According to the first census in 1927, there were 126, 633 *Rum* in Turkey, of which only 100, 202 were Turkish citizens. The *Rum* community historically included members with different ethnic, class and linguistic backgrounds and political allegiances (Benlisoy and Benlisoy 2001; Yumul and Bali 2001). In the early 20th century, nationalist circles and the Patriarchate propagated the unification with Greece. After the Greek-Turkish War and the exchange of populations in 1923, the *Rum* community is believed to have lost most of its political weight in Greek politics. Since the foundation of the Republic, the fate of the *Rum* community has become 'dependent on Greek-Turkish relations' (Bali, Yumul and Benlisoy 2002, 922). Indeed, as most interviewees in this study confirmed, the instability of bilateral relations has had an adverse affect on the *Rum* community. Following the exchange of populations, the *Rum* press adjusted to the new conditions and began serving the remaining Greek-speaking community in Istanbul, who had been exempted from

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<sup>5</sup> The *Rum* and Armenian respondents that were interviewed in the mid-2000s considered themselves 'more local' than the Turks. They also said that they viewed themselves as 'different' from the Greeks of Greece and the Armenians living outside Turkey and the Armenian diaspora in general.

the exchange. During the early Republican years there were 30 *Rum* newspapers in Istanbul (Türker 2003, 4–7).

One of the earliest Turkification policies included the ‘Citizen! Speak Turkish!’ campaign inaugurated in 1928. Its aim was to ensure that minorities in Istanbul and other parts of the country spoke Turkish in public places. In addition, in 1936 a new legislation required that all foundations (*vakıf*) submit a comprehensive list of their property and register it. All property acquired after 1936 was transferred to the treasury and for a long period the communities did not have the right to appeal against this law. The right to acquire and use property was critical for the maintenance of non-Muslim communities’ culture and heritage and the financial stability of their institutions, including the media (Oran 2005). Further discriminatory economic policies triggered new waves of migration of minority members. For instance, on 11 November 1942, in the midst of the hardening economic conditions during the Second World War, the non-Muslim minorities were heavily taxed with a one-off emergency wealth tax (*Varlık Vergisi*). According to Aktar (2004, 2006), the tax had serious consequences not only on the economic life of the communities but also on their cultural and social conditions (mainly) in Istanbul. Moreover, it negatively affected their integration in Turkish society.

The most significant event that strained relations between the state and non-Muslim minorities, especially the Greeks, took place in 1955. It is known as the September 6–7 events (Σεπτεμβριανά) or Istanbul pogrom. On the evening of the 6–7 September, a series of government-instigated riots resulted in the vast destruction of Greek property, businesses and churches. The events were triggered by a radio broadcast which reported that the house of Atatürk in Salonica, Greece, had allegedly been bombed (Güven 2005). The attacks seemed to target the Greeks of Istanbul due to the Cyprus problem, but they also included other non-Muslim communities leading to further mass migration. During the 1960s, the impact of international political tensions and problems for the Greek community of Istanbul continued. The accelerating Cyprus crisis in 1964 led to the deportation of 12,000 Greeks with Greek nationality. However, many Greek nationals were married to Greeks with Turkish citizenship, therefore the number of people who had to leave rose to 40,000 (Aktar 2004). The Greek community’s victimization due to international tensions culminated in the closing down of the Theological School of Halki in 1971.

Following the military coup in 1980, the transition to a liberal market economy began in Turkey, which triggered changes in social and political life. This transition to a liberal economy brought about the questioning of the principles of the Republican establishment and its ideology. The Republican ideology aimed to create a civic citizenship model, which was based on the principles of modernization, secularization and standardization of social and political life where linguistic, religious and

ethnic differences were confined to the 'private' realm. As Kasaba and Bozdoğan (1997, 2–3) aptly observe:

In the 1990s, the public assertions of particularistic ethnic and religious identities and the contestation of cultural identities in Turkey became more visible, comprehensive and radical. The critical appraisal of Turkish modernity was accompanied by a growing interest in the country's multicultural legacy, challenging the official discourses of 'Turkishness'.<sup>6</sup>

In this context, the effect of the Kurdish issue on the revival of identity politics in Turkey seemed to have been instrumental in the way non-Muslim minority institutions sought to participate in the public realm and gain increased visibility. These efforts could be seen in the revitalization of minority media in Turkey and their engagement in cultural activities in general. For instance, the following quote by Arus Yumul, an Armenian scholar in Turkey, demonstrates how minority intellectuals in particular began to have a say in the exercise and configuration of citizenship through the activities of their media institutions. As Yumul (2005, 118) puts it:

[Since the 1990s], non-Muslims also became part of the debates on citizenship, multiculturalism and identity politics. [They became] part of the trend of promoting their communities and performed some activities to publicise their culture, music and food. They put forward their demands for the acknowledgment and protection of these cultures. Identity politics also comprised voicing injustices and oppression. During this period, non-Muslims [instead of positioning themselves as the 'silent other'] adopted the position of citizens who demanded recognition and equality instead of tolerance; they began to discuss loudly the discriminatory practices they faced.

This view resonates with that of Rifat Bali, a Jewish intellectual and writer, who discusses the transformations that have taken place in minority communities since the 1990s as follows:

It was especially the case for Greeks and Armenians. Not the Jews, because Jews were married to the state and they never flirted with the opposition. This is why nobody looked at them and nobody flirted with them, because Jews were considered to be statist. So, people began to talk to those, who had a 'problem' with the state. Those who had problems with the state were Greeks and Armenians who, especially after 1996, began to talk (Interview, 9 June 2004).

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<sup>6</sup> See also Poulos' revealing discussion of the impact of the project of modernity on the conceptualization of the *Rum* composers of Istanbul in Chapter 4.

As I claimed in the introduction, since the foundation of the modern Turkish state, the general tendency within non-Muslim communities was to remain 'silent'. As I have discussed elsewhere (Yanardagolu 2009), this condition was the outcome of, on the one hand, state-initiated top-down policies and, on the other hand, the communities' self-induced sanctions by their leaders and intellectuals. Nevertheless, the process of questioning the nation-state from the mid-1990s onwards led to openness within the non-Muslim minority communities. Although non-Muslim minority media historically emerged to serve their own communities, these recent developments have compelled them to become more active, open and visible in the broader public arena. As Rifat Bali highlighted in his interview, it was 'those who had a problem with the state, especially the Greek and Armenians, who voiced their demands more loudly' (Interview, 9 June 2004). The launch of the Armenian publishing house *Aras* in 1993 and the Armenian weekly *Agos* in 1996 were two major examples of this repositioning of the minority communities as they began to 'demand recognition and equality instead of tolerance' (Yumul 2005). At the end of the 1990s, Turkey was accepted as a candidate country to the European Union, and began to introduce an unprecedented number of reforms, frequently referred to as the democratization packages. The purpose of these reforms, which have been put into practice in the last decade, aimed at enhancing basic human rights and the protection of minorities in Turkey. Equally importantly, they have positively impacted on the repositioning of minority communities and their media in present-day Turkey.

### The *Rum* Community and its Media

The newspaper *Apoyevmatini* was established in May 1925. It is the oldest functioning *Rum* newspaper from the Republican era,<sup>7</sup> and it is published daily apart from weekends. As its editor, Mihail Vassiliadis, explained, when *Apoyevmatini* was founded the *Rum* community of Istanbul comprised 10 per cent of the city's population, which gave the newspaper a relatively high circulation and readership. However, he believes the situation started to deteriorate in the 1930s due to the rise of nationalist and fascist governments in Europe and their attempts to assimilate minorities (Interview, 11 January 2005). In his 2005 article in the Turkish daily *Radikal*, Baslangıç argues that the history and survival of *Apoyevmatini* could be considered in parallel with that of the *Rum* population of Istanbul, which has shrunk from 100,000 to around 2,000. Since the end of the Second World

<sup>7</sup> The other newspaper is the centre-left *Cumhuriyet*, which in 1924 replaced the semi-official organ of the Ankara government, *Yeni Gün*, published during the War of Independence (Topuz 2003).

War, *Apoyevmatini's* quality and readership declined, a process that was further accelerated by the emigration waves following the 6–7 September 1955 pogroms and the 1964 deportations triggered by the accelerating Cyprus problem. According to Vassiliadis, today *Apoyevmatini* operates as a 'one-man-show' driven solely by his efforts.

Nevertheless, the newspaper still serves as an influential focal point for the community, as it represents a 'tradition' within the *Rum* community as well as in Turkish public opinion. Alexis Kampouris, the assistant editor of the second *Rum* newspaper, *Iho*, confirms the status of *Apoyevmatini*: 'the most established newspaper is *Apoyevmatini* because it is seen as the father of the press in the community'. Kampouris believes that due to Vassiliadis' venerable position among Turkish activist and leftist circles, 'what he says [in *Apoyevmatini*] can be easily reproduced in Turkish society than what is said in *Iho*' (Interview, 10 May 2012). In this sense *Apoyevmatini* has an advantage over influencing public opinion beyond the confines of the *Rum* community.

The second *Rum* newspaper, *Iho*, was established in 1977. According to its editor, Andreas Rombopulos, *Iho* was founded because, at the time, *Apoyevmatini* was unable to fulfil its role as community newspaper due to poor management. Andreas Rombopulos claims that 'it was madness to launch *Iho* in 1977' because it was after the troubling events of 1964 and 1974, both of which were related to the Cyprus issue and had a detrimental effect on the *Rum* community in Istanbul. As Rombopulos states, particularly after 1974, the migration of *Rum* citizens to Greece and other countries accelerated. Rombopulos inherited the newspaper's management from his father, while he was still studying in medical school in Istanbul and had been involved in all aspects of newspaper publishing from a young age. He was also the Istanbul correspondent for the Greek *Mega Television* channel (Interview, 1 April 2005). At present, he is the only editor of *Iho* as all others have emigrated. *Iho* is an afternoon newspaper and has a circulation of 400 copies a day. The main content of the newspaper continues to focus on local news relevant to the *Rum* community. In the last decade, as Rombopulos explained in the interview, *Iho* began covering both domestic and international news aiming for wider news coverage beyond the local *Rum* community.

Both newspapers mainly survive on the revenues generated from official publicity issued by churches, such as announcements about masses and other events, because income from private advertising has dwindled. As Kampouris adds, both newspapers also hold the privilege of issuing the news bulletin of the Patriarchate and publicizing it first, because the patriarch is also the archbishop of Istanbul. The Greek community, which is estimated around 2,000 people in Istanbul, continues to constitute the main readership of *Iho* and *Apoyevmatini*. Nevertheless, as I will illustrate in the following sections, recent developments, such the foundation of an



Internet radio by *Iho* and a social media campaign to support *Apoyevmatini*, have demonstrated that minority media have the potential to mobilize support and audiences beyond the *Rum* community of Istanbul and Turkey.

### **Serving the Community: The Media's Contribution to the Preservation of Language, Culture and Identity**

Traditionally, minority media outlets fulfill a 'double role' in the maintenance of cultural identity. On the one hand, they function as vehicles for linguistic and cultural maintenance along with religious and educational institutions. On the other hand, they offer 'competing versions of a group identity' (Dayan 1998, 90–92). They establish bridges between the mainstream media and minority communities and they contribute to the interaction between the national (greater public sphere) and the community (micro public sphere) in terms of offering platforms for deliberation and communication (Tsagarousianou 2002).

The *Rum* community media retain their central role in the mediation of community affairs within the micro public sphere of the community. In his interview, Andreas Rombopulos elaborated on how the newspaper serves community life as follows:

Our community is scattered all over Istanbul but because we are so small half of the population know each other. The newspapers are a very important medium of communication [to publicise] church activities to other community organisations. We have a lot of associations and we have a very strong social structure compared to the other communities ... We had dozens of sport clubs and associations, now there are only two sports clubs left. Because our community has had a very lively social life these newspapers had been very important. The activities of all these organisations, dinners, parties, conferences and theatre performances still continue, and their mediation occurs via the newspapers. This is also another reason why we have such a big readership (Interview, 1 April 2005).

Moreover, *Iho's* founder, Rombopulos' father, was a principle in a Greek community school and, from its inception, *Iho* bestowed particular importance to the interface between minority media and minority educational institutions. For instance, it organizes essay writing competitions, quizzes and debates among school children in order to engage them in community life. Nevertheless, the lack of human capital condemns community institutions to difficult conditions. For instance, all aspects of production of the oldest community newspaper, *Apoyevmatini*,



are dependent on the sole efforts of its only editor. As Vassiliadis explained in his interview:

Apoyevmatini reflects what I think because there is nobody else. Therefore, the target of the newspaper is limited by my target and I only deal with things that I can do and will be able to do. What I can do is to publish a newspaper in *Rumca* [Greek] and use the language properly (Interview, 11 January 2005).

### Greek Minority Media and Journalists' Responses to Domestic and International Politics

International tensions, such as the intractable Cyprus problem, have shaped minority media and journalists' responses since the 1960s. A case in point is the editor of *Apoyevmatini*, Mihail Vassiliadis, who has been a journalist for 50 years. In 1960, when he worked for the *Rum* newspaper *Elefteri Foni* (Ελεύθερη Φωνή [Free Voice]) he was accused of 'propagating Greekness (*Rumluk propagandası*) in a fashion to debase national unity'.<sup>8</sup> In his interview, he recounted the state censorship and auto-censorship journalists in *Rum* newspapers faced in the past as follows:

They summoned us to the 1st office<sup>9</sup> [the office in the police that used to deal with minorities] a couple of times. It was forbidden to use the name Tatavla for this area [this is the old name for the *Kurtuluş* neighbourhood of Istanbul], we could not use Pera for *Beyoğlu*, only *Beyoğlu*. We could not say Galata for Galata, we had to say *Karaköy*. Otherwise, we would get into trouble. At some point, I wrote an article and mentioned Ephesus [a Hellenistic city near Izmir and major tourist attraction]. They called me to the office to enquire where I found this name. I told the guy that I read it in the brochures of the Ministry of Culture. He told me to stop being so cunning and warned me not to do it again. There is still a great deal of auto-censorship. For instance, in the news we get from European new sources, they say 'the President of Cyprus, Papadopoulos' but we have to say the 'leader of the Greek Administration, Papadopoulos' (Interview, 11 January 2005).

<sup>8</sup> Vassiliadis fought a legal battle for ten years and was finally acquitted after his third appeal in 1975. He joined the majority of Greeks who left Istanbul, only to return in 2003 to take up the position of editor of *Apoyevmatini*.

<sup>9</sup> A commission entitled 'Minorities Subordinate Commission' was established with a secret circular in 1962 in order to monitor minority members' activities that were perceived as threatening national security. It was secretly abolished in 2004, as part of the Europeanization reforms (*Hürriyet*, 23 March 2004).

The issue of censorship, especially auto-censorship, in relation to minority issues is of paramount significance in the Turkish media environment in general. It is a structural problem that is not limited to minority media outlets only. As part of my research in the mid-2000s, I collected similar narratives of self-censorship by veteran minority and mainstream journalists alike with regards to the coverage of issues perceived as 'taboo' in Republican Turkish history, such as the 'Kurdish problem', the 'Armenian issue', 'the 1955 pogroms' and 'the Cyprus conflict'. The general consensus among interviewees at the time was that the language of mainstream media was becoming more neutral, objective and less value-laden in relation to the aforementioned 'taboo' or 'sensitive' issues due to Turkey's increasing democratization and integration in the European Union (Yanardağoglu 2008).

Traditionally, tensions in Greek-Turkish relations have had a negative impact on the *Rum* community. As the editor of *Iho* maintained, minorities have always 'paid the price' for international and domestic political tensions. He added that 'throughout the Republican history non-Muslims in general and the *Rum* in particular had been seriously considered as the enemy' (Interview, 1 April 2005). The improvement of Greek and Turkish relations, in the aftermath of the 1999 earthquakes that hit both countries, had a positive impact on *Rum* media too. Andreas Rombopulos, editor of *Iho*, illustrated some of the changes made in the content and scope of the newspaper subsequent to the amelioration of Greek-Turkish relations:

We provide summaries of the Turkish morning papers every day. In the last couple of years we also started providing summaries of the Greek morning newspapers that may be of interest to the Greek community. In addition, Greek-Turkish relations occupy a very important place in the newspaper. As you know, our community has been affected by Greek-Turkish tensions throughout history in fact paid for it ... Reporting news from the Balkans and Middle East and, in the last ten to fifteen years, news from the European Union and world news is of great significance and occupies an important part of the newspaper's content (Interview, 1 April 2005).

As stated above, mainstream media's approach to 'sensitive' issues in Turkish politics has begun to improve as part of Turkey's greater democratization and integration in the global economy and politics in general and in the European Union in particular. At the beginning of 2000s, the positive effects of democratization were being felt in every sector of society, including the non-Muslim communities. In light of this positive political climate, minorities also demonstrated their willingness to open up to the broader society and claim their space in contemporary Turkey. Reporting news beyond the local Greek community can, thus, be seen as an effort on the part of the *Rum* community and media in Istanbul to reposition

themselves in the context of the aforementioned changing political and social conditions. The following section further elaborates on this repositioning of *Rum* community media by discussing some new initiatives.

### New Initiatives in *Rum* Community Media

Since the first round of interviews with Greek minority media editors in 2005 there have been a number of significant developments in Turkey and within the Greek community that have had both a symbolic and material impact on minority communities. These developments were initiated after the 2002 elections when the incumbent conservative and Islamic-based Justice and Development Party (AKP) came to power, ending a protracted period of coalitions in Turkey. As a result, between 2000 and 2006 a number of key reforms were introduced in the context of eight EU harmonization packages.<sup>10</sup> Although Turkey has not signed to date two essential documents in the field of minority protection,<sup>11</sup> it introduced legislation in support of cultural rights with reference to minority media starting with the public broadcasting in Kurdish. In addition, in 2002 a new regulation was introduced with regard to charitable foundations, allowing them to acquire property (*Hürriyet*, 4 October 2002). In 2007, the European Court of Human Rights adjudicated that Turkey had violated the property rights of minority foundations (*vakıf*). This has been a disputed issue since the 1970s, which financially hampered minority communities because they could not generate revenue from the properties that had been endowed to them by individuals. This situation was creating problems for the maintenance of schools, churches, hospitals and care homes for the elderly, which were part of the material as well as symbolic/cultural capital of the communities.<sup>12</sup> A new law (no. 5737) was passed by parliament on 20 February 2008 allowing assets registered under the names of religious

<sup>10</sup> Note that some harmonization packages had been introduced prior to November 2002, when the AKP came to power.

<sup>11</sup> The two documents are 'The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages' and 'The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities'. These two Council of Europe documents provide the basis of minority protection and media diversity. The European Charter was adopted in 1992 and entered into force in 1998. The Framework Convention was opened for signature in 1995 and to date has been signed and ratified by 35 member countries (for further details, see <http://conventions.coe.int>).

<sup>12</sup> In a recent interview to the Jewish newspaper *Şalom* (Peace), Laki Vingas, who is the representative of all the non-Muslim minority foundations in the 'General Directorate of Foundations' in Turkey and the first non-Muslim to be elected to this post since 1924 when the directorate was established welcomed the new legislation for the assets of minority foundations (*Şalom*, 4 April 2012).

figures to be transferred to minority foundations. This concession was intended to prevent subsequent cases going to the European Court of Human Rights (*Hürriyet*, 21 February 2008). In addition, minority media outlets received some financial support from the state. As I discuss in this section, the newspaper *Iho* used this financial support to launch an online radio to expand its audience.

This legislation did not directly respond to the needs of media outlets. Nevertheless, as Andreas Rombopulos, editor of *Iho* argues,

... it was perhaps due to [our] continuous coverage of the draft bill that the bill came through ... it was updated three times because we were highlighting the missing issues.

He also believes that the incumbent government's attitude towards resolving the property rights of non-Muslim charities differed from previous governments and this atmosphere facilitated the 'formation of a fresh and positive' approach to minority issues in public opinion too (Interview, 15 May 2012).<sup>13</sup>

Reflecting on these recent policy developments in Turkey, assistant editor of *Iho*, Alex Kampouris, claims that an equally important change has been taking place in the Greek community itself since 2005 (Interview, 10 May 2012). The wind of change accelerated after a conference meeting in Istanbul. In July 2006, the conference *Istanbul Buluşması* (Istanbul Meeting) brought together scholars from Turkey, Greece and around the world who discussed

the current problems of the community from the charitable foundations to education and showed that these issues which were previously only debated within the community could be analysed in much bigger platforms (*Istos* 2012).

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<sup>13</sup> The resolution of legal disputes regarding minority community institutions was part of the political and economic harmonization process with the European Union, which began after 1999. It was considered under the heading of minority protection. Although the initial reforms began before 2002, progress was made when AKP came to power. The different approach shown towards the protection of minorities' culture and institutions can be seen as part of AKP's overall tolerance towards religious freedom as well as its interpretation of Turkish history, which considers the *Rum* of Istanbul and other non-Muslim communities as part of the Ottoman heritage that must be protected. Despite the risk of overgeneralising, AKP's tolerant approach towards non-Muslim communities can be seen as part of its ideology that yearns for the revival of Ottoman traditions, sometimes referred to as 'neo-Ottomanism' in Turkish public opinion. This ideological approach reminisces the political and social governance during Ottoman times, when social differences were based on religion, and Turks constituted the ruling élite. A lengthy discussion of AKP's ideology towards non-Muslims, however, is beyond the scope of this chapter.

The conference preceedings were published in Greek in 2009 and in Turkish in 2012. The conference was organized by the Zografyon High School Alumni Association and it was supported by *Bilgi* and *Boğaziçi* Universities in Istanbul. The organizing committee was comprised of leading figures from the community. Alex Kampouris believes that the most significant outcome of the meeting was the decision to become 'more proactive' as a community and to have a 'unified voice' (Interview, 10 May 2012). Following the conference, in 2010, the association *Rumvader* (Σύνδεσμος Υποστήριξης Ρωμαϊκών Κοινοτικών Ιδρυμάτων [Greek Foundations' Association]) was established under the chairmanship of Greek community leader, Laki Vingas, who was also the first person to represent all minority foundations at the Directorate General of Foundations.

Despite the aforementioned efforts to improve the visibility of minority communities in the public sphere in Turkey, the Greek newspapers *Iho* and *Apoyevmatini* risked closing down in 2011 due to lack of funding. Although both newspapers have the privilege to publish Patriarchate-related news and the official advertisements of the churches, their revenues were insufficient to maintain their daily circulation. Vassiliadis, editor of *Apoyevmatini*, explained that the newspaper was in financial straits since January 2011 with daily losses of 150 Euros. He added that he was trying hard to keep the newspaper going until 11 July 2011 to celebrate its 86th birthday (Interview, 22 November 2011). As Vassiliadis was about to close down the newspaper, it received a one-off subsidy from the Turkish Press Advertisement Agency (*Basın İlan Kurumu*) in 2011, which provided a lifeline for a year. There were also donations from the general public, especially for *Apoyevmatini*, following a very successful Facebook campaign that was launched to attract public awareness to save it. Nevertheless, Rombopulos, editor of *Iho*, explained that both newspapers continue to face the risk of closure in the future because according to the new legislation they need to have a larger circulation in order to publish public advertisements.<sup>14</sup> For the time being, both newspapers continue to print about 400 copies each daily.

The dire financial situation of the newspaper forced Rombopulos to reduce his staff and the pages of the newspaper. At present, he revealed, he can only employ one Greek postgraduate student as his assistant editor because he needs someone who can use the Greek language effectively and who is also adept in new technologies. Crucially, part of the subsidy from the Turkish Press Advertisement Agency was used to launch the on-line edition of *Iho* called *Iho tis Polis* (Ηχώ της Πόλης [The Echo of Istanbul]) in December 2011 ([www.ihotispolis.com](http://www.ihotispolis.com)). According to assistant editor Alex Kampouris, the on-line edition of the newspaper did

<sup>14</sup> In 2011, the daily minority newspapers received 45,000 TL (approximately 20,000 Euros) as a one-off subsidy. In order to be eligible to publish public advertisements newspapers need to have a circulation of 5,000 copies and a staff of 15.

not 'aim to make money, but to open up the community' both nationally and internationally. In April 2012, *Iho* ventured into establishing an on-line radio ([www.radio.ihotispolis.com](http://www.radio.ihotispolis.com)) in an attempt to attract more people to the website and raise money from advertising. *Iho tis Polis*, which is the first on-line minority radio in Turkey, reaches 5,000 unique listeners in 58 different countries since it began transmission in late April 2012. The radio mainly plays Greek music and receives requests by its listeners comprised of second and third generation *Rum* as well as by Turks living abroad who ask for specific songs to be played on the radio and to be dedicated to their neighbours and friends in Istanbul. In the press release following the presentation of the on-line radio in Athens in October 2012, it was indicated that *Iho tis Polis* seeks to serve as 'a communication platform between the Greek diaspora and the Greeks of Istanbul and Greece; a platform that reinforces the ties among Greeks around the world'.

Andreas Rombopulos has received positive and supportive feedback inside and outside Turkey, which, he argues, reflects a general change in public opinion in Turkey vis-à-vis the *Rum* community since 1999, when earthquakes hit Istanbul and Athens. These events marked the beginning of a rapprochement between the two countries, as humanitarian help offered by both sides helped ease existing diplomatic tensions. When asked, Rombopulos does not necessarily associate this change in public opinion with the reforms introduced by successive AKP governments, because he believes that the initial changes began in the mainstream media first and the government later (see Yanardagoglu 2008 for further discussion). Nevertheless, he acknowledges the fact that AKP has shown a different approach to minorities and their problems.

One of the burning issues for the Greek community of Istanbul is its declining and ageing population. This is regarded as a key obstacle to reinvigorating the once vibrant social and cultural life of the community. In order to revive their traditionally active role in Istanbul's cultural life, a number of young Greek intellectuals established *Istos* Publishing House in June 2012. In his interview Foti Benlisoy, one of its founders, explained how the pogroms of 6–7 September 1955 and the deterioration of Greek-Turkish relations due to the Cyprus problem in the 1960s had an adverse effect on the development of the Greek publishing tradition in Istanbul. In his view, one of *Istos'* primary function is to 'revive this publishing tradition and make a contribution to a more pluralistic and democratic publishing life in Turkey'. Moreover, Benlisoy added that the Greek community in Istanbul 'is mostly a silenced community which does not say much but many talk on its behalf all the time'. He views the role of *Istos* as 'remov[ing] the dead soil over the community' and 'reviving its cultural life' in order to 'reflect the community in all its diversity and plurality' and allow the community 'to narrate its own stories' (Interview, 6 June 2012). At the opening ceremony of *Istos* Publishing House on 4 June 2012, which



was held at the assembly hall of the now defunct *Karaköy Rum İlkokulu* (Karaköy Rum Primary School), Foti Benlisoy introduced the three book series, namely *Tanıklıklar* (Testimonies), *Politika Historika* (Historical Works on the Rum) and *Elenika* (Greek Literature). Books are published in Turkish, Greek as well as in Turkish-Greek bilingual editions.

Benlisoy explained that *Tanıklıklar* (Testimonies) aim at reflecting the experiences of the 'average people' and their stories of 'living together' as part of the common cultural heritage of Istanbul. Tellingly, one of the first books published as part of this series, which was also introduced at the opening ceremony, is *Fahişe Çika* (Prostitute Çika, by Thomas Korovinis). Narrating the life story of Çika (or *Eftalya*), a prostitute in the brothels of Galata (*Karaköy* district of Istanbul), it weaves together the local vernacular of Istanbulite Rum, Turkish and Pontic Greek. Books grouped under *Elenika* (Greek) include translations of Greek works to Turkish, such as *Çileci* (Ascetic) by Nikos Kazantzakis, *Yunan Olmanın Ağırlığı* (On the Weight of Being Greek) by Nikos Dimou and Turkish-Greek comparative works, such as *Türkçe ve Yunanca Ortak Kelimeler, Terimler ve Atasözleri* (Common Turkish-Greek Words, Terms and Proverbs) by Herkül Millas. Finally, *Politika Historika* (Historical Works on the Rum) includes a range of books on the Rum minority.

The founding of *Istos* not only represents a significant initiative by young and educated members of the community but it also resembles other so-called 'ethnic minority media' initiatives in Turkey and elsewhere. These initiatives are closer to 'radical' or 'alternative' media initiatives in the sense that their main objectives are to showcase the minority groups' history and culture, combat prejudices and discrimination against minorities and increase their visibility and recognition in the public arena. In the case of *Istos* in particular, the publishing house makes an explicit effort to select academic and literary works, which promote the acceptance of cultural differences and provide critical approaches to nationalism and national identity in Greece and in Turkey. Overall, a common thread running through these new initiatives in Rum minority media is making the Rum cultural heritage relevant in present-day Turkey and beyond, by keeping community communication alive as well as by reaching beyond Turkey, to people who are either from Istanbul or have an interest in Greek-Turkish history, culture, language, music and literature.

## Conclusion: Continuities and Transformations

As I discussed in this chapter, the Greek minority community experienced persecution and vilification due to a number of domestic and international tensions throughout modern Turkish history, which led to a steady decline in its population. The negative effects of migration can be detected in both



the physical and symbolic decline in the reproduction of community life. The diminishing minority population renders it difficult to sustain community institutions, such as associations, foundations, schools and newspapers. In this regard, media outlets can assume an indispensable role and function by compensating and providing support for community institutions. The lack of educated human capital creates a challenge for minority communities to transmit their cultural identity and heritage and preserve their languages. Despite its dwindling population, the *Rum* community is 'getting new blood' as students and scholars from Greece and other parts of the world come to Istanbul to study or work. Interviewees in this study unanimously agreed that they expected a possible mini migration wave from Greece due to the current financial crisis, which could make a difference in reversing the decline in community life.

Media in minority languages provide 'self-esteem', 'self-affirmation' and a 'common symbolic space' within which the distinguishing characteristics of community life can be preserved and transformed (Horboken 2004). Recent initiatives, such as the on-line edition of *Iho* and its internet radio, *Iho tis Polis*, as well as *Istos* Publishing House symbolize an active effort on the part of the Greek minority to open up to the public realm and for its members to claim their positions as active citizens. As I sought to show in this chapter, despite their limited audience, Greek minority media in Turkey are far from vanishing. In response to their lack of funding, they are adapting to contemporary contexts, transforming their content and enhancing their accessibility and visibility. It is my contention that this transformation in minority media in Turkey reflects important changes in Turkish society regarding the ways in which minority issues and problems have been discussed and debated. Moreover, the changes observed in minority media outlets need to be investigated within wider processes of globalization and democratization affecting present-day Turkey. These transformations reflect the cumulative impact of the processes of democratization in Turkey, which have accelerated since the mid-1990s, particularly in the sphere of identity politics, followed by the positive impact of the European Union membership negotiations which gave rise to a series of reforms in the mid-2000s.

It is important to reiterate that these transformations would not have been accomplished without the Greek community's active participation. The recent developments signal a repositioning of the minority community's place and visibility in the public sphere. The community which previously preferred to be introverted, focusing on its own affairs, now seems to be claiming its cultural heritage more ambitiously. As the interviews I conducted revealed, the younger generation of community members, in particular, are keen to appeal beyond the minority community to a wider audience of Greeks, to include the broader Greek diaspora through the use of new technologies, such as the Internet radio.

Another important dimension of this community transformation has to do with the greater emphasis placed on the community's efforts for the development of democratization and transparency in Turkish politics and culture in general. This is most visible in *Istos'* efforts which can be seen as a positive transformation within minority media from merely providing 'community communication' to providing an "'alternative" platform which seeks to become part of the civil society' through the active participation of community members. The implications of such a shift could be best captured with social research that goes beyond the study of historical events and engages with questions of active citizenship and diasporic dynamics in the context of Greek-Turkish relations.

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# Chapter 13

## Running the Greek Orthodox Schools: Law and Administration in Late Ottoman and Republican Education in Turkey\*

Ayşe Ozil

### Introduction

Walking by any one of the Greek Orthodox schools in Istanbul today, it should come as a surprise to read, on the official signs at their gates, that these are private schools. The placard put up at the entrance of each school announces *Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Özel Rum Lisesi* (Ministry of National Education – Private Greek Orthodox High School), pointing to their status as private institutions of education under Turkish law. Indeed, all Greek Orthodox schools in Turkey, as well as those of Armenians and Jews, operate under the Law for Private Educational Institutions and follow the regulations that accrue from such status. But are these schools not *communal* schools with legal minority rights defined and protected by the Treaty of Lausanne (1923), the founding document of modern Turkey? So why and how does the Turkish state treat them as private schools, a categorisation which contradicts minority regulations, and as such runs against not only non-Muslim administrations' own classification of their institutions as communal – and not private – schools, but also the state's underlying classification of them as communal without which the category of minority would not be possible?

Indeed, there is both an internal contradiction in Turkish law about the functioning of non-Muslim educational institutions as well as a discrepancy between Turkish legal precepts and what these institutions are in practice in the eyes of both the communities and the state. It is the aim of this chapter to show how non-Muslim institutional life in Turkey has been characterised by a series of legal inconsistencies and administrative

*Note:* \*I would like to thank Dimitris Frangopoulos and Meri Komorosano for allowing me to use the Zografeion and the Galata school archives respectively.

loopholes within the legal and administrative framework of the republic of which non-Muslims are an integral part. In an effort to identify the space where Greek communal institutions and the Turkish legal-administrative system meet, I argue that these loopholes and ambiguities are not a few passing features, but shape the very essence of the administrative status and thus the workings of non-Muslim institutions. The Turkish state has systematically refrained from making clear-cut and consistent legislation in this sphere, leaving the space open for a flexible practice according to the demands of the political context and the historical circumstances. The legal-administrative lacuna has had such a defining presence in non-Muslim institutional life that the resulting *ad hoc* arrangements have themselves almost become the norm, producing an *ersatz* framework, which in turn has impeded the proper application of legal minority rights.

The freedom to practice one's own religion and language lies at the heart of these rights, which are embodied in communal institutions. Communal institutions, such as churches or the Greek Orthodox schools that this chapter examines, shape the very realm where a sense of religious, linguistic or cultural community can be – and has largely been – realised and asserted. Notwithstanding, non-Muslims of Turkey are active in various other spheres of society such as trade, business and higher education – spheres which were much more numerous in the Ottoman Empire including the imperial administration. Yet, there is no essential relationship between these spheres and the fact that these people are Christians, unlike the school networks where communal ties are located. It is precisely this institutional sphere that has been tainted by unclear legislation as well as legal and administrative contradictions.

Any thorough understanding of non-Muslim presence in Turkey needs to take into account the shaky legal-administrative base on which non-Muslim institutions stand. In an endeavour to make sense of this legal-administrative set-up, the present chapter asks: what exactly are these legal contradictions and administrative ambiguities? In what ways do they affect the functioning of the minority school system? Why does the Turkish state classify these schools as private institutions and once classified as such, under what conditions do they operate? What is the Greek administration's own categorisation of their institutions and how does this categorisation contradict with the perception of the state? In order to shed some light on these questions, the chapter first turns to the late Ottoman Empire. This is, however, not to provide a brief sketch of general history as is usually the custom, but rather to show how it was during this period that the current school system was defined. The chapter, then, examines the state law in this area and the communal school network before moving on to an investigation of contradictions, ambiguities and conflicts in minority education from the late Ottoman Empire to present-day Turkey.

## Background

The Greek school system that exists under the Turkish Republic today is the creation of the late Ottoman period: all Greek schools of Turkey were established in the 19th or early 20th centuries. Even the few exceptions, like the much older Patriarchal Academy or the Megali Scholi, as the Academy is known since the turn of the 19th century, were regenerated in a modern fashion during this time. After 1923, these schools constituted the institutional basis of Greek education in modern Turkey. In fact, a considerable number of them were established so late in the empire that they practically operated during the Republican period. The legal-administrative configuration that was designed to run these institutions was likewise a product of the late empire. In short, the conditions under which these institutions would function were largely defined in the second half of the 19th century when modern education began for the Ottomans.

This was a period of newer and heightened contact between the Ottoman and the Orthodox Christian administrations. Mainstream historiography of the late Ottoman Empire often tells us how Christians and Muslims were increasingly venturing on their separate paths under the influence of nationalism: Greeks and Bulgarians along with other Balkan peoples established their nation-states while the remaining non-Muslim populations of the Ottoman Empire, which still constituted substantial numbers, distanced themselves from the Muslim world in various ways. Despite the dominant influence of this perspective, a number of scholars convincingly pointed out that the Ottoman and Greek Orthodox administrative networks began to relate to one another much more intensively during this period when both networks went through a modern reorganisation (Stamatopoulos 2001, 2003, 20; Anagnostopoulou 1998). The modernisation of the empire in the mid-19th century, in other words, entailed a greater and more thorough contact between the Ottoman state and non-Muslim administrations.

On the part of the Christian communities, this move was intertwined with the emergence of a lay class of bankers, businessmen and other professionals. The Ottoman state bolstered the emergence of this class by providing substantial guarantees for non-Muslim rights, a policy which was set out in imperial edicts (especially *Islahat Fermanı* [Reform Edict], 1856) and supported by international treaties (the Paris Treaty, 1856). As a result of the technological developments of the period, especially with the introduction of the telegraph and the railway, the state was also better positioned to penetrate into the various parts of the Ottoman society to apply its policies and to monitor developments. Later in practice these developments turned out to be much contested and the consequences did not always match the initiatives, but there certainly was a greater degree of interaction between the imperial and the Greek institutions regardless of the different shapes that the relationship assumed.



In the field of education, the period attested to the emergence of secondary mass education, which was to transform the nature of learning in the Ottoman Empire and later modern Turkey. This came as a result of initiatives on the part of both the state and non-Muslim communities. Combined with the drive for political and administrative centralisation, the state began to establish and run modern high schools. It also demanded to control and inspect the schools of non-Muslims, which were being established during the same period by their respective communal administrations. The Ottoman state was no longer content with drawing the outer contours of Christian presence in the empire, such as giving permissions for the establishment of Christian institutions. Formerly, as long as they did not 'disrupt' the public space with high structures, bell towers or conspicuous ornamentation, Christian buildings were largely allowed to be. These buildings were mostly churches since school buildings of mass secondary education did not exist before the 19th century. During the late Ottoman period, the social and educational activities of the prospering Greek upper classes changed and the rise of Hellenism brought a new urgency over the control of education. What was taught in schools became much more important for the state than the height or shape of buildings. Along with the emergence and development of secondary education came its regulation.<sup>1</sup>

### State Law

In 1869, the Ottoman state issued its first modern code of education, which was to constitute the main legal framework of the educational system under the Republic as well. The code began by differentiating between public and private education. The first article stated that any school established and run by the state was a public school while those that were established and run by individuals or communities (*cemaat*) were private schools (*Düstur* 1873, 184). This meant that all non-Muslim schools were now officially classified as institutions of private education. True, the Ottoman state was not, and had never been involved in managing or financing non-Muslim schools, but what the Ottoman law-makers were doing with the

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<sup>1</sup> There was a reflexive relationship between the establishment of schools and the promulgation of legislation; the latter did not simply follow the former. While the introduction of modern education goes back at least to the turn of the 19th century for both state and non-Muslim communities, new regulations did not come before the second half of the 19th century and most of the schools were established in its last decades (for the proliferation of imperial schools, see Sakaoğlu 2003, 75ff). Regulation, therefore, was not only giving shape to developments that were already there, but was also introducing and prescribing those developments, see Evered (2012, 7).

1869 legislation was not simply legalising a much older practice. Before the advent of mass schooling in the 19th century, there was no state-private differentiation. The task of education was left to pious foundations and religious institutions, both Muslim and non-Muslim, while all of the educational activity itself was confined to basic learning within a religious framework or to advanced studies in several higher academies for the privileged few. What changed in the 19th century was that the state took up a vigorous programme of education, and established large numbers of secondary schools throughout the empire along with higher institutions of professional and vocational training (Fortna 2002; Somel 2001). At this time, local communities, mainly non-Muslims, were establishing their own institutions of education, a development that increasingly underlined a differentiation between state and non-state schools.

State education mostly served Muslim students whereas Christians largely took care of their schooling on their own, upon the initiation of their communal leaders. Even though the 1869 legislation called for the establishment of state-run primary and middle schools for both Muslims and (separately) non-Muslims (*Düstur* 1873, 184, 186–7), eventually the state established and ran primary and middle schools for Muslims only (Ergin 1977, vol. 2, 383–5, 460–9). This left non-Muslim groups to sponsor their primary and middle schools by themselves. As for the state high schools and colleges, they were not designed to cater for Muslims only (*Düstur* 1873, 190–1), and some of these schools indeed taught non-Muslims as well. The Galatasaray Lycée or the Imperial School of Medicine attracted considerable numbers of non-Muslims (Sakaoğlu 2003, 116). There were also Christian children attending missionary schools (Freely 2000, vol. 2 *passim*) as well as Ottoman high schools (Ozil 2013, 43). Not all Christians went to schools established by their respective communal administrations, but most of the student population of these schools was made up of children of that particular faith.

This communal character of non-Muslim education, however, was not echoed in formal legislation where the main dividing line was, from the perspective of the state, between public and private education. Despite the fact that the 1869 legislation differentiated between individually and communally established private schools, it still disregarded the entire Christian school network that emerged during this time, by putting it under the same general category of private education. The Ottoman system, therefore, did not recognise the Greek and other non-Muslim schools for what they were.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Traditional historiography, which mostly follows the categorisations of the Ottoman and Turkish states, refers to non-Muslim schools not only as minority but also as private schools, that is by their official status (Aytekin 1991, 152; Akyüz 1994, 239–40).

## The Communal School Network

In contrast to the classifications of the state, in the eyes of the Greek Orthodox, their schools were communal: all of their educational institutions were established and run by Orthodox Christian administrations and catered mainly for Orthodox Christians. In fact, there was an entire network of education involving different types of communal schools. By relegating this system to the category of private education, the Ottoman state was, therefore, undermining a much more sophisticated and multi-layered framework. This educational framework can be divided into three different categories of communal schools defined by the conditions of their establishment and administration:<sup>3</sup>

- A). The main category with the largest number of schools was the Community Schools (Κοινοτικά Σχολεία): these schools were established and run by the educational council of each Greek Orthodox 'community'. These communities were Greek Orthodox administrative units that addressed the Orthodox Christians of one or more neighbourhoods of a town or of an entire village. A community was the basic administrative unit under the Patriarchate of Constantinople. By the end of the empire, a Greek primary school was established in almost every neighbourhood of Istanbul with a substantial Orthodox Christian population. In the old city, for example, the Greek school of Langa was founded around 1850 in the courtyard of the Church of Agioi Theodoroi and at the turn of the 20th century developed into a larger institution with an individual building of its own. Elsewhere in Istanbul the *Maraşlı* School was founded in Fener where the Patriarchate is situated. Likewise, the school of Panagia was established in 1808 in Pera, the expanding European quarter of the city, and was soon joined by other schools (Τα Ελληνικά Σχολεία της Πόλης 1995, 85). On the Bosphorus, the community of *Boyacıköy*, just like many other villages along the same shore, opened its school for boys in 1864 and its school for girls

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<sup>3</sup> Tuition fees were not a criterion determining the category of a school. The 1869 legislation clearly spelled this out in its Article 129 (*Düstur* 1873, 204), which stated that private schools could either be free of charge or by tuition fees. All three types of Greek schools charged fees, yet they also gave extensive waivers, scholarships and awards, particularly the Community Schools (Κοινοτικά Σχολεία); see Ερανιστής November 1910; Strantzalis (2003), 283. Moreover, tuition fees were not among the major financial sources of the Community Schools; see the General Code of the Community Schools under the Archbishopric of Constantinople 1897, Article 3.

in 1886.<sup>4</sup> These were all primary schools and essentially served the Christians of the neighbourhoods where they were situated.

High schools, on the other hand, were not confined to one particular neighbourhood. They recruited children from different parts of Istanbul and elsewhere in the Ottoman Empire. Among the main high schools of this category was the Zografeion (which grew out of the school of Panagia in 1893), the Greek Trade School (1831) and the Theological Seminary of Halki (1844). Community schools made up the core of the Greek educational network under the Republican period as well.

- B). Central Foundations (Μείζωνα Ιδρύματα): three of the major communal high schools of Istanbul, the Megali Scholi, the Zappeion and the Ioakeimeion, were all run by a central communal council serving the entire Orthodox Christian population.<sup>5</sup> These schools did not belong to the neighbourhoods where they were situated, neither were they run by the educational councils of the communities of those neighbourhoods. They were institutions of the wider Greek Orthodox population of the empire. The Megali Scholi, the Zappeion and the Ioakeimeion functioned in this capacity during the Ottoman period and continued through the Republican era (Vingas 2009).<sup>6</sup>
- C). A third category, and most interesting from the perspective of the public-communal-private differentiation, was the Greek *private* schools, which were established, financed and run by Greek Orthodox *individuals*. These schools, too, were communal in the sense that they mostly served Greek Orthodox children, but in terms of their administration they were only partially tied to the communal system of education and the administrative network of the Patriarchate. True, they had to notify the Patriarchate, or more particularly its Educational Council<sup>7</sup> regarding the conditions of their establishment, sources of income and curricula, but they were not under the direct or full supervision of this council, unlike the Community Schools. The Lycée of D. Petallidos, the Greek-English school of N. Froudas, the private girls' school of Sofia Therinos as

<sup>4</sup> Ιστορικών Σημείωμα περί της Κοινότητος Βαφειχωρίου (1934), 32–9.

<sup>5</sup> Besides these three schools, there were two more institutions that were classified as Central Foundations: the Balıklı Hospital/Philanthropic Institutions and the Prinkipo Orphanage. The latter is defunct today. For further details, see the entry on Κωνσταντινούπολη (Istanbul) in Εγκυκλοπαίδεια Μείζονος Ελληνισμού 2008.

<sup>6</sup> The Ioakeimeion closed down in 1988 and merged with the Megali Scholi, Το Ιωακείμειο Παρθεναγωγείο Κωνσταντινουπόλεως (2006), 7–8.

<sup>7</sup> See the Code of the Patriarchal Central Educational Council, Article 20, in Ziogou-Karastergiou (1998), 22.

well as that of Athina Pangalou were among the major Greek private schools (Ozil 2001, 63). There were also some other private schools which were established and run by Greek cultural and educational associations, such as the one that belonged to the Greek cultural association of Pallas.<sup>8</sup> During the Republican period, these Greek private schools were the first educational institutions to be closed down, confining all Greek learning to *communal*, (that is, categories A and B above) and not private schools.

Therefore, what the Ottoman state lumped together as private schooling was a much more diverse educational and administrative network on the Greek side. At the head of this network sat members of the upper ecclesiastical clergy along with lay notables: the Patriarchal Educational Council worked in association with the Greek Literary Society, two modern institutions that were the outcome of the institutionalisation of Greek mass education in the 19th century (Ziogou-Karastergiou 1998, 33; Exertzoglou 1996, 22–6).<sup>9</sup> In parallel with the initiatives of the Ottoman state, therefore, the Greek Orthodox administration also began to exert its control over how to educate the next generations. The Patriarchal Educational Council regulated the progress and content of Greek education, and included an inspection system for the teaching staff and the textbooks.<sup>10</sup> This was the time when Ottoman authorities also demanded a share of control over non-Muslim education. In 1895, the Ottoman government issued a circular making Turkish language classes compulsory in non-Muslim schools and required notification about their teaching staff and curricula (Sarioglou 2004, 39). It was not long before that these two seats of power were to come into conflict with one another.

### Contention over Communal Education

Known in historiography as the ‘Question of Privileges’, the relationship between the Ottoman state and the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate was marked by a rivalry in the late 19th century over the administration of the Greek Orthodox population. Erupting in particular moments of political change, a series of conflicts grew out of state attempts to restrict Greek administration to its purely religious functions and to transfer all other

<sup>8</sup> See the Code of the Greek Cultural Association ‘Pallas’ in Constantinople, 1875.

<sup>9</sup> See the Code of the Patriarchal Central Educational Council, Article 3, in Ziogou-Karastergiou (1998), 120.

<sup>10</sup> See the Code for the Inspectors of the Schools of Primary and Secondary Education under the Archbishopric of Constantinople 1920.

matters, including education, to government control. First emerging in the 1860s (Stamatopoulos 2003, 265), this contention over communal privileges became an acute problem in the 1880s, leading to the resignation of Ioakeim III, the most influential patriarch of the period. The issue continued throughout the final decades of the empire (Nobuyoshi 2007; Alexandris 1983, 32–6) and achieved a particularly severe form in the Republican period (Alexandris 1983, 135–9).

While the late Ottoman Empire witnessed the increasing attention of the central administration to exert its influence over the content and the inner workings of Greek Orthodox education, it was the new nation-state framework, bolstered by the changing world order and the Population Exchange, which provided for the fully fledged implementation of this centralisation policy after 1923. The main tenets of the 1869 Code remained in place throughout the Republican period,<sup>11</sup> yet change came through its rigorous enforcement. State policies for non-Muslim schools during the late Ottoman period were to find more suitable ground for application under the new nation-state.

Under Republican Turkey, Greeks were reduced to an incomparably smaller percentage of their former population and were confined to Istanbul along with the two small north Aegean islands of Imbros (*Gökçeada*) and Tenedos (*Bozcaada*). This major demographic shift entailed a weakening of communal institutions not only with regard to the student body, but also in terms of finances and the overall power of communal authorities. As the imperial structures gave way to those of the nation-state, there was much less room for the recognition of diverse religions, languages and cultures. Moreover, the young Turkish state, under which this weakened Greek population continued to live, was better placed to act independently of the Great Powers whose attention to the Anatolian lands was steadily waning during the 1920s and 1930s.

In 1923, the newly established Republic designated its non-Muslim citizens as legal minorities. This came as a result of the Lausanne Treaty, which Turkey signed with a number of international powers including Britain, France, Italy and Greece at the end of its War of Independence. The treaty, which became the founding document of the modern

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<sup>11</sup> The 1869 Code remained in force throughout the period of the constitutional monarchy as well (1908–22). Even though a number of new regulations were issued during this time, these regulations did not change the basic tenets of the educational system. In 1915, a new circular for private schools (*Mekatib-i Hususiye Talimatnamesi*) reiterated the earlier precepts and called for compulsory Turkish language education as well as classes on Ottoman history and geography. As a result, private schools, including the Greek Community Schools, Central Foundations and privately owned Greek schools, became subject to the inspection of state officials who were likely to be Muslims (Aytekin 1991, 142–4, 152–5, 164).



republic and has remained in force since then, reserved its Section III to the 'Protection of the Minorities', laying out the basic communal rights of non-Muslims under the Turkish state. In particular, Article 40 of the treaty reasserted the rights of non-Muslim minorities to establish, run and control their own religious, educational and philanthropic institutions, to freely use their language and conduct their religious activities in these institutions (*Düstur* 1931, 38). This they had to do with their own financial means as it was in the Ottoman times. Furthermore, the following article (Article 41) stated that in places where non-Muslims formed a considerable percentage of the population, local governments and municipalities were to provide financial support for non-Muslim educational, religious and philanthropic institutions (*Düstur* 1931, 39). As much as scholars have dealt with the issue of minority rights in Turkey, they have mostly focused on Article 40. Much less is known about Article 41, which vested local authorities with the power for the protection and development of non-Muslim institutions. This article, however, would remain a dead letter (see Chapter 10 by Tsitselikis).

As non-Muslims received a very clear minority status under the new nation-state with accompanying rights protected by an international treaty, this led the state to tie them more emphatically to itself while it simultaneously began to question those rights (Oran 2008). The minority condition brought about a perennial tension between situating non-Muslims in nation-wide networks along with the rest of the population on the one hand and allowing them to practice their minority rights on the other. These two perspectives, however, were not inherently contradictory as long as the ensuing legislation ensured the rights granted in Lausanne.

One period of major tension occurred in 3 March 1924 when the state issued a law for the unification of education under its Ministry of Education, a single authority governing all schools in the country (*Kanunlarımız* 1929, 96–7). This legislation aimed to end all education controlled by Muslim religious leaders towards the secularisation of society. Although it did not mention non-Muslims, the 1924 Code implied that no educational institution could now remain outside the purview of the Ministry of Education. The earlier (1869) legislation had likewise been a move towards the same direction of centralisation and state control of education but it had not wiped out the control of religious associations over education, Muslim or non-Muslim. What the 1924 law did was to expand on the 1869 legislation to end all dual and parallel administrations on education that shared power with the central government.

For non-Muslims, this meant that their educational institutions would come under the supervision of the Ministry of Education. Indeed, the status of minority schools was consolidated at this time as part of the private school network. A Turkish deputy headmaster was appointed by the Ministry to



every school.<sup>12</sup> Classes of Turkish geography, history and culture were compulsory and had to be taught by Turkish teachers. The salaries of these Turkish teachers, which did not normally denote low amounts, were announced by the Ministry and paid, except for a few short periods, by the school administrations (Alexandris 1983, 190). There were also periodic inspections of non-Muslim schools by the officers of the Ministry,<sup>13</sup> and all school registers had to be written in Turkish, unlike the Ottoman period when Greek was the language in which registers were kept.<sup>14</sup>

The more the state underlined the private character of these institutions, the more it exerted its control over them. These changes occurred at a time when there were no real Greek private schools remaining (that is, category C). True, two of these continued to function after 1923 but they were not to last for long. The Greco-French Lycée of Apostolidis was shut down in the school year 1925–26 on charges of receiving subsidies by the French government (Sarioglou 2004, 95; Strantzalis 2003, 261). The Greek private middle school of Vareiadou was to continue operating for a slightly longer period (Sarioglou 2004, 56),<sup>15</sup> but eventually all minority education of the Republican era was carried out in non-private communal schools (that is, categories A and B).

The main and largest communal high schools that survived the upheavals of the war years and the establishment of the Republic were the Megali Scholi, Zografeion, Zappeion, Kentrikon and Ioakeimeion, as well as the Theological Seminary of Halki until 1971. On the upper administrative level, the Greek Literary Society was dissolved in 1922 and so was the Patriarchal Educational Council, the two higher councils responsible for the administration of schools. With the formal dissolution or the practical waning of these seats of authority, minority education began to lose its communal character in administration. The state aimed to turn non-Muslim schooling into a matter between private lay individuals and the government (Macar 2003, 121) while it consolidated its own power as the central decision-making authority in minority education.<sup>16</sup> Government authorities did not recognise the Patriarchate in its administrative and educational capacity and did not allow church

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<sup>12</sup> For a critical self-portrayal of the Turkish deputy headmasters, see the relevant article in the Armenian-Turkish weekly *Agos* published in Istanbul, 21 July 2012.

<sup>13</sup> See, for example, Galata Greek School Archive, Interim Inspection Reports, 1975.

<sup>14</sup> See, for example, Galata Greek School Archive, Student Report Cards 1899–1900, 1916–17 and 1947–72.

<sup>15</sup> See Türk Hususi, Azınlık ve Yabancı Okullarda Talebe İşleri (1938), 8.

<sup>16</sup> For a discussion of the responses of Greek Orthodox communal leaders to state policies, see Kamouzis (2013).

prelates in any of the administrative and educational councils of the Greek Orthodox community (Alexandris 1983, 170–1; Strantzalis 2003, 262), creating an ambiguity between practices on the ground and what was prescribed by the state.<sup>17</sup>

Indeed, from the perspective of the Greek Orthodox people, this was not how the communal administrative framework functioned. True, lay circles had over the years gained important positions and power in running the communities, but this never entailed a total break with the Patriarchate, which continued to be a primary centre of authority for the Greek Orthodox. Informally, the Patriarchate never disengaged itself from the field of education (Strantzalis 2003, 264), and in practice there was much cooperation between individual communal leaders and the Patriarchate regarding educational and cultural matters. Especially towards the end of the 20th century when there was a drastic decline in the Greek Orthodox population and problems with the proper functioning of community councils, the Patriarchate re-emerged as the central institutional authority that held the community together (Anastasiadou 2009, 253–4).

Throughout the Republican period, therefore, Orthodox Christian institutional life was marked by a contradictory existence: the Patriarchate continued to act as a powerful authority but the Turkish state did not allow or recognise its administrative functions. Since such a major institution could not be totally overlooked by the state – it was after all the reason why a Greek Orthodox minority was allowed to stay in Istanbul with the Lausanne Treaty despite the exchange of populations in Anatolia – Turkish authorities conducted relations with the Patriarchate without turning these into an official engagement (Macar 2009, 193–5).<sup>18</sup>

In 1961, the status of minority schools would once again be formally reiterated as private schools (Sarioglou 2004, 182), undoubtedly under the deteriorating political relations between Greece and Turkey which by the 1980s resulted in the drastic decline of the Greek Orthodox population of Turkey and therefore of the student numbers in schools. Today, there are about 2,000–4,000 Orthodox Christians in Istanbul (Anastasiadou and Dumont 2007, 27). This is a sharp decrease from approximately 200,000 residents when these schools were first established in the late Ottoman period (Alexandris 1983, 50–1). Likewise, the student population has declined from 14,559 in 1923 (Sarioglou 2004, 64), the year of the establishment of the Republic, to a total of 170 students almost a century

<sup>17</sup> An example of a symbolic act illustrating the state's reluctance to share power with the Christians is its refusal to recognise the translation of the name of Megali Scholi as '*Rum Mekteb-i Kebiri*'. The state deleted '*Kebir*' (Great) from the name of the school, Ergin (1977), 737.

<sup>18</sup> For a further discussion of the Patriarchate throughout the Republican period, see Akgönül (2005), also Chapter 11 by Kamouzis.

later. According to a recent study, there were nine primary schools that were still operating in 2006 and since then some of them have closed down as well. The three high schools that remain open are the Megali Scholi, Zografeion and Zappeion with a total of 59 students (Markou 2009, 27, 31).

## Concluding Remarks

All Republican history has been marked by ambiguous legislation in the administration of non-Muslims. There were no new law codes for the reorganisation of non-Muslim schools when non-Muslims first attained minority status with the Lausanne Treaty and neither were there any other legal arrangements following the major demographic transformations they underwent in the 20th century. Minority schools were run by a series of circulars and *ad hoc* arrangements, a characteristic that defined the entire Republican period in this area (Sarioglou 2004, 60ff). Always reluctant to share authority with local seats of power on the one hand and ethno-religious communities on the other, the Turkish state hardly took into account the changing demographic and administrative realities of its non-Muslim citizens towards the establishment of a consistent and coordinated system of education. There were only a number of half-hearted attempts while a fully fledged educational system never became a normative or practical reality for minorities. The most recent Code of Education (2007) does not introduce any changes to the classification of minority schools as private schools.<sup>19</sup> There is still no comprehensive and properly applicable law code for minority schools that would not only recognise their rights asserted in the Lausanne Treaty at the beginning of the Republican period almost a century ago, but would also take into account the political, social, demographic and cultural changes that the communities have experienced since then.

Notwithstanding, there have been a number of ameliorative policies during the past decade. Although still severely restricted in various ways and mostly relating to infrastructural issues rather than to the administration, organisation and the content of education, there is one particular area which has seen a series of changes: today non-Muslim communities are slightly better disposed to legally own and use their school buildings as well as other immovable property that belongs to schools and other communal institutions. Indeed, the question of legal ownership of communal immovable property, another area which is

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<sup>19</sup> See the Law on Private Educational Institutions, no. 26434, in *Resmi Gazete*, 2007; for a short overview of the latest situation about the status of minority schools as private schools, see <http://hyetert.blogspot.com/2012/04/aznlk-okullarnn-temel-sorunlar.html#more>.

equally marked by *ad hoc* arrangements, has been one of the major issues encountered by the non-Muslims of Turkey throughout the Republican period. Without fully fledged legal ownership rights over their properties which were frequently confiscated by the state (Kurban and Hatemi 2009), or managed by individual members of communities against the interests of their co-religionists,<sup>20</sup> communal institutions were often stripped of their vital income to sustain themselves.<sup>21</sup> Since there was no state contribution to finance these institutions, communal administrations were dependent, among others, on revenues generated by their immovable properties, which were mostly rented stores or apartments. While many restrictions regarding property still remain in place, some of the confiscated immovables have been returned to their original owners in recent years and today non-Muslims can claim the legal ownership of some of their institutional buildings.<sup>22</sup>

These legal developments emerged as part of a new attentiveness in Turkey on the part of both the governing party and critically attuned segments of society regarding ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities. This attentiveness which has marked the past decade is the outcome of an increasing internationalisation of politics on the one hand and an internally more critical stance in the public sphere regarding the recent past of Turkey on the other. Communities themselves have also shown signs of regeneration.<sup>23</sup> Despite a drastic population decline and the structural difficulties experienced by minorities throughout the Republican period, the administrative heterogeneity of the Greek schools is still visible: even though Ioakeimeion stopped functioning, the Megali Scholi and Zappeion continue as Central Foundations under the administration of a special council composed of elected representatives of the Greek Orthodox communities and the Zografeion remains a functioning Community School. Communal administration still retains its relative strength and communal authorities are to a certain extent able to respond and make use

<sup>20</sup> See *Agos* 10 July 2009, 24 November 2012 and Fall 2012 *passim*.

<sup>21</sup> For a detailed discussion of the issue of legal corporate identity and communal institutions, see Ozil (2013), chapter 3.

<sup>22</sup> For a critical overview of the problems of institutional property ownership and an examination of the new legislation, see Kurban and Hatemi (2009). For a rare case where confiscated property was handed back to the community, see *Radikal*, 23 March 2012. Non-Muslim communities can claim ownership of confiscated property but a considerable number of their applications are still refused, see *Agos*, 31 August 2012.

<sup>23</sup> Regarding the regeneration of communal elections towards a more democratic administration, see *Agos*, 10 July 2009, and the Greek newspaper *Απογευματινή* published in Istanbul, Spring/Summer 2012 *passim*. Also, see Chapter 12 by Yanardağoglu with regard to recent developments in the Greek Orthodox media.

of the recent state policies, although not so much for the development of communal education,<sup>24</sup> as there are practically very few students overall and no students at all in most schools. Serious difficulties remain, but the 21st century has begun with a newer outlook to the minority question in Turkey.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Some schools are now used for broader cultural activities: the defunct Greek primary school in Feriköy was one of the venues of the Istanbul Biennale in 2009 (<http://11b.iksv.org/>), and the Greek primary school in Galata of the most recent Istanbul Biennale in 2013 (<http://13b.iksv.org/>); for the Galata school see also *Arkitera*, 20 November 2012.

<sup>25</sup> For a very recent study on the situation of the Greek Orthodox communities within the current democratisation process, see Adar (2013). Also, The Economic and Social History Foundation of Turkey has recently compiled a report entitled 'Geçmişten Günümüze Azınlık Okulları: Sorunlar ve Çözüm Önerileri' ['Minority Schools, Past and Present: Problems and Proposals'] (Istanbul: <http://www.agos.com.tr/haber.php?seo=azinlik-okullarindaki-sorunlar-cozum-bekliyor&haberid=5768>

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# Chapter 14

## ‘Like a Bridge over Troubled Water’: Reforming the Education of Muslim Minority Children in Greece

Thalia Dragonas and Anna Frangoudaki

### Introduction

In 1997, the Greek Ministry of Education presented the authors<sup>1</sup> with an amazing challenge: the reform of the education of Muslim minority children in Western Thrace, Greece. Muslim minority children had suffered from poor education for many decades. At the onset of the intervention, although there were no reliable statistics on school attendance and drop-out rates, or any assessment of pupils’ educational and linguistic competences, it was common knowledge that a large number of children were coming out of primary school illiterate in Greek and functionally illiterate in Turkish. Moreover, the drop-out rates from nine-year compulsory education were significantly higher to that of children belonging to the majority.

In order to reverse the situation, we embarked upon a comprehensive intervention inside and outside the classroom, which comprised of the teaching and learning of Greek as a second language, the development of multiple educational materials, extensive teacher training and work with the Muslim minority community. What makes this project particularly noteworthy is: (a) the duration of the educational reform (it has been running since 1997); (b) the broad spectrum it covers, ranging from classroom materials to the involvement of the community; and (c) its interdisciplinary nature.

From the onset of the intervention we were acutely aware that minority children’s massive underachievement was not limited to the educational sphere; it was also of a historical, political and socio-economic nature. The Muslims of Thrace are a historical minority resulting from a Convention

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<sup>1</sup> The authors represent a large interdisciplinary team comprised of academics from various Greek universities working across a range of disciplines, including sociology, psychology, education, linguistics, anthropology, history, physics, mathematics, geography and the arts (music, design, photography) as well as primary and secondary teachers.

and a Protocol signed at the Lausanne Peace Conference in 1923, following the 1919–22 Greek-Turkish War. Whereas the Muslim minority in Thrace is comprised of three ethnically different population groups, the largest and most powerful one is Turkish speaking and of Turkish ethnic identity. Its members, however, bear the stigma of incarnating the lifelong archenemy of Greece. Hence, while this intervention is primarily educational, it is also deeply political. The goals of the educational reform are to accommodate conflicting demands, to promote interaction and participation, and to instigate collaborative relations of power, that is, support and develop the empowerment of educators, pupils and the community. To reach these goals, we have aimed at increasing the understanding of the historical, social and political conditions within which minority education is embedded. In addition, we have sought to foreground important identity issues and initiate a shift from authoritative, monologic to dialogic practices for meaning-making in educational practice. It was only under these conditions that school performance would improve.

In this chapter, first we provide an overview of the historical and policy background to majority-minority relations in Western Thrace in general and with regards to education in particular. Then, we describe the main aspects of this educational intervention. Afterwards, we discuss how the educational reform project affected social change in the field of minority education, by highlighting quantitative and qualitative changes that have occurred since its inception. In this context, we provide illuminative examples that illustrate pupils, teachers and parents' engagement in dialogic practices. We argue that the way the minority's diversity is currently accommodated does not assure equality of respect and equal opportunities for all its members.

### **The Historical, Sociocultural and Policy Contexts**

The Muslim minority in Thrace should be distinguished from the migrant Muslim population in Greece (see Tsistelikis 2012, for further discussion). The grounds for the ambivalent attitudes towards Muslim migrants, as everywhere in the Western world where Islamophobia is rising, are religion and culture. In Thrace it is ethnic identity that is at stake. The Muslim minority is a territorial one and the point in question is the fact that Turkey is its kin-state.

The Treaty of Lausanne stipulated the compulsory exchange of populations between Greece and Turkey, whereby the Greek Orthodox living in Turkish territories were exchanged with the Muslims living on Greek soil. For reasons that are beyond the scope of this chapter, the Treaty in question included an exception and specified those to be excluded from the exchange: 130,000 Orthodox Greeks established in Istanbul, and about the

same number of Muslims living in the Greek province of Thrace. Since these populations were reduced to a minority status, the Treaty included a section entitled, 'The Protection of Minorities', based on the principle of reciprocity.<sup>2</sup>

The fate of these non-exchanged minorities was sealed by the historical Greco-Turkish conflict, and the nationalist ideals epitomizing the nation-building processes that followed the dismantling of the Ottoman Empire. Both minorities were caught in the clash between Greece and Turkey, and were used as means of pressure, or became victims of reprisals. Both were exposed to considerable duress, such as restrictive and discriminatory policies, coercive emigration or, even worse, large-scale deportation (Alexandris 1992; Oran 2003). As Tsitselikis succinctly puts it, 'reciprocal maltreatment began as soon as legal protection was set up' (2008, 75). We do not wish to delve into the considerable historiography relevant to this complex matter, nor account for the abuses that took place in both countries, at different time-points and with differing violence (for further discussion on the topic see Tsitselikis, this volume).

For the purposes of this chapter we restrict our discussion to the way that the cultural diversity of the minority has been managed by the Greek state. In recent years, questions of ethnicity and minority rights in the Western world have been addressed on what has come to be referred to as the liberal-communitarian divide (May et al. 2004). In ideal type terms, on the one side of the divide, there are those who prioritize equality of all individuals before law, and claim that the role of the state is to ensure that every citizen is treated as an equal member of society with the same rights and responsibilities. In this context, they argue against the recognition of ethnic identities in the public sphere. Rather, one's ethnic, cultural, religious or racial identities are understood as a private matter. On the other side of the divide, there are those who postulate that a broader communal socialization in a historically rooted culture is necessary to enable a minority's civil rights and fragile presence in the public political arena. In other words, it is the institutionalization of collective rights that can guarantee that minority members are treated fairly and that they are protected from the oppression of the majority.

Where does the management of cultural diversity of the Muslim minority in Thrace stand in terms of the above liberal-communitarian debate? While the purity of the two approaches is often not retained in practice, the accommodation of the minority's cultural rights does not fall under the liberal model. At the same time, it is not the case of the implementation of a communitarian approach either, whereby the state accommodates diversity by giving effective control to the minority over certain political and cultural affairs. Rather, it is the International Treaty of

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<sup>2</sup> See Articles 37 to 45 for details, [http://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/Treaty\\_of\\_Lausanne](http://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/Treaty_of_Lausanne).

Lausanne that constitutes the basic charter that gave the Muslim minority in Thrace the right to freely practice their own religion and to establish, manage and control schools at their own expense where they could use their own language and teach the Qur'an. The respect of these cultural rights is neither the product of demands made by the minority on the state, nor the outcome of the Greek state's active policy. Furthermore, the protection of the minority's cultural identity is not a remnant of the traditional status of minorities in the Ottoman Empire. There, the legal and social mechanisms contributed towards keeping the different *millet* apart and not integrating them. By promoting minority protection in Greece and Turkey, the Lausanne Treaty did not aim to perpetuate minority members' separate status, but rather to integrate them within their host countries in order to secure international stability (Aarbakke 2000). By allowing minorities to retain their cultural identity and assuring civil liberties, the intention was to facilitate their incorporation into the host countries.

The design and implementation of minority education has been linked to the trials and tribulations the Muslim minority experienced. The authoritarian nature of post-civil war Greece, the mounting difficulties between Greece and Turkey and the Greek dictatorship from 1967 until 1974 have all had a negative impact on minority education developments. For a long period, the tacit message emanating from all directions was that there is no need to educate the minority, since it is better controlled when it remains illiterate.

On the basis of the Treaty of Lausanne and Greco-Turkish Cultural Protocols, minority schools have dual-medium curricula. Turkish language and the supposedly ideologically free subjects, namely mathematics, physics, chemistry, art and physical education, are taught in Turkish by teachers who are members of the minority. On the contrary, the ideologically laden subjects, namely Greek language, history, geography, environmental studies and civic education, are taught in Greek by teachers who belong to the majority. Since the Treaty of Lausanne does not distinguish between linguistically diverse groups within the Muslim minority, Turkish is the language of instruction for all minority children, regardless of their mother tongue. This concerns Slav-speaking Pomaks<sup>3</sup> and some Romani-speaking Roma. Although bilingual, minority primary schools are obsolete institutions, attended only by minority children, and none of the issues pertaining to current debates on bilingual education seem to interest education policymakers on either side.

Up until the mid-1990s, no comprehensive educational policies had been implemented for minority education. Yet, certain political and social

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<sup>3</sup> The Pomaks are Slav-speaking Muslims traditionally residing in villages in the Rodopi Mountains near the Greek-Bulgarian boarder. Increasingly, they live in urban or semi-urban centres.

groups, from both the majority and the minority, had recognized the severity of the problem long before. Minority education has been described by an enlightened figure of the minority, as 'a castrated, marginalized and downgraded mechanism for producing illiteracy' (Onsunoglu 1997, 62).

Owing to historical developments and political pressures, the minority was prevented from participating in the socio-economic changes of Greek society, which were particularly rapid in the 1970s and 1980s. They were excluded from the benefits of development and remained at a disadvantageous, marginal position. The most important consequence of the socio-economic deprivation is mirrored in the social structure of the minority, where there are significant social inequalities between majority and minority members. As revealed from a survey conducted in 1997 as part of the project discussed, 42 per cent of the economically active minority members were manual workers and 47 per cent were agricultural labourers, while the national mean was 18 per cent. In other words, almost 90 per cent of the minority belonged to the two lower social strata (Askouni 2006). Compared to the majority Greek population, the minority suffers profound inequalities: it is far more economically deprived and far less educated than the majority. The greater part of the minority lives in separate communities. Out of the almost 500 rural and semi-urban settlements in Thrace, only 12 per cent have a mixed population, while the remaining are divided almost equally into homogenous majority and minority geographical units.

The minority, largely agrarian and poor, despite trends towards modernization, has remained largely deeply traditional, patriarchal and religious. Society in Thrace has been divided into first- and second-class citizens: a dominant group that could freely exercise power and a subordinate one, socially, economically and educationally marginalized. The reasons for these sharp social divisions and disregard of human rights have been the product of a complex causal nexus. The perception of the minority as Turkey's 'Trojan horse', to quote Heraclides (2001, 300), justified, and still does, patriotic rhetoric for the protection of 'national interests', expressing fear for the threat the minority causes to the fabric of the Greek nation, or just concealing blatant economic exploitation, made possible through lawlessness. Furthermore, as elsewhere in the world, the coexistence of first- and second-class citizens nurtures authoritarian attitudes and drives the hegemonic group to defend its status, and maintain its socio-economic privileges.

In the early 1990s, Europe witnessed important political transformations as regards to minority rights. International standards for the protection of members of minority groups were developed by the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. Greece found itself shamed by international organizations for violating minority human rights (Anagnostou 2005). During the same period, important

transformations took place in Greece. After a long period of economic hardship and authoritarian-governing, Greece envisaged the end of an extensive and difficult journey towards becoming a democratic, European society. Moreover, the prevalent nationalist myth that Greece was a culturally, linguistically and ethnically homogeneous society was strongly challenged by the influx of large-scale migration. These international and domestic developments set in motion new social policies concerning the Muslim minority, and a series of economic revitalization measures for Western Thrace more generally. The new policy agenda included respect for human rights, political equality and substantial legal equality, as well as the implementation of educational policies against social exclusion. Moreover, it supported tolerance towards access to Turkish mass media, and the lifting of restrictions of movement in areas along the Greek-Bulgarian border that had been established during the Cold War period. The Greek state began to realize that overt discriminatory measures against the minority were achieving the opposite of the desired effect. They only led to the strengthening of the ties between the minority and its kin-state Turkey.

The winds of change, described above, had direct implications for the education of minority children too. An important affirmative-action measure was taken in 1996, allowing a special 0.5 per cent minority quota to enrol in Greek universities, thus, *de facto* readjusting and absorbing inequalities in the fields of language and social participation. Ten years later, another measure was introduced: the pilot instruction of Turkish in mainstream secondary schools.<sup>4</sup> The education reform for minority primary and secondary school pupils, to which we will now turn, needs to be situated in the abovementioned policies against social exclusion.

Before we describe the reform, it is worth assessing whether the policy changes of the past 20 years have fully guaranteed fair treatment of the minority. Despite the very important steps forward, if we were to apply liberal-communitarian discourses to the management of cultural diversity, we could safely argue that the minority is still losing out. The liberal so-called discourse is often adopted by assimilationist (at best) powers that cannot tolerate the linguistic, religious or ethnic diversity of the minority. Although Greece signed the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCPNM) in 1997, it has not yet ratified it and continues

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<sup>4</sup> This was a very important measure that did not, however, bear fruit. It was resisted from almost all sides. On the one hand, it was implemented very hastily and did not involve the minority in its design and implementation. On the other hand, minority hard-liners interpreted it as a measure that would jeopardize the status of minority schools. Nationalists on the majority side also resisted the introduction of Turkish into mainstream secondary schools, on the grounds that it would contaminate Greek national education.



to apply policies determined by the narrow interpretation in the Treaty of Lausanne. Thus, the disadvantage the minority faces is treated primarily as cultural, and, as Mantouvalou (2009) has shown, the structural aspects of exclusion fail to be taken into consideration. The result is marginalization in the name of cultural diversity.

It is high time that there is a shift away from liberal-communitarian discourses as concerns the Muslim minority in Thrace, to a more focussed debate on how to accommodate cultural and ethnic rights. One should not disregard the inescapable effects of power, domination and historical oppression on the personal and political possibilities for true participation for minority members. If we are to acknowledge that identities are a social and cultural construction, we are bound to recognize their articulation with other social forces and their multiple manifestations. This perspective presupposes that ethnicity is fluid, malleable and open to negotiation, depending on context and participants. As Nagel (1994:155) aptly puts it:

a chosen ethnic identity is determined by the individual's perception of its meaning to different audiences, its salience in different social contexts, and its utility in different settings.

The educational intervention we are discussing in this chapter has adopted the view that minority children, youths and their parents will find a voice in a dialectic that does not seek cultural supremacy or sovereignty.

### **The Project for the Reform of the Education of Muslim Minority Children: An Overview**

The project for the reform of the education of Muslim minority children, widely known by its Greek acronym 'PEM', was initiated by the Greek Ministry of Education and is mainly funded by the European Social Fund.<sup>5</sup> It began its life as a three-year plan that has been renewed three times, under seven different Ministers of Education, over five consecutive governments, thereby demonstrating the long-standing interest of the Greek state to improve minority education. This 15-year intervention can be situated in the tradition of action research, the aim of which is to challenge discrimination, bridge research and activism in the field of educational policy and pedagogy and ultimately achieve social change

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<sup>5</sup> The Project on the Reform of the Education of Muslim Minority Children is directed by Professors Anna Frangoudaki and Thalia Dragonas. It included four phases: Greek Ministry of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs, Operational Program in Education and Initial Vocational Training I (1997–2000), II (2002–04), III (2005–08) and IV (2010–13).

(Abraham and Purkayastha 2012). Drawing on this tradition that extends its focus beyond academia, we have sought to investigate the connection between theory and practice, expand participation and collaboration and identify ways to challenge unequal power relationships.

The development and implementation of the project presented challenges from the moment we first entered the field. The biggest challenge in the design of the project is the mandate by the Ministry of Education, stipulating structural changes in the Greek programme of dual-medium minority schools only. The focus of the mandate created an asymmetry that has affected both the content of the reform and the attitudes of the minority towards educational change more generally. Nevertheless, we acknowledge that the transformation of minority education as a whole is a more complex endeavour determined by the principles guiding the protection of the respective minorities stipulated in the Treaty of Lausanne as well as Greece's pending ratification of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.

As far as the minority's responses to social change are concerned, limited access to education has led the minority to social and psychological deprivation and hence to inability to impact on social processes and build autonomy and self-determination. It has also created feelings of incompetence and powerlessness. Education is, thus, the most important starting point for fighting the social exclusion the Muslim minority continues to experience.

As regards the literacy of minority groups, such as the Muslim minority of Thrace, Wagner's (1991) analysis is very pertinent. The author discusses two different types of what he calls 'subordinated group illiteracy': 'illiteracy of oppression' and 'illiteracy of resistance'. They both derive from obstacles to access to appropriate schooling. The former is imposed by the majority societies and their intention to assimilate diversity. It results in the slow destruction of identity and breeds mechanisms of resistance on the part of the minority communities. 'Illiteracy of resistance', on the other hand, although caused by oppression, is to some extent imposed by minority groups themselves. By wishing to safeguard their language and culture, and fearing assimilation, minorities turn against themselves and reject the form of education imposed by the majority group. In extreme cases, Wagner claims, minorities may prefer to remain illiterate, rather than risk becoming assimilated and losing their language and culture. Wagner's analysis reflects in the most accurate way the conflicting perspectives held by the Muslim minority in Thrace as regards its education.

To redress this lose-lose situation, the intervention is informed by the concept of empowerment. Drawing on Hur (2006), we understand empowerment as the social process that takes place within and between individuals and as the outcome measured against expected accomplishments. Empowerment involves both minority and majority.

It entails dissociating from the notion of zero-sum dynamics where a win-lose mentality prevails. In our project, empowerment takes the form of the willingness of each member to contribute collectively toward a common goal, develop relationships to promote mutual respect, enhance communication and collaboration to achieve common objectives, invest in decision-making and sharing a sense of responsibility for individual and collective outcomes (cf. Larkin et al. 2008). In the area of pedagogy in particular, it was Cummins' (2004, 49) definition of empowerment that has influenced us the most. Cummins embeds empowerment in the process of negotiating identities in the classroom and the establishment of collaborative relations of power that enable students to achieve more. Students belonging to subordinated groups, according to Cummins, will succeed academically to the extent that the patterns of interaction in the school challenge and reverse those that prevail in society at large. Overall, the entire intervention is geared towards reconciling unity with diversity, cultivating inclusion without being assimilationist, promoting a common sense of belonging, while respecting legitimate cultural differences and valuing plural identities without undermining shared citizenship. Hence, the logo of the project: 'Addition, *not* Subtraction, Multiplication, *not* Division'.

A 15-year intervention is difficult to summarize.<sup>6</sup> In the remainder of this section, we briefly present and discuss the different aspects of the project.

### *Research*<sup>7</sup>

At the onset of the project, there was a glaring paucity of reliable student population statistics and other data concerning the Muslim minority and its education. Thus, we embarked on a number of surveys and qualitative studies to investigate some of the following themes: the profiles of students, teachers and parents, language use and language assessment, drop-out rates, parental attitudes towards education and representations of ethnic identity.

### *Classroom Materials*<sup>8</sup>

Since 1997, 40 new textbooks for Greek as a second language, history, geography, environment and civic education were produced for primary

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<sup>6</sup> We refer interested readers to the project website [www.museduc.gr](http://www.museduc.gr) (in Greek, English and Turkish); also, the papers in Dragonas and Frangoudaki 2008.

<sup>7</sup> Coordinated by Professor N. Askouni (sociology of education).

<sup>8</sup> Coordinated by Professors G. Kouzelis (sociology); A. Iordanidou, S. Moschonas and M. Tzeveleku (linguistics); Ch. Sakonides (mathematics); V. Tselfes (physics); E. Avdela (history); V. Apostololidou (literature); E. Hondolidou (education); N. Lambrinos (geography).

education following an integrated learning approach. In secondary education, new materials were developed to supplement existing ones for teaching Greek as a second language, literature, history, mathematics, physics and geography. Additional educational materials for Greek language learning were developed in print and electronic format. For instance, we produced a 6,000-word Greek-Turkish dictionary for primary school children aged six to twelve, a trilingual dictionary (Greek, Turkish and English) and a comprehensive Greek grammar book for secondary school students whose first language is not Greek. Moreover, we designed interactive educational applications and produced lyrics set to music. The aim of the new teaching and learning materials is to promote self-expression and help develop children's conversational competencies, before introducing the official school language. The theoretical underpinnings of the materials' design is informed by the view that both language and literacy learning are context-embedded, they emerge from children's particular experiences and they need to build on pupils' mother tongue(s) and enhance their sense of identity.

It is important to stress that the project's development of teaching materials for Greek as a second language addressed a significant gap. Unlike the extensive production of teaching materials for Greek as a foreign language, there were no materials for Greek as a second language targeting children. The new history books are another project innovation. Unlike mainstream history textbooks, they do not reproduce dominant nationalist historiographical discourses (for an insightful discussion of history books in Greece and Cyprus, see Millas and Papadakis this volume). Rather, their aim is to equip students to think historically and to familiarize them with the methodology of historical research. Moreover, their rationale is not to uncritically evaluate the past, but to understand it in order to examine conflicts, wars and violence beyond simply reproducing nationalist stereotypes and hatred between neighbouring countries. Crucially, the project's new teaching and learning materials caused a crack in the otherwise centralized Greek educational system, where the curriculum is rigid and the policy of the single textbook for each subject prevails.

### *In-service Teacher-training*<sup>9</sup>

Extensive human and financial resources have been allotted to the in-service training of hundreds of teachers. The need for teacher-training was compounded by the fact that teachers often lacked prior knowledge in teaching bilingual/multilingual children. Moreover, many teachers had been hired years earlier, at a time when their duties were designed to meet nationalist goals rather than academic and pedagogic ones. An important

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<sup>9</sup> Coordinated by Professor A. Androussou (educational psychology).

innovation of the project is that, for the very first time in the history of minority education in Greece, teachers from the majority and the minority were trained side by side. Teacher-training workshops have focused on the use of the new materials, on classroom dynamics, on the development of self-reflective practices and on identities and the negotiation of difference. They have been premised on an understanding that teaching practices are not neutral: they can either reinforce coercive relations of power, or promote collaborative relations of power. To be able to affirm their students' identity, teachers first have to adopt a reflexive approach and re-examine their own feelings and representations of the 'other' they are to teach.

To this end, a documentary video, examining the dialectics of identity in Western Thrace, was also prepared. It has been used for teacher-training purposes, offering trainees a new lens to understand the interplay between minority and majority relations, through the eyes of a third party. The film has served as a projective tool, opening up a space for teachers to express their feelings openly, thus addressing conflicting issues often ignored or silenced. Besides teacher-training workshops, teacher practitioners are visited in their schools.

Moreover, extensive teacher-training materials were developed and themes pertaining to the education of minorities are presented and discussed in 34 booklets, also available in e-learning format.<sup>10</sup> Teacher-training has proven to be the most difficult part of the intervention, since it requires deep transformations of self and other representations, of values and teaching styles.

### *Compensatory Classes*<sup>11</sup>

In 2012–13, 4,162 primary, lower and upper secondary school students enrolled in supplementary classes designed to support underachieving pupils and redress social exclusion. Classes take place in the afternoons or on weekends, and they are taught by trained teachers using the teaching materials produced by the project (see Figure 14.1). Instruction in compensatory classes differs from traditional teaching methods employed in mainstream schools, where learning is largely based on memorization and a 'one size fits all' approach. Compensatory classes are informed by an inquiry-based pedagogy, whereby students are positioned as active learners and language is used for meaningful communication, either in oral or written forms. Moreover, learning is meaningful rather than institutionally imposed and the process of learning is more important than the content (Kalantzis and Cope 1999).

<sup>10</sup> See [www.kleidiakaiantikleidia.net](http://www.kleidiakaiantikleidia.net) (in Greek).

<sup>11</sup> Coordinated by Professors H. Dafermou and M. Sfyroera (education); Ch. Sakonides (mathematics).



Figure 14.1 Children learning during a compensatory class

*Source: Project for the Reform of the Education of Muslim Minority Children*

### *Work with the Community*<sup>12</sup>

Opening up to the community was deemed an important step to overcoming the structural inequalities of minority education. This process allowed for the emergence of new 'real', 'imagined' and 'symbolic' spaces, where rigid boundaries could be ruptured, that is boundaries set by the majority to exclude the minority, as well as boundaries raised by the minority to protect itself: as Giampapa (2004) aptly puts it, the act of claiming identities and claiming the spaces of identity is a political act.

As a result, ten community centres were gradually set up: three operate in the urban centres of Xanthi, Komotini and Alexandroupoli, and seven in semi-urban and rural areas. The centres are staffed by equal numbers of minority and majority personnel, thereby actively contributing to the discourse of identity politics. The centres are open seven days a week, eleven-and-a-half months a year. They offer a wide range of activities, including creative play and the arts for preschool children, afternoon

<sup>12</sup> Coordinated by Professors E. Plexousaki and A. Notaras (social anthropology) and A. Androussou (educational psychology).





Figure 14.2 Mothers learning in a Greek language class

*Source: Project for the Reform of the Education of Muslim Minority Children*

compensatory classes and summer courses for primary and secondary school pupils, the use of computers, Greek language classes for parents (see Figure 14.2), Turkish language classes for Greek-speaking teachers, counselling for parents and teachers and vocational guidance for the youth. They also operate a lending library.

It is our contention that the centres constitute the sole spaces in Thrace where majority and minority members work collaboratively, striving for a common goal. The centres represent the only state institution where children and especially their parents can use their preferred language for communication. They represent a microcosm, where different identities can coexist and languages can alternate. They are interpersonal spaces, where knowledge is generated and identities are negotiated. Moreover, four mobile units, equipped with computers, books and educational games, travel daily to isolated communities, holding classes and engaging children in out-of-school learning experiences (see Figure 14.3). At present, more than 2,000 children and young people participate in the activities offered by the community centres and the mobile units.





Figure 14.3 An unconventional class provided by a mobile unit  
*Source: Project for the Reform of the Education of Muslim Minority Children*

One of the most important functions of the centres is to provide a physical, social and psychological space, in which adolescents can initiate and develop their own creative projects under the guidance of both minority and majority youth leaders.<sup>13</sup> At the centres, we have observed an increase in girls' participation in particular, who are traditionally kept at home and refrain from taking part in mixed social activities when they reach adolescence. The youth creatively discover how to live and perform through collaborative practices; how to build bridges across differences and make compromises that are oriented towards a meaningful present rather than reproducing the past. Another important function of the centres is to help maintain an on-going dialogue with parents, teachers and representatives of the community who are encouraged to join the children's open workshops held every few months. To further encourage dialogue, meetings with leaders of the minority, local Members of Parliament, local educational authorities and majority and minority teacher trade unions are regularly organized.

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<sup>13</sup> Coordinated by A. Vassiliou (social psychologist).

During the past 15 years of this educational reform, we have witnessed important transformations. In the next sections, we will highlight some of the quantitative and qualitative changes that have taken place.

### **Quantitative Changes: Empowerment as Measurable Outcomes**

Since the inception of the educational reform project, impressive changes regarding empowerment, as a measurable outcome, have occurred. More specifically, drop-out rates from compulsory education decreased from 65 per cent in 2000 to less than 30 per cent in 2012. In addition, from 1997 to 2010, pupil enrolment in lower and upper secondary compulsory education has surged by 163 per cent and 402 per cent respectively. Figures have changed dramatically, particularly for girls, who, as a rule, were withdrawn from school by the end of primary school. Girls' attendance has increased by 147 per cent and 143 per cent in lower secondary and upper secondary respectively.

These changes have been paralleled by an impressive move from minority to state education. The number of minority children attending mainstream primary schools has increased from 5 per cent to 33 per cent; that is an increase of 560 per cent. At present, one-third of minority children are enrolled in state primary schools. Pupil enrolment in state schools has also increased by 207 per cent in lower secondary and by 500 per cent in upper secondary education. In other words, four out of five minority children attend state upper secondary schools. The move away from minority education has been met with resistance on the part of many minority leaders who claim that it leads to children's loss of language and culture. While committed to improving minority education, we acknowledge that such ethnic schools segregate children and reproduce stereotypes that divide society and create social exclusion for minority youth. The current minority school, no matter how it may improve academically, it is very difficult to overcome rigid dichotomies, to promote dialogue between cultures and thus encourage collaborative relations of power. As a result, the educational reform has also sought to contribute to improving the learning environment in state schools, where minority children are increasingly more visible and audible.

Finally, significant changes have also occurred in tertiary education owing mainly to the positive discrimination measure regarding university entrance exams mentioned in the previous section. In 1997, only 68 students from the Muslim minority attended Greek universities while in 2011, 482 students were enrolled in tertiary education in equal numbers as far as gender was concerned. This signified a 608 per cent increase. Nevertheless, it is important to highlight that because minority students enter Greek universities with lower qualifications, they encounter many

academic and psychosocial difficulties. Thus, some students fail to finish their studies and most take longer to graduate than majority students. A quantitative and qualitative study measuring drop-out rates from tertiary education and examining students' academic and social coping strategies is currently in process as part of the project's mandate.

Although the impact of these changes in reversing minority children's underachievement has been tremendous, it is widely acknowledged that minority children are still lagging behind academically compared to their majority peers. This gap is reflected in drop-out rates from the nine-year compulsory education, which are still almost five times higher for minority children compared to the national mean.

### **Qualitative Changes: Empowerment as Process**

While measured outcomes are quantifiable, the examination of the process of empowerment has yielded in-depth, qualitative insights. This intervention is bringing to the fore important identity issues: it suggests an understanding of knowledge embedded within communal relationships; it professes a move away from authoritative monologic to dialogic practices of meaning-making in the educational setting; and it aims at raising awareness of the historical, social and political conditions within which education of the Muslim minority is situated.

In the final section we present and discuss four illustrative examples which demonstrate how the principle of empowerment was applied in view of supporting and developing communication and mutual respect between majority and minority members and within the minority community, personal investment in decision-making and the sharing of a sense of responsibility for individual and collective outcomes. The four examples below are also indicative of the range of social actors involved in the education reform project, namely minority and majority staff at the community centres as well as minority and majority young people, community members and teachers.

#### *Community Centres and their Personnel*

It is well documented that educational reforms are often held back due to institutional constraints (for example Bourdieu and Passeron 1970) and that the development of out-of-school learning structures may in turn have a positive effect in alleviating these constraints (for example Derouet 2000). The creation of the community centres discussed in the previous section is an example of such structures. Situated at the intersection of space and identity politics, the centres have introduced the potential for agency, that is, the possibility of moving from exclusion to inclusion. For the first time

in Thracian society majority and minority young people collaborate for a common goal as administrators, counsellors or youth workers. The centres' personnel could have chosen to reproduce the dominant power structures operant in Thracian society today. Instead, they chose to address issues of diversity, pluralism, complexity and conflict. This has been a challenge for the young people involved who have had limited prior experience of coexistence in institutional settings to accommodate their own needs, while serving the needs of a wider group. New values and new rules are co-constructed, reinforcing collaborative, rather than competitive and coercive interaction, advancing equal participation in decision-making and democratic pluralism in an out-of-school learning context.

### *Creative Activities Workshops*

The creative activities in the centres are initiated by the youth themselves. The youth workers, members of the minority and the majority, are responsive to the ideas that develop during group work with the youth. Their role is that of a facilitator. They provide youngsters access to information, resources, support and an environment that enhances growth and promotes empowerment. They use collaborative critical inquiry, enabling youth to analyse and understand the social realities of their own lives and of their communities. The group process challenges dominant myths and stereotypes, and unveils the deeper meanings and personal consequences of actions. A circumstance of increased complexity is generated, when the creative activities take place in mixed minority and majority groups. There is increased opportunity for self-reflection, cutting through the surface, challenging and negotiation, joint goal-setting, compromise and problem-solving of difficult issues of coexistence. As a young adult who has participated since she was a child in the Creative Activities Workshops phrased it:

We have managed to be heard. The older generation has a duty to hear our problems and our desires. At long last we spoke about things we are afraid to talk about.

Negotiation of identities focused also on gender and went past the obvious language or ethnic barriers of multicultural coexistence. Opening up gender issues to a wider public created embarrassment, especially for the girls. Steps forward were ambivalent. Yet, an activity organized by a mixed group of male and female youth, whereby a big outer wall of the Komotini Community Centre was decorated with graffiti, broke the ice and created an opportunity for dialogue between the youth and the wider community.

Another example of identities negotiation in the context of the creative workshops was the negotiation of linguistic identities during the summer

camp for minority and majority children in the summer of 2011. The camp was organized by a mixed group of youth workers, who devised a playful situation whereby children were met every morning by a fairy who spoke an alien, fairy language. In order to communicate with the fairy, majority and minority children had to invent new codes of communication and translation between different languages. The purpose of the activity was to address issues of language use and linguistic hegemony in a playful way. Greek, Turkish, Pomak or Romani was not an issue here. If children wanted to communicate in the fairy language, they had to go beyond traditional linguistic barriers, confront prejudice and invent new codes of communication. Children could also become fairies themselves, if they wished, and address the challenge of adopting new roles. In this and other activities organized at the camp, children were free to communicate in whichever language they wished. Yet, we observed that all the children mainly used Greek. It was clear that the minority children, who were the numerical majority in the camp, accommodated the needs of the majority who did not speak their language. There was an obvious reversal of linguistic hegemony and it was the minority children that were there to integrate the majority into the camp.<sup>14</sup>

*The Development of a Turkish Textbook*<sup>15</sup>

Another example that illustrates the process of empowerment for minority members was associated with the development of a Turkish language textbook. According to the principle of reciprocity, textbooks for the Turkish and Greek programmes of minority schools in Western Thrace and Istanbul are imported from Turkey and Greece respectively. The ministries of education of both countries reserve the right to censor content that is deemed ideologically charged and to demand its removal.<sup>16</sup>

The strict division between the Greek and Turkish programmes in minority schools and the monitoring of the latter by the Turkish Ministry of Education allows for limited intervention that is not strictly controlled. As previously mentioned, the pilot introduction of Turkish as a curricular subject in Greek secondary state schools by the Greek Ministry of Education in 2005 was met with huge resistance by nationalists on both sides. An important criticism from the minority was their lack of involvement in the design and development of the textbooks, an issue that directly concerned them. In response to this criticism, in 2006 we took the

<sup>14</sup> We thank Anni Vassiliou for sharing her insights with us.

<sup>15</sup> Coordinated by H. Millas (political scientist).

<sup>16</sup> See Stathi 1997, 65, for a discussion of maps of Turkey, pictures of Atatürk, the Turkish national anthem and other national symbols removed from Turkish textbooks used in minority schools in Western Thrace.

initiative to encourage the development of a Turkish textbook by members of the minority in collaboration with two members of the *Rum* minority of Istanbul currently living in Greece. The result of this joint endeavour was the production of the textbook *Our Turkish Textbook* (*Türkçe Kitabımız*) in 2008. This textbook is unique compared to the other Turkish textbooks used in minority schools, in the sense that it is entirely composed of texts written by intellectuals, writers and poets who are minority members. It is, thus, a small but representative sample of the local Turkish cultural and linguistic heritage of the minority.

### *Turkish Classes for Greek-speaking Teachers*

At the onset of the project, the teachers, members of the majority, expressed an intense dislike for the Turkish language. They claimed the sound of this alien language was harsh to their ears. The aversion to the Turkish language was coupled in our eyes with the assertion that minority children were incapable of learning Greek because to them, they claimed, it is the language of the enemy. Currently 600 majority Greek-speaking teachers take Turkish classes, offered in the context of the project's intervention, in firm belief that they need to understand the mother tongue of most of their students.

## **Epilogue**

In this chapter, we have illustrated some of the quantitative and qualitative changes effected by the education reform project for all the social actors involved in minority education in Western Thrace. The processes of change, however, have often been met with resistance from both sides of the divide. When the project began in 1997, the presence of the team members in Western Thrace triggered mixed emotions: suspicion from the local Greek authorities; anger, hostility and ambivalence at best on the part of the nationalists in the majority population; hesitation and timid hope in the minority; caution among its leaders. For the first two or three years, the members of the minority were difficult to approach. Contact had to be made through their official representatives, such as teachers' unions and minority leaders. They were very reluctant to voice their opinions, and most of the time the impression was that there was a party line that everyone was strictly adhering to. Parents were reserved; mothers more so.

These early reactions on the minority members' part were related to the fact that the project's team had entered the field as part of a top-down initiative of the Greek administration. We were perceived as outsiders, identified with state powers that had traditionally marginalized and excluded the minority from decision-making. Minority newspapers



questioned whether the education reform represented a 'wolf in sheep's clothing', and there was widespread suspicion of a hidden assimilationist agenda. Establishing a relationship of trust between minority and team members was a long process. It was based on the premise that the battle to reverse the structural inequalities for minority children and their failure at school was of a socio-political nature that concerned all citizens. The establishment of a relationship of trust can be manifested in minority parents' presence in the community centres, particularly that of mothers. In the centres, mothers speak in their own language with the staff and their home culture is respected. As a result, mothers gradually started asking for Greek language classes for themselves in order to be able to support their children's Greek language learning. It was clear, however, that learning Greek allowed them to claim a voice in the majority society. A similar process of building trust over time occurred over the mobile educational units that visited remote villages. While these units were received with great enthusiasm by the children, in the early stages of the education reform, local *imams* were resistant. They perceived the classes organized by the mobile units as disrupting their Koranic classes and did not make their pupils available. At present, in some cases, the timetable is jointly negotiated between the leaders of the mobile units and local *imams*.

Relationships of trust took equally long to develop with the majority. Despite the fact that the education reform was the official policy of the Greek Ministry of Education, with few exceptions, initially the local Greek media represented the project members as 'pawns of Turkey's foreign policy', or as politically naïve academics intruding into local affairs. Moreover, local educational authorities were disinclined to accept these policy changes, being convinced that the education reform would be short-lived. Nowadays, this negative climate has been reversed. Most local media (newspapers and TV channels) follow up on the press releases by the project and highlight the achievements accomplished. Resistance to the educational reform was particularly true for the majority teachers who participated in the teacher-training workshops. Teachers held strong views that their students could not achieve at high levels, their educational and social backgrounds riddled with deficiencies. These views were gradually revised as a number of teachers refocused on the strengths of their students, they engaged in self-reflection and the transformation of their own teaching practices and they became aware of the socio-political dimensions of learning.

It is worth noting that when one majority or minority group became more accepting of change, the other withdrew its support. These reactions illustrate that the development of enduring collaborative practices between majority and minority groups are still at early stages. It is our contention that minority hard-liners will keep promoting Wagner's notion of 'illiteracy of resistance', while majority hard-liners will keep using and abusing patriotic rhetoric, demanding for a policy of 'negative reciprocity'.



Nevertheless, as this chapter sought to illustrate, the positive outcomes from the on-going process of transformation in Thracian society as a whole and in minority education in particular cannot be denied. We are convinced that as long as education continues to empower students and teachers, the new generation will be increasingly more capable of negotiating conflicts, inventing successful compromises and building 'bridges over troubled water'. While the healing of a deep-rooted history of opposition and oppression is not an easy task, through personal and collective empowerment binary oppositions such as Christian and Muslim, Greek and Turk, 'us' and 'them' will become less prominent, and other identity aspects associated with gender, cultural and political affiliation, social class, educational and professional trajectories will be brought to the fore.

An analogy may serve as a concluding remark. According to the scenario majority and minority youth workers gave to the children at the camp, the fairy had been held captive by a centaur for 100 years. The children had to solve a riddle to set her free. Can this fairy tale serve as an allusion to the children's daily lives? Does the story imply that the minority has been held in captivity for the past 100 years? Does it refer to the frequent impasse of minority-majority relations? Who can solve the riddle? It is our belief that it is minority and majority children, the new generation, that will jointly strive for a better future, and hence solve the riddle that will set the fairy free. The most eloquent answer to this direction was provided by a five year old. When she was asked to give her drawing a title, she said: 'It is an all embracing whole'.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> The title in Greek was 'Το Όλον'.

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