

DO's & DON'T s for Better Greek-Turkish Relations

**A guide
for those who want to avoid mistakes
which create misunderstandings
and aggravate inter-ethnic rapprochement
(The guide may also be used conversely
to create tension,
to satisfy aggressive personalities
and Greek and Turkish nationalists)**

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2002

*Dedicated
to those few Greeks and Turks
who can not readily be identified
as the stereotypes in this guide.*

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PREFACE

This guide was originally written in English with the purpose to be published in a third country, simply because each Greek or Turkish publication is perceived by the 'other' side as biased. Eventually another solution was found: the text circulates in Greece in English and in Greek and simultaneously in Turkey in Turkish. In case of doubt or disagreement the English text precedes; the others are translations.

All the views expressed here are my own and they do not commit any other person, group or organization. In other words there is no conspiracy. I also take this opportunity to declare, being fully aware of the consequences of this declaration, that, though I do not know why, I like *pasturma* as well as *souvlaki*!

H. Millas

PROLOGUE 1

By: Üstün Ergüder

One of my few long time friends is Costas Catsaros, a red blooded Greek who had never been in Turkey when I met him at Manchester University in 1958. We played basketball together holding the University colors high in the English inter-university competition. We labored hard together to pass Italian, which we had both picked up to satisfy the language requirement of the University for the BA Administration degree. Our friendship developed further and we starting rooming together in a Manchester digs. It was Costas who introduced me to cooking. Our deal was that he would cook and I would do the dishes. Being an unskilled worker vis-à-vis a Greek did not bother my Turkishness. I had something to learn. The only difference in his style of cooking was that he would use olive oil for hot dishes. Haling from Ankara, my palate was used to butter or margarine for the same dishes. I used to think that olive oil would only be fit for salads or vegetable dishes like *dolma*, fig leaves stuffed with rice. Costas changed all that and I must admit I liked it. Our friendship still continues. Costas is now a successful businessman who frequently travels to places like Gaziantep and Denizli. He is certainly more knowledgeable about the “Anatolian Tigers”, an emerging group of Anatolian businessmen and entrepreneurs, than many *Istanbullu* Turks including myself. His business interest in Turkey goes way back to 1980s and was not initiated by the *love affair* of the post earthquake period.

Did we ever talk politics? We recently do. As a good Greek he complains about Greek politics and as a good Turk I try to match him up with my views on Turkish politics. I don't, however, remember discussing Greek-Turkish relations with him. On various occasions I recall the expression of a mutual wish of ending this “stupidity” between these two nations. I have a very distinct memory of watching with him live on TV the events that led to Zurich and London agreements of 1959. My most distinct recollection was jointly seeing Adnan Menderes survive the plane crash in London on TV at the Manchester University student union. We just watched it, shook our heads, made few comments, and went on to the basketball training session.

I often put myself in place of a Greek and try to look at Turkey with his eyeglasses. I do that when I have time to relax at Akyarlar (Bodrum) which is so close to the Greek island of Cos that one can get a good idea of what that small island town looks like. One is even tempted to swim there although those who are an expert on currents do not advise it. They

also tell me that Cos is more distant than one perceives. Akyarlar used to be, during the 1980s, a place from which Turkish left wing and PKK dissidents took off in small boats for Cos and most found themselves at the Lavrion refuge camp near Athens.

What do I see when I look from Cos? I see a country that is bursting at the seams. She has a growing and young population of 67 million with 50 percent of the population 25 or under. Her cities are becoming more crowded. Statistics indicate that income distribution is going from bad to worse. She has political wisdom accumulated over ages but finds it difficult to adjust that wisdom to change that is a hallmark of our times. Policies of economic reform are held in harness by a governing system still carrying a traditional and ideological baggage of *etatism*. Furthermore, a political patronage system further reinforces concentration of authority at the center and prevents policies of “economic rationality.” Yet, many independent observers see her economic potential. This is a dynamic country but a politically sloppy one at the same time. Despite that sloppiness, she has a way of getting things done. She works herself into political and economic corners, but knows how to get out of them. I see a political paranoia caused by sitting on a piece of real estate which is both coveted by many and strategically at the center of almost all hot international conflicts. That paranoia has also historical roots. I see basically a Muslim country, but a country preoccupied with the West and Europe throughout her history. This, in turn, perhaps leads to an identity problem further contributing to that paranoia; a kind of paranoia that makes political rationality, political reform, and the generation of a *future vision* extremely difficult; a kind of paranoia that makes *security* an excessive concern. As a Greek I could very easily be concerned with what I see and Turkey might become a major preoccupation for me.

Sometimes I try and do the exercise in reverse. As a Turk I fail to understand the Greek preoccupation with the Turk. I think we are very similar in our tastes, habits and behavior. Before joining the EU, I observed a similar sloppiness in Greek politics to the one that befuddled Turkish politics. I look around Turkey and see Greece as potentially the least troublesome neighbor perhaps with the exception of Bulgaria. I see a nation of close to 11 million: no serious population pressure for territorial expansion. I fail to understand the mutual *war footing* of both nations during the past quarter of a century. I see Turkey more preoccupied with “internal” and “external” dangers. I see Greece as only playing a tiny part in that equation of “dangers”. Political and cultural links of Greece with the West lead me to think that Greece is exploiting these links at the expense of Turkey. My traditional vision of Greece as the *spoiled child* of Europe is reinforced. Yet for me, the Turk, Greece is not a major preoccupation. Problems with Greece are nothing more than

a nuisance among many that Turkey has. I, as a common Turk, feel that Turkey got entangled in Cyprus, only reluctantly, responding to Cypriot and Greek excesses. Both Aegean and Cyprus fuel my paranoia as I see it as encirclement.

I read Hercules Millas' essay with excitement. Millas is a Greek-Turk who has grown up in Turkey, served in the Turkish army, and currently lives and teaches in Greece. He is a breed that seems to be disappearing from the Istanbul scene. I regret that. Turkish-Greeks were, or *Rums* as we called them without meaning any offense, a key element in the multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, multi-religious city of Istanbul. My generation and the generations preceding could not imagine this exotic city of ours without the local Greeks. Their most obvious presence was in the Bosphorus fish restaurant scene and the associated *raki* and *meze* culture. Bosphorus fish, *raki*, and *meze* restaurants still flourish, most of them now under the management of Turkish apprentices who took over the restaurants from their Greek-Turkish bosses who departed for Athens. And, they do that very successfully. Yet, a favorite pastime for Turks of my generation visiting Athens is to look for former *Istanbullu raki* and *meze* experts who may have set up restaurants at the Plaka and Mikrolimano. Having a foot and a root in both countries, there is no one more qualified to look at our myths about the other more critically than Millas. A favorite myth, slogan, perception or whatever you might like to call it is "we Greeks and Turks are very similar. We are both Mediterranean." For a Turk being Mediterranean means everything to our West: Greek, Italian, Spanish with the French omitted for reasons that I am not aware of. Greeks figure prominently when Mediterranean similarity is underscored because we all drink *raki* (after all ouzo is no that different), eat *meze*, and share the same cuisine. Southern and Eastern Mediterranean is avoided totally in that feeling of "sameness," similarity, or "affinity" if you will.

Millas does a superb job in questioning those claims that I always felt to be an oversimplification. Yet, all oversimplifications hide certain facts or truths. Post-earthquake developments show that "claims" of similarity are not without a base. Perceptions are important and some Greeks and Turks continue to perceive similarities. This in turn has had an impact on people to people relations with important and much needed spillover effects into politics. But, it will run into problems if you treat those claims emotionally and romantically, as we tend to do around this part of the world, and forget they are oversimplifications. Millas in *DO's & DONT's for Better Turkish-Greek Relations* warns us against the pitfalls we may fall into with oversimplifications and myths. It is a very useful handbook for anybody on both sides of the Aegean engaged in promoting better Greek-Turkish relations. In this day and age of post-earthquake

“love affair” and increased contacts of two peoples, this is a valuable guide for those who want to get things done whether they are in tourism, business, second track diplomacy, and cultural and educational exchanges. I personally believe that the future of better Greek-Turkish relations lie in developing future oriented projects were the outcomes could be win-win for both nations. I strongly believe that such an approach in itself is a win-win situation. The strategy of increasing contacts, joint projects will, I am sure, will serve in time to decrease the importance of the historical baggage of conflict that we seem to carry.

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PROLOGUE 2

By: Theodore A. Couloumbis

Some years ago – in the early 1990s – I attended a conference in Melbourne, Australia which was focusing on the problems and prospects of contemporary Hellenism. The audience comprised mostly Greek-Australians and the presentations were made by academic persons from the Greek diaspora, including a number of Greek-Americans. At that time most people in Greece was singularly preoccupied with the dispute over the name of what is formally referred today as the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM). Passions were then running high – especially in diaspora communities – and there were long diatribes emphasizing history, language, culture, politics and diplomacy. The question appeared to have been reduced to the notions of rights and ownership. In other words, who had the “exclusive” right to the use of the name “Macedonia”? Harsh words were being exchanged, Alexander the Great was figuratively exhumed and placed under a microscope, economic sanctions (an embargo) were employed, the EU and the U.N. became highly engaged, a series of third party facilitators sought to channel relations toward compromise, and Greece came close to becoming part of the Balkan post-communist problem rather than a part of its solution.

In September 1995 a deal (referred to as the interim agreement) was fortunately struck between the two countries. It left the issue of the “name” of FYROM open to a future negotiated settlement, but it opened wide gates for trade, investment and other modes of bilateral cooperation. Nearly seven years have passed since the interim agreement and the issue of the “name” remains unresolved. But relations between Greece and FYROM have bloomed. The promotion of economic development, political stability and territorial integrity in a pluralist and democratic setting in FYROM, are all among the top objectives of Greece’s foreign policy priorities in the Balkans. In sum, the Greek-FYROM relationship of the past decade is excellent proof that so-called “historic conflicts” are not necessarily timeless and that the peoples of the Balkans are not prisoners of history doomed to behave in the future as they have behaved in the past.

Hercules Millas' volume – written with considerable tongue in cheek – is designed to contribute to a climate of mutual understanding and gradual reconciliation between Greece and Turkey, two long-time adversaries in the Balkans. Millas – paradoxical as it may sound to our unaccustomed ears – is a “Greek-Turk” or a “Turk-Greek”¹. Born in Ankara and brought up in Istanbul, a member of the Greek minority of that great city, educated and educating the young in both countries, having served in the Turkish army and teaching in Greece, Millas has the rare ability of being sensitive to the fears, needs, expectations as well as the biases of both Greeks and Turks.

His work is a manual on political correctness/incorrectness. It is realist and pessimist in its orientation, pointing out, sadly, that victories of one side are seen as defeats by the other. National holidays in Greece commemorate disasters in Turkey and those of Turkey commemorate catastrophies in Greece. Despite its light-hearted style of expression, the book raises the somber warnings of a chorus of an ancient tragedy.

Millas' guide of do's and dont's will prove extremely helpful to both Greeks and Turks in social gatherings or during tourist exchanges. It will help them avoid abrasive and/or controversial statements. But for the author, the pain remains deeply marked in the memory and myth of both countries. The reader, therefore, will often wonder whether the gap can ever be bridged and whether both peoples are doomed to protracted conflict.

As Hercules Millas informs us in his epilogue, the bulk of his book was written before “earthquake diplomacy” and the Helsinki EU Council meeting of December 1999 that opened the prospect of Turkey's EU membership. Since that time the obvious affinity between foreign ministers Cem and Papandreou, proliferating low politics agreements, civil society contacts, growing volume of trade, renewal of bicomunal negotiations in Cyprus, incremental confidence – building measures, and the cementing impact of the September 11, twintower tragedy in New York, are all opening a window of opportunity for Greek-Turkish peace and cooperation in the Aegean and Cyprus.

What many well-meaning people are trying to do in this early part of the 21st century is to disaggregate Turkey's and Greece's disputes and to address, initially in terms of confidence building measures, some of the so-called low political questions. In my view, as societies are integrating, their low politics (e.g. tourism, environmental protection, terrorism, cross border smuggling and criminal activity) will be placed on the top of foreign policy agendas. We are gaining time in a strategy that is called

¹ Incidentally, when we get accustomed to using “Greek-Turk” as a hyphenated designation as in the case of “Greek-American” or “Greek-Italian”, we will have advanced far on the road to reconciliation.

"step by step", emphasizing confidence building measures and leaving difficult questions in the Aegean for later resolution.

The most poisonous problem between our two countries is the question of Cyprus. By moving it, integrating it, into a wider context, we may be able to facilitate the Cypriot peace process as well. The wider context is clearly offered by the European Union. The promise of accession of Cyprus and of Turkey could have a self-restraining effect on the behaviors of Greece, Turkey and of the two communities of Cyprus.

I often remind my students of all the troubles, civil and international, that we in Greece faced in the turbulent 20th century. We have experienced the Balkan Wars, the World Wars I, the Greek-Turkish war and the exchange of populations, the World War II, the Axis occupation and, sadly, our civil war which delayed our integration into the European Communities for at least 20 years. But then I remind them that the rest of Europe was not immune to similar problems either. We were not unlike Portugal, not unlike Spain, not unlike Italy in the inter-war period, not unlike the whole environment in South Eastern Europe.

Our main problem in the Balkans has been the syndrome of the "greater": "Greater Albania, Greater Bulgaria, Greater Greece, Greater Macedonia, Greater Romania, Greater Serbia and Ottoman nostalgia (that would be equivalent to Greater Turkey)". We had all been trying to be "greater" at one another's territorial expense. But because, at one time or another these territories became "apples of discord", we had a chain of bloody, irredentist confrontations.

It is high time for us to redefine the concept of "greater". Greater is a country that has 2% inflation, less than 3% of GDP budget deficit, and 60% or less of GDP public debt. These are the Maastricht criteria. If we add to them consolidated democracy, respect for the environment, women and minorities, tolerable levels of unemployment, and safety nets against poverty, homelessness and disease, we can define "greaterness" as being a part of the European Union and of the wider Euro-Atlantic Community.

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INTRODUCTION

I was born in Turkey and lived there for thirty years as a member of the Greek community of Istanbul. Starting from childhood I was, in a way, informally trained to do and not to do certain things, in order to survive as an individual and as a member of an ethnic minority. In the second part of my life, I spent another thirty years in Greece, keeping my Turkish nationality. Little by little, I came to the conclusion that I tended to behave differently from most Greeks and Turks when I discussed issues that concerned both parties. Probably due to my upbringing and ‘training’, I refrain from certain anticipated ‘ethnic’ attitudes and/or I prefer distinct approaches.

I believe that my approach is more effective in dealing with conflicting bilateral issues. The ethical aspect, however, of a set of pre-determined and programmed behavior, irrespective of its efficiency is really disturbing. Insincerity is part of the whole idea, since part of the game is not to do or not to say the first thing that comes to one’s mind. The enterprise may remind one of the Phanariots. The Phanariots were the rich and influential Greeks who lived in the Phanar quarter of Istanbul during the Ottoman period and served the state. Much later, they were judged as ambitious and double-dealing by most Greek and Turkish historians. It is true that they never sided wholeheartedly with either party when nationalistic fervor swept the Balkans. It is also true that my home was close to the Phanar; but on the other hand, I am not really rich and I am quite averse to serving states.

As my introspection kept me uneasy on these matters of sincerity, to my great relief I found out that some methods had been developed by academics with the purpose of resolving inter-ethnic conflicts. These academics developed some guidelines of behavior; very pragmatic, almost Phanariotic. My guide of ‘DO’s & DON’Ts is not a contribution to this scientific approach for ‘conflict resolution’; it only presents some observations with respect to my environment. It may help both Greeks and Turks who wish to have better relations with one another.

Very often, a conduct that disturbs one of the two main parties - in our case the Greeks and the Turks - may also originate from a third party. Naturally, this guide may help third parties, too.

The guide can also be used in the reverse. Those who do not care for developing better relations with the other side, but mostly care about satisfying their ego by attacking and making the other side feel miserable may read the guide differently, inversely: they should not try to do what I recommend as 'do' and they should do the 'don't's. After all, what benefits one is what gives him satisfaction. Frankly, I have more trust in this inverse use of the guide, since it is always easier to frustrate 'the other side' than to foster an atmosphere of confidence.

The guide may also be of some help, indirectly and only after creatively adapting the advice to their own situation, to other groups and individuals who face a conflict or hate each other. For example, couples who are no longer in love, successful business partners who are sick of seeing each other, families who decided at an unfortunate moment to spend the vacations with some friends and then feel frustrated, neighbors who feel the people next door are the worst in the world, citizens who have to live with immigrants, with refugees or with other 'outsiders', in short, all those who face a situation which resembles the one of the Greeks and Turks, may benefit. The problematic sides of the Greeks and of the Turks can be apprehended as examples which others could try to refrain from imitating.

The DO's & DON'Ts will hopefully highlight some basic features of the two sides too. National sensitivities, after all, are related to matters of national identity, social aspirations and regional worries of legitimacy and sovereignty. Sensitivities are part of our ethnic character and they act as a kind of national destiny.

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In this 'guide' it has been assumed that the reader has a relatively good knowledge both of the history and of the present status of Greece and Turkey. References are not included in this text, which does not aspire to be an academic work. Instead of references some of my related publications and conference papers are presented in the attached 'bibliography' to provide further information to the readers.

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Chapter 1

BAPTISMAL SKIRMISHES

(names, toponyms etc.)

Greek children are formally named at baptism. Later, as grown-ups, if so desired, they may acquire any name they like. There is plenty of liberty actually in choosing one's name. There is no apparent difficulty in this respect in Turkey either. There is not even a ceremony; people simply register the name of their children and if they wish, change their names as adults. The same is true with toponyms, which may be changed by the local authorities.

However problems arise when names are associated with 'identities'. Up to the last two decades, the Church of Greece did not allow babies to be baptized with ancient Greek names. (Without acquiring a name one could not obtain an identification card, go to school, etc.). The Church first in 1819 suspected that secular circles, and much later the Marxists, were challenging the pious tradition by introducing pagan names. In Turkey, Kurds faced serious limitations when they attempted to choose Kurdish names for their children.²

There are presently a series of skirmishes with respect to certain toponyms and nomenclature of the present and/or ancient Greeks and Turks. It is wise if the Greeks, the Turks and third parties are aware of the dangers of using or not using them. In English, things appear simpler: there are Greeks and Turks. However in Turkish and in Greek there are various ways of referring to these groups of people. There are cases where the two parties either use different names for the same group of people, or each side uses the same name for groups identified differently by the other side. Each side conceives the contradiction in these uses as a challenge, a defiance, an insult and an open rejection of many things: from sovereignty rights to respect for one's intelligence.

² I know a Greek couple who, as communists and atheists, wanted to give ancient Greek names to their children. Because of the objection of the Greek Church and its imposition of Christian names, they ended up giving their daughters Russian names: Natali and Tatiana. In Turkey, one may meet Kurdish nationalist activists with the surname of 'Turk': Ahmet Türk.

The Greeks, in Greek, call themselves Hellenes. They don't object to the use of 'Greek' (in English). There are Hellenes/Greeks in the USA, in Cyprus, in Istanbul etc., irrespective of whether their legal status is one of a foreign citizenship. The Turks call Greeks 'Yunan' in Turkish, and 'Greek' in English. However, in Turkish they use a different word for 'Greeks' who do not hold Greek citizenship: Rum. This term was traditionally used in the Ottoman Empire by both the state and the grecophones themselves for Orthodox Christians and is derived from the word Roman.³

Consequently, for the Turks there are no Greeks in Cyprus but only 'Rums' (when they use Turkish). The members of the Orthodox grecophone minority of Istanbul are seen as Rums and they are so called. The Patriarch is the religious leader of the Rums, etc. The Rums of Istanbul are of course Turkish citizens and contingently are either 'Greeks', 'Rums' or 'Turkish citizens'. For the Turks, the names 'Greek' and 'Rum' are not synonymous and/or substitute; they would not, for instance, accept to host a 'Greek/Hellene' (Yunan in Turkish) minority or Patriarchate in Istanbul.

The Greeks call the modern Turks simply Turks. The Muslim-turcophones of Western Thrace however are denied this ethnic/national identity and are identified only as 'Muslims'. Lately there are some signs of differentiating 'Turks', 'Pomaks' etc. As a result, the 'names' of the ethnic (Greek/Turkish) groups become an issue. Any mistake has negative effects on bilateral relations.

The matter becomes a complete jumble when a historical dimension is introduced. For Greeks, ancient Greeks are simply Hellenes/Greeks (same as the modern Greeks), but the Turks may use for the same ancient people a variety of words (in Turkish) which are not clearly defined: Greeks, Hellenes, Ionians, Yunan, sometimes with or without the word 'ancient' in front of these words. For the Greeks, the Byzantines are clearly 'Hellenes'; The Turks would use Greek, Hellenes, Rums, Byzantines, Orthodox, East Roman or Roman. Interestingly, even the Greeks and the Turks themselves are not aware of the confusion, but they simply feel ill at ease every time they sense the 'other' side is using an unfamiliar and 'strange' nomenclature. The historic dimension of the matter will be discussed anew under a different heading. For the moment, we will deal with the present-day situation, which is confused enough in itself.

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³ The Greeks also use the word Rum/Romios but in a different meaning: as synonymous to Greek (Hellene). For example, the Prime Minister of Greece as well as the (Turkish citizen/national) Patriarch may be both characterized as 'Romios'.

Never try to convince the other side (if you happen to be a Greek or a Turk), or any of the parties (if you are out of the controversy, i.e., you are a third party) that he/she uses a wrong name or an inappropriate word. You will be immediately conceived as a prejudiced 'opponent' and, depending on the degree of insecurity of the person, even a biased enemy. Do not try to hint that 'names' are not of importance; you may sound like a sneaky hypocrite. Even if you calmly suggest a more consistent use of names, by merely introducing such an argument gives the impression that you are 'sensitive' in this matter. 'Why should one be sensitive unless he is bothered with what I say, unless he thinks like the other party?' is the question that normally comes to mind.

If you happen to be in a meeting with Greeks and Turks and you would really like to interfere in order to appease only your own frustration, you may say the first thing that comes to mind. This (no. 1) choice is surely the most drastic act. It always works. In a few moments, the tension will rise considerably to convince you about the correctness of your choice. If you jump up and interrupt the 'other' correcting him/her the tension will be even higher. A milder controversy will occur if one pretends that he/she does not notice the 'strange' and 'controversial' (according to him/her) use of the words and he/she goes on participating and discussing the issue, whatever that is, as if nothing really serious (or unacceptable) is happening. And when one's turn comes, one may introduce the terminology of his/her own. The risks are worth taking if one judges that the person on the other side of the fence is of a conciliatory nature.

If one does not seek tension there are different choices. If the 'other' is a hard-liner, one had better stick to the 'other's' choice of words, if one can bear it (choice no. 2); or skip the ethnic adjectives altogether (choice no. 3). For example, one may avoid the 'Muslim', the 'Turkish' or the 'Greek' controversy regarding minorities by talking only of the minority of 'Western Thrace' and/or 'Istanbul'.

Using the terminology of the 'other' side might seem like a submissive approach but in reality it is a shrewd one. It should be done with the greatest possible apathy. Your gains may be considerable provided you can act well, not disclosing your tactical intentions to the other side.

A: The 'other' will be so shocked by your easy acceptance of what he/she assumes you obsessively reject, that for a while he/she will be thrown off balance and perplexed (this surprise may last from a few minutes to several years). You may find ample time and few opportunities to make up for the initial concession.

B: You may impress third parties following the discussion; you may create the image of a very mature personality interested in contributing to a conciliatory approach, not adding oil to the fire.

C: The other may feel inferior vis a vis your magnanimity and may reciprocate with some ‘concessions’ on his part, too.

An alternative may be to use the words of the ‘other side’ but putting them in quotation marks, either in writing or by waving two fingers of each of your hands, preferably with a jocund smile (choice no. 2B). Now, the smile is very important. It should not be a grimace showing contempt or mockery. It is no use for a Greek to say the ‘Turks of Western Thrace’ with a sneer on his/her face. The use of quotation marks is probably the best solution when parties carry an official position and they are not allowed readily to accept any name used by the other side.

*

The above are defensive tactics to be employed in situations where controversy already exists. It is obviously preferable not to reach that point. A prerequisite is to know the terminology and the names the other side uses.

In general, another useful practice is to avoid the use of the words ‘Greek’ or ‘Turk’. The difficulty is apparent; but so are the pejorative connotations of these words. In Greek ‘Turk’ means, apart from an ethnic group, according to the context, ‘savage’, ‘furious’ or a verbal insult. In Turkish ‘Greek’ (Yunan or Rum) brings to mind the ‘enemy’ or someone mean. A few years ago, a well known Turkish businessman of mass media was ‘uncovered’ as having a Greek ancestor in his family. He was branded a ‘Greek child’ (Rum çocuğu). The Greeks similarly had used the characterization ‘Turkish seed’ for the Christian immigrants from Anatolia in a pejorative sense.

Therefore, one should use the words ‘Greek’, ‘Greece’ and/or ‘Turk’, ‘Turkey’ in conversation as few times as possible. One may speak of the ‘neighboring country’, ‘the people next door’, ‘the nation to our west/east’, the ‘other’ etc. Some people instinctively use the ‘softened’ versions of national nomenclature. The Turks use the word ‘Hellenes’ (Helenler) for ‘Greeks’ and Greeks use ‘Ottomans’ (Othomanoi) instead of ‘Turks’ when they need to sound more friendly and gentle with the ‘other’ side. They prefer this usage also when they want to convey the message that they do not consider the ‘others’ so negative. This approach is worth remembering.

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Toponyms are another intricate matter. A letter sent from Turkey to Greece very often is not accepted by the officials of the central post office and is returned with a stamp saying ‘address unknown’ in cases where on the envelope the country is mentioned as ‘Yunanistan’, i.e., the Turkish word for Greece. This happens even if it is clearly marked Athens, and even if the (accepted) words Greece or Hellas are also included. The logic behind this is that the Greeks react (according to the principle of ‘reciprocity’) to the refusal of the use of ‘Constantinople’ on the Turkish side.⁴

Greek passports do not include the word ‘Constantinople’ as the place of birth, since this toponym will create problems for the bearer in being accepted in Turkey. The solution, since the Greek authorities refuse the use of ‘Istanbul’, is to write the name of the suburb instead of that of the city; this is the current practice. A Turk will not get a visa to enter Greece if as place of birth the Greek town Komotini is mentioned as ‘Gümülcine’, its Turkish name. There are many examples of this sensitivity. One should be aware that there are different toponyms for the same place: Chios/Sakız, Aleksandroupolis/Dedeagaç, Xanthi/İskeçe, Beyoğlu/Pera, Bosphorus/Boğaziçi, Makrohorı (Makriköy)/Bakırköy, İmia/Kardak, etc.

In short, try to mitigate and control the emotions; do not use the anathematized word or use one of the above approaches, i.e., quotation marks, accept the offer of the other etc. Double-use is widely used lately: Istanbul/Constantinople, İmia/Kardak etc. But which one should go first? One may think of all kinds of solutions: alphabetical order, historical order (a appropriate method for names of cities), changing of order every other time. The best solution however, should be prescribed after a thorough research on the psychology of the suffering subjects involved.

Many names are apprehended as anathema and as a provocation. Crowds in Greece and in Turkey reacted violently lately when a rumor spread that an avenue was to be named ‘Mustafa Kemal’ in Thessalonika, and when a ship with the name ‘Venizelos’ carrying the ‘Rum’ Patriarch reached a Turkish port, respectively. There are double names for many places: Southeast Turkey/Kurdistan, Republic of Macedonia/FYROM, Turkish Republic of North Cyprus/Pseudo State of Denktas or Occupied Territories, East Black Sea area/Pontus, Anadolu (Anatolia) /Asia Minor etc. A friend of mine narrated to me how he came across a village in Anatolia, inhabited by Greeks who had converted to Islam and in

⁴ A letter sent from Saudi Arabia to Greece with the inscription of ‘Yunanistan’, in Arabic characters, does not present a problem and the address in this case is easily recognized. By the way, the Saudis do not know where ‘Persian Gulf’ is and do not accept letters with this address; they have heard only of ‘Arabic Gulf’. Many wise people use simply ‘Gulf’.

consequence did not participate in the population exchange of 1923; the new name of the village was Öztürkler Mahallesi which literally means 'the neighborhood of real Turks'. The old airport of Athens 'Hellinikon' (Hellenic) is not situated in an district with the same name as it is believed; the old name of the district was Hasani (a Turkish name, Hasan). Actually, toponyms are usually associated with national sovereignty.

It is difficult to purify the 'other' altogether from the anathema of controversial names. Even the prime minister of the two countries once had names that belonged to the 'other'. A few years ago, the Prime Minister of Greece was K. Karamanlis and of Turkey A. Menderes; the first had a Turkish surname and the second a Greek one (Meander). Many Greek family names are Turkish due to historic reasons.

Detested words however are not of the same magnitude. Turks are normally annoyed when they hear the Greeks referring to 'Turkish' rule (Tourkokratia) when they actually refer to the Ottoman rule. They can stand it somehow though. Turks however hate 'Constantinople' more than the Greeks dislike 'Yunanistan'. Dario Moreno was adored in Turkey for his song 'Istanbul, not Constantinopolis'. A few years ago the editors of a periodical were taken to court in Turkey for using the old name of Istanbul, Konstantiniye, as the title of their journal.

Both sides are fervently changing as many toponyms as they can when they remind the 'other'. In Turkey, the island of İmroz has become officially Gökçeada and the Tourkolimano (Turkish Port) of Pireas has become Mikrolimano (Small Port). Hundreds of toponyms have been changed and the process is going on. The irony is that this enterprise is an impossible one: the word Balkans is a Turkish one, and the word Istanbul is derived, according to a persuasive etymology, from the Greek 'stin Poli' (to the City). Even the suffix 'ia/iye' of 'Turk-ey' is Greek. The common history is really both a binding and a dividing one (see chapter 3).

**

Application Exercises (optional)

What defines a Greek or a Turk? There are so many different definitions! Here are some characteristic definitions of Greeks and Turks.

- Greeks are (a 'G List', according to Greeks) :

G1 - The ancient people who lived in ancient Greece (the Peloponnese, Attica, Thessaly, Aegean islands, Ionia, Alexander's Macedonia etc.) and who were of Greek (Hellenic) origin

- G2 - As above (G1), but including people of non-Hellenic origin, who learned Greek as a second language and were accepted as Greeks by other Greeks. The renowned Loukianos (A.D. 120-180) is an example of such a Greek.
- G3 - As above (G1, G2), but not accepted as Greeks by other ancient Greeks, yet considered as such by present-day Greeks.
- G4 - The people mentioned as 'Greek' (Hellene) in the New Testament, many of whom were neither of Hellenic origin nor had any Greek education but were simply non-Christians, pagans.
- G5 - Some Latin speaking East Roman citizens, especially dignitaries who helped Christianity but did not identify themselves as Greeks. Constantine the Great (Flavius Valerius Aurelius Constantinus - 280-337) is an example.
- G6 - The East Roman (later Byzantine) grecophone Orthodox people who identified themselves as 'non-Greeks' (in the sense of 'non-pagan'). The Patriarch Genadios Scholarios (1400-1472) is one of them.
- G7 - The grecophone Orthodox Christian populations of any origin (Hellenic, Slav, Albanian etc.) who identified themselves as Greeks.
- G8 - The turcophone Orthodox Christian populations known as Karamanli, mainly living in Asia Minor, and who did not carry a Hellenic self-consciousness/identity.
- G9 - As above (G8) but with Hellenic self-consciousness / identity.
- G10 - Turcophone Muslims who are of Orthodox Christian origin and secretly practice Orthodox Christian traditions (Mostly living in Turkey, better known as 'crypto-Christians').
- G11 - Turks of various non-Christian religious sects who for some Greeks are converted 'Greeks' and/or 'Orthodox Christians'. Alevi populations are an example.
- G12 - All those who in our days self-identify themselves as Greeks (Hellenes) irrespective of nationality. These are mostly all the Greek origin people around the world.
- G13 - All those who carry Greek nationality irrespective of religion, language and self-identification. The ethnic minority groups of Greece are included in this group.
- G14 - As the above (G13) but excluding Muslims (irrespective of their willingness to be identified as Greeks).
- G15 - As above (G14) but excluding all who are not Orthodox Christians (Armenians, Jews etc.).
- G16 - Greek nationals who clearly deny the Greek ethnicity. Some Western Trace minority group leaders are an example of this category.

By a selection of criteria any group shown above may be excluded from 'Greekness'. For some Greeks many of the above who carry and/or carried Greek nationality and identified themselves as Greeks etc., are not actually 'Greeks'. For some others, almost all of the above are Greeks. The case with the Turks is not very different.

- Turks are (a 'T List' according to Turks) :

- T1 - All ancient Turkic people that lived in Asia.
- T2 - Almost all the people around the world. This is a claim of a history thesis developed in Turkey in the decade of 1930 (Sun-Language Thesis) and which is not popular anymore.
- T3 - Some non-Turkic people who mostly lived in Central Asia and therefore are seen as Turks. Mongolians are an example.
- T4 - Some European nations which due to historical reasons occasionally are associated with the Turks. Hungarians, Bulgarians, Finns are examples.
- T5 - Ancient peoples of Asia Minor/Anatolia such as Hittites, Ionians etc., who are perceived as the ancestors of present-day Turks of Turkey.
- T6 - Muslims of various non-Turkic origin irrespective of nationality. Some Muslims of the Balkans and even the grecophones of the island of Crete are examples of this category.
- T7 - Many famous Muslim scholars who lived in the Middle Ages mostly in Anatolia, but elsewhere too, and who neither were of Turkic origin nor used the Turkish language. Mevlana Celaleddin Rumi is a typical example.
- T8 - All turcophones of Anatolia irrespective of religion. Orthodox Christian Karamanlis are an example of this group.
- T9 - All Ottomans of Turkic origin.
- T10 - All Ottomans as above (T9) but including Muslim populations irrespective of ethnic origin.
- T11 - All Ottomans as above (T10) but irrespective of religion, ethnic origin and language and self-identification (including the non-Muslims e.g., the Christians and the Jews).
- T12 - All Ottomans who self-identified themselves as Turks irrespective of ethnic origin, language and religion.
- T13 - All nationals of Modern Turkey.
- T14 - As above (T13) but excluding non-Muslim ethnic groups such as Greeks, Armenians, Jews etc.
- T15 - As above (T14) but excluding ethnically non-Turks such as the Kurds.
- T16 - All present-day nations that speak a Turkic language.
- T17 - All who in our days self-identify themselves as Turks.

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Based on the above a series of exercises can be carried out. Try to answer the following questions:

Q1. Look closely at the 'G List' definitions of 'Greeks' and mark the self-exclusive, non-acceptable definitions according to your own judgment based on your own knowledge of history. (By permutation find as many as possible self-excluding definitions. For example G1-G4, G7-G8 are contradictory definitions since in G1-G4 Greek language is and is not a prerequisite and G7-G8 both accept and deny self-identification).

Q2. Do the same with the 'T List' definitions of Turks.

Q3. Compare the two lists and see if you identify 'Greeks' and 'Turks' who in practice (in actual life) are the same people. As an example notice that G8 and T8, G12 and T13 refer to the same populations.

The findings can be evaluated as follows:

A1. Count the definitions not acceptable to you.

- If you see less than 3 contradictory and unacceptable definitions in the 'G List' the alternatives are the following:
 - a) you are a 100% Greek patriot,
 - b) you like Greeks and you need to see around you as many Greeks as possible,
 - c) you need to visit an eye specialist.
- If you see 3 to 6 unacceptable definitions in the same 'G List' you are a normal Greek;
- If you find more than 6 you are not a Greek and if you see more than 10 unacceptable definitions you are probably a Turk.

A2. In the 'T List' the following applies:

- If you do not find more than 2 unacceptable definitions of Turks you are a perfect Turkish patriot or you have a visual problem (or both).
- 3 to 9 unacceptable definitions means you are a normal Turk, more than 9 means a non-Turk and more than 13 a Greek.
- Third party members can proportionally check their Philhellenic or Turkophile (or their anti Greek or anti Turkish) inclinations.

A3. How many 'Greeks' and 'Turks' who are actually the same persons did you find? You should have found at least 5 couples. If they are less

- you are not good in history,
- you do not know Greeks and Turks well,

- you refuse to accept the facts,
- in any case, you need to read this guide carefully.

Conclusion:

1 - If you find out that in general you are a perfect (Greek or Turkish) patriot it is highly probable that this guide is not going to be of any substantial help to you. Do not get involved in actions which intend to improve bilateral relations. In your case, abstention from such efforts is the greatest possible contribution to this direction.

Try to profit from the adverse use of this guide. Your efforts, whichever use you make, will give similar results anyhow; but at least you will feel more relaxed and you will enjoy your natural drives. Enjoy the tension!

2- If you happen to be a 'third party', a 'normal' Greek or a 'normal' Turk (or both, say a G8-T8 or a G13-T17) go on with the second chapter.

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Chapter 2

DO GREEKS AND TURKS LOOK ALIKE?

Never compare Greece and/or Turkey with a country to its east and especially do not assert this eastern country resembling Greece or Turkey. The people of both of these countries have a high esteem for the 'West' and therefore they do not like to be associated with an 'eastern' neighbor. Even if some individuals express contempt for and criticism of the Western World - perceived as 'Catholic/Protestant' (by Greeks), as 'Christian' (by Turks), and as 'capitalist/ imperialist' (by both) - they prefer to be compared and associated with the 'western' part of the world. Many will deny this preference, they may declare that they are proud of their eastern identity, they may sometimes call themselves easterners, Mediterraneans, 'Balkans', recalling their opposition to the 'Frankish' or 'infidel' (gâvur) West; but very few will ever identify themselves as 'Asians'. Europeanism is in general 'in'.

*

As a corollary of the above, most Turks like to be compared with and are ready to accept similarities with Greece and Greeks, the Greeks do not.⁵ The Greeks have developed a very popular saying in Greek-Italian, which in English may be ascribed as 'one race one face', meaning 'we are very similar to Italians'.⁶ As far as I know the Italians are not aware of the saying and I am afraid they are not aware of the alleged similarity either. On the other hand, Turks hate to be reminded that they have similarities with Iranians and Arabs: common religion, cuisine, great linguistic influence, common history, customs, etc. Those Turks who so dexterously pinpoint similarities with Greeks never notice the similarities

⁵ This is a generalization. There are naturally many Turks who would not like to look like the neighboring nation. These Turks are the extreme nationalists, some religious people, etc. The Turkish intellectuals, who are mostly the ones who communicate with the Greeks, are the ones who stress the similarities.

⁶ The well known saying among the Greeks is 'Una razza, una faccia'. In the same context many Greeks did not like the thesis of M. Bernal *Black Athena* mainly because this book stresses an 'Eastern/African' tradition of ancient Greeks.

with Arabs and other eastern countries. Both sides love to look like the people on their west.⁷

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So, one hears very often the Turkish side repeating, with all the good intention, how close the two people are since ‘we look so much alike’, and how they share such a similar past and set of customs and traditions. The usual arguments are: the common tradition in cuisine, in music, the common words in Turkish and Greek, the tavla (backgammon). Some stress external appearances.

The Greeks listen to all this in exasperation and surprised, trying to guess if the other side is teasing, making fun, trying to insult, or if behaving naive. The Turkish side on its part never understands why the Greeks do not accept this ‘obvious’ similarity.

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So it is better for Turks (and third parties) not to mention to the Greeks these ‘catastrophic’ similarities. The Greeks on their part should show some endurance and tolerance if others challenge them with improper resemblances. From now on, having read these lines, they should be aware of what the ‘other’ side really means and intends.

The discourse of ‘similarity’ however, will help when addressed to the Turkish side. One may even stress and exaggerate the similarities (provided the Greeks are not listening). It is really very easy to find similarities between two groups of people who lived within the

⁷ Apart from the ‘admiration’ that the East feels for the West and which mainly originates from the technical accomplishments of this Christian West, there is a ‘hate dimension’ too. The love-hate relations between the East and the West have a great history behind them. The wars and invasions that lasted for centuries between the Muslim and the Christian worlds have left very deep traces and prejudices on both sides, strengthening the hate side of the relations. Both sides would need again centuries to get completely over the perception associated with this past. On the other hand, bias can be demonstrated and shown to societies. Irrespective if they can or cannot control this inner drive of prejudice, this ‘knowledge’ will function rather positively. This East-West dimension will not be discussed further here. It is useful however to remind that ‘Greece’ very often is perceived as part of the ‘West’ by the Turks. Therefore any interference of the Western powers to mediate between the two countries is perceived, at least, with doubt by the ‘Eastern’ Turkey. The Greeks on the other hand do feel very often alienated as they perceive the ‘Catholic/Protestant’ West acting with ‘bias’ against Greek-Orthodox Greece. It is useful that mediators are at least chosen between individuals with declared weak religious beliefs or that they are of say, Jewish, Buddhist or other exotic religious origin; they may appear more neutral to our two parties, e.g., to Greeks and Turks.

boundaries of a single state and in the same geographic region for centuries.⁸

This is the minimum the parties can do. At maximum, they may surpass themselves and the Greeks may accept, as a gesture of generosity, that they are 'una razza una faccia' with the Turks, and the Turks, with an act of self-sacrifice, accept their Asian character and that they have nothing in common with the Greeks. If the parties ever accomplish this, a supreme and marvellous relaxation will prevail in the Greek-Turkish relations. Mutual trust will at a great degree be established between the parties. More detailed do's & don'ts will follow when these issues will be further discussed under different heading: history, symbols, etc.

*

This similarity issue has two more dimensions: the 'imperial' and the 'national identity' dimension. The Turks as the heirs of a multi national empire and of a traditional policy of trying to keep all ethnic groups united under the Ottoman rule are closer to the tradition of stressing the necessity and the rational of being 'close and united'. They are inclined to stress historical, racial and linguistic similarities. The Greeks - and all the other nations which revolted and fought against the Ottomans in order to establish a sovereign state - stress the differences which make necessary and give meaning to the separation of their 'nation' and the secession.

The national identity is associated with the need of all nations to stress their special and unique character. The Greeks who lived, according to popular belief, for four hundred years under the 'Turkish yoke', do not

⁸ Every point in this guide is simplified and consequently somehow distorted. The people that lived together for centuries are not 'two', as the nationalistic interpretation of history claims, but 'many', and as individuals they are millions; these people did not live in 'one' state, but at least in 'three', Byzantine, Seljuk and Ottoman Empire, or within empires which, as they changed through the centuries, passed through stages exposing very different aspects of statehood.

In fact the 'two' sides are both alike and different. This may be expected to apply to all neighboring nations: externally they look alike, they share words and expressions (about five thousand in present Greek and Turkish), they cook some foods the same way; but they think (especially about the past), feel and behave distinctly, they are members of different political and social structures and they follow different religious practices and family relationships (and this difference is more predominant in the rural areas). They are different since the Turks believe, in contrast with the Greeks, that they are like the Greeks. They believe the 'other' is quite strange, even when they notice some trivial details; they feel queer, for example when they see how the 'other' reads the telephone numbers: in Greece, say, 23-93-2-37, in Turkey 239-32-37. In short, they belong to different nations.

like to be reminded of possible (cultural and especially biological) traits of the invader that they possibly possess. The Greeks feel injured when reminded of a past with Turkish influence.

A similar inclination is noticed on the Turkish side too. The Turks who are so fond of stressing the resemblance with modern Greece, a member of European Union, are not at all happy when the Greek character of the Ionian civilization and of Byzantium is recalled. They feel somehow uneasy to have inherited so much Greek land, so many Greek peoples, and their respective civilizations. They silence that part.

The Turks bring forward the similarities that were (really or supposedly) created during the glorious times of Ottoman rule and during the Turkish supremacy (during 'our' rule and supremacy); not the similarities inherited during the racial intermingling of grecophones and turcophones of the 11th-14th century, when Byzantium had a direct impact on the Muslims. On the other hand some Greek historians like to bring up what is mostly silenced by the 'other' side: that there was a great movement of islamization among the Christian population of Anatolia.

The sensitive issue of Ionians and Byzantium (for the Turks) and of 'history' (for both parties) will be discussed in the next chapter.

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Application Exercises (optional)

Imagine a dialogue of two persons, one claiming that Greeks and Turks look alike and the other the contrary. Follow their arguments. Then answer the questions that follow.

A: Greeks (Gs) and Turks (Ts) lived for centuries together under the Ottoman rule. They look so alike!

B: Still, they always formed separate communities and villages.

A: But we know of many instances where the villages were mixed; and in the cities there were streets commonly shared.

B: The differences are irrespective of physical proximity. Gs and Ts belonged to different cultures and religions.

A: But there are many similarities between monotheistic religions.

B: Gs had a different family structure, they practice monogamy.

A: The harems of the Muslims is a myth; most Turks practiced monogamy but more important than that, the last century polygamy was illegal anyhow.

B: Families are formed traditionally on different terms: Turks pay a sum of money to get a wife (başlık), whereas the Greeks get a dowry (prika).

- A: These are past history and details.
- B: Even completely naked Gs and Ts look so different: Ts are circumcised, Gs are not; Turkish women, but some men too practice complete depilation, Gs do not!
- A: It is not those parts that define a group of people. Why don't you notice that they cooked the same meals, sang the same songs, traditionally dressed so alike, exchanged and now share thousands of words and visited and prayed at each others' holy places for centuries. They lived in peace in the multinational Ottoman Empire.
- B: You have a selective memory. For centuries Christianity was under captivity, Gs were forced to Islam, Greek boys were taken away by force to serve as Janissaries, Gs were second class citizens in this Muslim state.
- A: You have a fixation with the past. Why don't you notice the present situation? Gs and Ts physically look alike, as individuals have same aspirations in life, have a similar way of daily life etc.
- B: I see different and strange things: Ts do not eat pork, think of sin when they drink beverages, take off their shoes when they enter holy places, wash instead of using toilet paper, publicly sacrifice great number of sheep by cutting their throats and at the end they are buried in a shroud instead of in a coffin. All these are strange things to us!
- A: But it is the Greek high priests that abstain from sexual relations, it is the Gs who barbecue thousand of sheep publicly on the skewer every Easter. These may seem strange to the Ts too. Then what? Some very religious Ts think Gs are strange too. To them the way of the 'other' seems different and therefore disturbing. In this respect, those Ts look like the Gs.
- B: Those Ts think like that because they are too conservative, actually backward. I think this is an additional difference between the two parties. Ts have not built a democratic society, they do not respect human rights etc. Whereas Gs are so different in this respect.
- A: This is the self image of the Gs. Gs forget both the dark ages of the Byzantine period and the dictatorships of the recent past: Metaxas, civil war, the military regime of 1967-1974. They see what they like to see.

Questions:

1. Do you think these two persons can come to an agreement on this topic? Why?
2. Who seems to be talking more 'sensible', A or B? To whom do you feel closer?

3. What else can you add to the arguments of A and B to make them sound even stronger?

The reader will have to answer the questions as an exercise to get a feeling of the way Gs and Ts 'communicate' and more concretely in matters of 'similarities'. The correct answer is a private matter of ethnicity which the writer does not intend to violate. At the course of the guide however, an explanation of this discourse will be attempted.

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Chapter 3

THE COMMON HISTORY WHICH DIVIDES

This section will be longer because ‘history’ plays the most important part in increasing inter-ethnic sensitivities. By history however, it is not meant what the layman understands: i.e., what happened in the past. History here means the way the past has been adopted and adapted to satisfy national needs. This is the history which does not start from the past running to our days, but from the present time, going backward and interpreting previous events, by a method of selections, omissions, distortions, exaggerations of certain events and silencing of others.

The result is that now Greeks and Turks have an altogether different image of the past. Actually this last sentence should be phrased the other way around: those who perceive the past in different ways identify themselves as Greeks or as Turks. If the historians of the two countries ever manage to reconcile the two controversial interpretations of the past, it is possible that the national identity presently sculpted by these two nations will be drastically altered.

Modern Greek and Turkish historians, following the latest developments in the academic world naturally accept that the appearance of ‘nations’ is relatively a recent historical phenomenon. Actually modern Greeks (or the ‘Hellenes’, as the Greeks call themselves today) developed as a nation at the end of the 18th century and the Turks at the end of the 19th.

Having these people identifying themselves as Greeks and Turks it is easy to talk of two distinct nations. Before the 18th century however, there is no clear cut criterion for defining Greekness and Turkishness. It is not the language, because many slavophones, albanophones and turkophones are today perceived plainly as ‘Greeks’ and many albanophones, grecophones etc., are seen today as ‘Turks’ beyond any doubt. It is not the religion that determines the ‘nation’; from atheists to pagan ancient Greeks, together with the pious Orthodox ones, they are all considered by many as one nation. In Turkey the present ‘cultural civil war’ due to differences in practices related to religion does not basically banish the national character of the people. As for the vague notion of the ‘binding culture’ which is claimed by some nationalists, it is supposed to exist and it is always present in spite of the language and the religious differences

and even if the parties are involved, say, in a civil war with the intention of exterminating the other part and establishing a society with altogether different principles.

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One example of the difficulty in identifying who is who historically is the case of the Karamanlis. The Karamanlis are the turkophone Orthodox Christians of Anatolia/Asia Minor.⁹ According to the Turkish historiography they are Turks who have changed their religion and according to the Greek one, they are Greeks who have changed their language.¹⁰ The Karamanlis eventually were sent to Greece in 1923 with the forced exchange of populations between the two countries. The Greek speaking Muslims of Crete were taken to Turkey instead. The exchange was conducted on the basis of religion; religious belief was taken as determining ethnicity. The topic is a bit more complex. The Christians Syrians and the Muslim Albanians were not exchanged. But we will not deal with all details.

The Karamanlis and ‘Turks of Crete’ were seen either as Greeks or as Turks. The simplistic and dualistic nationalistic classification has some limitations. During the process of ethnogenesis, but also later, all groups had to be accommodated within these two general ethnic categories only; they are seen as Greeks or as Turks. A group of ‘ours’ speaking with the language of the ‘other’ was a real problem. Probably because of this, the Karamanlis in Greece did not establish their own cultural centers, as all the other immigrants did, to preserve their language and their traditions.

Do not mention this; avoid this topic.

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The whole issue of ‘history’ can probably be best thought of as a perception associated with national identity and visualized as settled on a trivet. Imagine one leg to be made of pride, the other of shame and the third of insecurity (the whole thing sitting on ashes which cover a fire).

⁹ The Turks dislike the toponym ‘Asia Minor’, they prefer ‘Anatolia’ (see Chapter 1 and 2/Exercises). Anatolia (Anadolu in Turkish) sounds very Turkish but it is very Greek (Anatoli meaning East). Recently the word ‘Turkey’ is introduced with the intention of replacing both Asia Minor and Anatolia. The Greeks feel at ease with both of these denominations.

¹⁰ What the Turks infer is that ‘normally’ Turks should be Muslims and what the Greeks infer is that Greeks should be Christians; identities other than the Greek/Christian and Turkish /Muslim are inconceivable for the national interpretation of history when national history is interpreted.

The national history of Greeks and Turks, especially the part that has to do with 'us' and the 'other' is heavily marked with these three components. The pride is expressed by the excess praise, honor, glory and exaltation that are attributed to 'us', to our part. Shame can be noticed indirectly; either in the silence that prevails in the field of the dishonorable acts which are attributed to 'us' and in the excessive zeal to demonstrate that the 'other' has proved inferior, sinister etc., with respect to 'us'. Insecurity is the feeling which is created as the nation is heading towards its ultimate target, to national sovereignty. Insecurity is the fear of the deprivation of the most sacred part of a nation, of sovereignty, popularly expressed as 'liberty' or 'independence'.

Greeks fought against the 'Turks' in order to establish their national state in 1821-1829. The Turks fought against the Greeks a hundred years later, in 1919-1922 for the same target. This is probably the only case in history where two national states are created after a fight against the 'other' in succession and where the other part is perceived as the 'national enemy'.

This particular interpretation of the past which is associated with the insecurity and the fear of the parties, is the general framework in which the 'other' is located. For the Turks, the Greeks are a nation with unending expansionist behavior. They started with a humble national state in 1829 and then expanded their borders at the expense of Turkish (Ottoman) lands (too) many times: in 1881, 1913, 1923, 1947. There were also unsuccessful attempts in this direction: 1897, 1919-1922, 1974. The Greeks have a different framework. The Turks came from Asia attacking and capturing the Greek (Byzantine) lands. They caused the disappearance of the Greeks in Asia Minor and they enslaved the Greeks who lived in present-day Greece. The Turks, who presently live on ancient Greek lands are still threatening the integrity of Greece. They lately captured part of Cyprus.

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With the above in mind the various historical theses and depictions become somehow understandable. The Greeks try to demonstrate the following.

- A) They compose a nation which lived in 'this area' for 3000-4000 years continuously.
- B) The ancient Greeks, the Byzantines, the Karamanlis, the modern Greeks etc., compose a unity, the Greek nation.
- C) The Greeks who always created superior civilizations have been challenged, destroyed and enslaved by the 'barbaric' Turks.

D) The Greeks suffered heavily from the centuries long Turkish occupation and fought hard to liberate themselves from it.

E) Even today, this dreadful past is being heavily felt, both as a threat and as a prospect of repeating itself. The occupation of Northern Cyprus and the attacks on the Greek minority in Turkey are usually mentioned to demonstrate the ill intentions of the 'other side'.¹¹

In this admittedly oversimplified resume above we find all three components of the tripod or trivet: pride, shame and insecurity. Shame, as normally should be, is actually always hidden. It can be noticed in the justifications of military defeat, in the silencing or the glorification of the period of 'enslavement', in the debasing of the 'other' etc.

The Turkish side has developed a history which is almost contrary to the Greek side. According to Turkish historiography the past is very different from the Greek one but also quite different from the general perceptions of Western (Christian) historiography.

A) The ancient Greeks and the modern Greeks are completely different people.

B) In the 1930s a radical thesis was developed and officially espoused. According to this, almost all ancient people were of Turkish origin; consequently even the ancient Greeks were presented as Turks. Remnants of this theory can still be encountered in the Turkish historiography.

C) The Ionian civilization was not Greek but 'Anatolian'.

D) The Byzantine state and its civilization is not Greek but Eastern Roman.

E) (Sometimes) Ottomans are not Turks but citizens of a multi national empire, therefore the present Turks do not have any 'responsibility' for this imperial past.

F) (Usually) The Ottomans were Turks and this Turkish state was generous and tolerant toward the nations it controlled.

G) The Greeks lived happily under the Ottoman rule but they revolted (due to western instigations or due to the ungratefulness of the Greeks).

H) Modern Greeks followed an expansionist policy against the Turkish lands and persecuted the Turkish and Muslim populations.

I) The Greeks dishonor Turks by attributing barbarism and denying civilization to the Turks.

G) The present-day ill intentions of the 'other side' are demonstrated by reminding the behavior of the Greeks against the Turkish minority in Thrace and the Turkish community in Cyprus as well as by the hostile attitude against present-day Turkey.

¹¹ Naturally here we deal with the 'general' tendencies of historiography. This general tendency is best expressed in the textbooks of these countries. There are naturally some historians, both in Greece and Turkey, who do not follow closely the above 'national' approach.

When the Turkish side publishes studies of ‘modern’ Greek-Turkish relations they start the story in 1821; the Greek studies on the same issue start in 1923. Actually this is a safe way of presenting the ‘other’ side more ‘aggressive’ and ‘expansionist’ since Greeks appear to expand only before 1923.¹² Do be aware of this important difference if you ever think of speaking of the recent history of the Greek-Turkish relations.

These two myths are directly opposed to each other. The Turks say: we respected your religion and your identity for centuries, we treated you so well, whereas you oppose us and attack us. The Greeks say: for centuries you attack our lands and enslave us. You still follow this policy. The mutual bitterness is quite openly and regularly expressed in the textbooks, in historiography, in literature, by laymen, by politicians.

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Actually very little room is left for some advice about what to do and not do when Greek-Turkish history comes to the agenda. Both parties are truly convinced of the correctness of their views. Worst than that, in most cases Greeks and Turks do not accept that they may be themselves the bearers of crude, one sided and unsophisticated perceptions. Presented with examples of distorting propaganda both sides dismiss them as exceptional cases or as insignificant acts of ‘some few fanatics of ours’. They then argue anew that it is the ‘other side’ which is really fanatical and biased toward ‘us’.

It is also true that most of the time ‘national’ perceptions are presented in a subtle and crafty manner. In the last decades the negative aspects of the other nation are not attributed, for example, to racial reasons but are explained by historical, structural and/or psychological reasons (perhaps, the way I do). It is really difficult to judge if this new trend is as progress in the sphere of social sciences or a regression to hypocrisy. Nowadays ‘barbarism’, ‘expansionism’, ‘baseness’ etc., are not presented as intrinsic aspects of the other nation, but as ‘unchanging’ and therefore permanent historical, structural, contingent phenomena or as acquired habits mainly by biased education. The ‘rejection’ of the racist discourse is really touching.

Still however, there is room for humanity to do something to improve the situation. The most drastic act would be to concentrate all efforts on new born babies. A new generation of Greeks and Turks can be brought up within a less nationalistic environment where the self-assurance,

¹² Greece stopped extending its borders after 1923 with the exception of the annexation of the Dodecanese in 1947 and Turkey stopped losing lands after 1923, annexing Hatay/Alexandretta in 1939 and invading / performing the peace operation in Cyprus in 1974.

modesty and trust for all human beings are secured. This is a long term solution to the problem and, probably, one with few chances to be financed by the local authorities in question. It will not be pursued here.

On the other hand in everyday situations, when parties are faced with historical arguments of the kind expressed above, the most important thing is not to lose one's temper. The parties should try to keep calm. Some specialists recommend that the listeners should silently start counting up to one hundred before they respond in order not to rush to a heated answer. The longer the counting the better for the conversation. Actually the best would be not ever to stop counting and thus refrain from any answer. Answers in these cases are never understood as such by the 'other party' anyhow; the 'other' simply sees people trying desperately to deny obvious facts because they are prejudiced.

Appearance should not deceive either. Very often the more biased people are the calmer they appear. They assume an air of comfortable self confidence, they smile with serenity and they explain why the 'other side' behaves with such short sightedness. Usually they are very close to reality and successful in their observations; what they miss is their own portrait. They may declare that they care the least for the other side, too. The Greeks may say that they do not care very much for an 'eastern' and traditional country which has so many social problems to face and the Turks may repeat that they do not care for a country which is so small and insignificant. Do not waste your time with very self assured persons.

If you happen to be in an environment where you will be understood by many, you may try to express yourself without reservations. I was lucky a couple of times, especially when I happened to be on neutral land, i.e., abroad, outside the countries in dispute, and I had the opportunity to talk openly. I said that I did not agree with this interpretation of history where the facts are valid only if they carry a national ID. It is relaxing to speak out, but this frankness does not convince the parties. It is however really very relaxing.

I taught Greek at Ankara University. There, things were really easy. Young people are fond of listening to criticism against the older generation. Something one can do when facing young people is to start explaining what national bias is, how the previous generations both cultivated it and were influenced by it, how people were deceived by wishful thinking and of their need to feel proud through a group identity. You may demonstrate that all nations are almost similar in their vices and merits and that the differences, if they exist, are open to alterations. If you intend to persuade that 'their' nation has done wrong, made mistakes, violated justice etc., simply accept that 'your' side has done the same. With this condition they will accept the shortcomings of their party more easily. Who would not like to feel part of a greater whole?

Confess the ill acts of your party with sincerity. Avoid cheating. To accept that ‘we once have done what you are doing now, we have passed through these paths’ does not mean acceptance but an indirect way of saying ‘we are ahead of you, you are behind’ or ‘we have corrected ourselves but you have not’. Do not stress your superiority; because apart not helping, it aggravates the situation. (This is rather a more common mistake made by the Greek side which believes that Greece diachronically is more advanced than its neighbors).

Do try to remind that living individuals can never be accused of the actions which their real or imaginary dead ancestors have done. Do openly and clearly distance yourself from racism and revanchism.

People may be criticized, though, within limits, in cases where they justify or they do not condemn passed abhorrent acts of ‘ours’. Crimes against humanity (massacres, racism, murders, pillages etc.) can always be condemned, provided this criticism is not used as a pretext to infer that today’s ‘heirs’ are also to be blamed for excesses of the past. If criticism is worded carefully, distancing past from present, rarely do people refrain from accepting it.

Do not try to explain to the other side its history, its religion, its language, its habits etc. This haughtiness drives the ‘other’ mad. And this is done quite often. I have seen Turks explaining to the Greeks the history of ancient Greece or the past of the Patriarchate, stressing how happy the Greeks were under the Ottoman rule and Greeks talking to the Turks about Islam, about the beliefs of Mustafa Kemal, how happy the Muslims/Turks are in Western Thrace today. This is perceived as arrogance or lack of respect. Unless you are an expert on a topic do not lecture to the ‘other’ about issues he is ‘supposed’ to know better. (‘Expert’ is not the one that feels like being one; nor the one declared so by his/her countrymen. Expert is the one that is accepted as such by the ‘other’ side).

As a corollary, normally, you should accept or pretend you accept what each side claims about national history.

Be a good listener. Don’t interrupt. Even if you are going to be listening to nonsense, still you may learn a lot about the way the other side thinks. Also if you let the ‘other’ go on talking there is a possibility that he/she will start feeling his/her own exaggerations and the inconsistencies. Do not sneer while listening.

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The do’s and don’ts mentioned above are general ones. There are hundreds of cases associated with ‘history’ which cannot be covered comprehensively here. Generally the following should be kept in mind:

any step towards defending the national version of history creates a sense of animosity on the other side. Parties, in a remarkable and curious way, are aware of the image the other side has for them. Any move that recreates or strengthens this negative image seems abhorrent to them.

In the case of Greeks and Turks the game of images is unique. Specialists say that groups carry three sets of images: a self image, the image of the other (the way they perceive the other) and the image they have about the other side's image of them. The experts then claim that the bigger the positive/negative difference between the self image and the image which we believe the others have of us, the greater the sense of injustice and the tension between the groups. Particularly at this point the problem is really big. Both sides have an exaggerated positive image of themselves and at the same time they are aware of the fact that they are not at all esteemed by the other side.

So, try to appear (and if you can manage, even try to feel) humble. Modesty in general helps; but in this case we are talking of a historical one. Don't mention 'your' past glories very often. It makes the other side sick. At the same time try to find a tiny positive aspect of the other side. And express it, say it. In this way the difference of the two images will close a little. Parties will start feeling less frustrated.

This does not bear the meaning that one rejects the positive aspects of one's national past. On the contrary, one can think that by this approach he/she is also adding a new, almost completely missing merit to his national character: modesty. The other side, is aware subconsciously of 'your' significant past anyhow. This can be sensed in the effort to condemn this past. In addition, each party prefers to have a past enemy that had been mighty. Nobody likes victories or defeats against insignificant opponents.

It is not enough however, what one does and says outright. Many times what one hints and infers is very important. Sometimes what is believed that the other side hints may prove detrimental. A classical example is the habitual saying of the Turkish side: 'we have been living together for centuries'. This is usually served with a garniture of 'in peace' or 'friendly'. This discourse with respect to the past is annoying the Greeks. For them there was not a 'living together' but a period of subjugation. Something like the people in prisons, where the guards and the people behind the bars stay close to each other but they do not 'live together'. A positive aspect of this period can not be visualized and accepted; therefore neither the 'peace' nor the 'friendship'.

This centuries long period of Ottoman rule, in Greece is called 'Tourkokratia' (Turkish rule).¹³ It bears a connotation close to 'Turkish slavery'. The Turkish side is surprised that the Greeks use the word 'Turk' and not 'Ottoman'. They do not understand why Greeks are so much against this period. They think and say: 'After all, so many historians recognize positive aspects in the Ottomans'.

What should one do when such cases are encountered? The parties should try some exercises of empathy. For instance the Turks may try to imagine hearing the Greeks say how the two parties lived in peace in İzmir in the years 1919-1922 when the Greeks had occupied the city. This period, apart from the initial stage as it happens with all cases of invasions and occupations, was a peaceful and prosperous period of the city. However it is inconceivable for a Turk to imagine this period as a 'happy' one. Similarly the Greeks can not perceive a positive Ottoman period. Probably the Greeks can better understand the Turkish reaction if they can visualize a Hindu accusing the present Greece and Greeks for the invasion of India by Alexander the Great. Also Greeks who think that Alexander was welcomed by the people he conquered, should try to understand similar feelings of Turks vis-à-vis their Ottoman heritage.

In other words, do respect the sensitivities of the 'other' part even if these do not seem sensible to you. There is some sense even in the most absurd actions of people. The practice of an empathetic approach and an effort to communicate with the other side in order to 'understand', is the key to that.

A very popular incident which repeats itself almost on a daily basis is the different interpretation of ancient Ionian civilization. The remnants and ruins of this civilization are visited very often by Greek tourists in the coasts of Western Turkey. These Greeks criticize with irony the Turkish guides who desperately try to hide the Greek aspect of these ruins. They never mention the word 'Greek', they do not remind their audience the language these ancient people used etc. Especially the school books in Turkey follow this practice closely. Some Turks express their discontent for the arrogance with which the Greeks read aloud the ancient inscriptions of the ruins and the way they enjoy forcing the guides to accept the Greek aspect of this civilization.

This controversy which causes a lot of frustration to both sides is not only a matter of correct historical analysis. It is a serious component of the 'trivet' mentioned above. What parties around the ruins fight for has to do - perhaps subliminally - with the sovereignty rights of the area. The

¹³ The Greeks use the 'Western' terminology when they call the Ottomans 'Turks'. The Christian Western world (and the grecophones) used this name from the times of the crusades. The Turks believe this is a 'Greek' prejudice. It is always wiser to use 'Ottoman' instead of 'Turkish'.

contented smile of the Greek (for a Turk this is an arrogant smile) who manages to read the ancient inscription, is de-coded by the Turks present in the scene as a satisfaction of the Greek of having (supposedly) proved the close relation between the ancient owner of the land and himself. In many cases this kind of a deconstruction is simply correct; in some other cases it may be the product of an unwarranted fear and insecurity on the Turkish side.

In other words, one may read the inscriptions but one should not let it be inferred that his/her presence is a threat to the local people. Especially if one can read the words but can understand nothing of an ancient Greek inscription, something which happens very often since the ancient and modern Greek language differ a lot, he/she should not pretend he/she understands it. If he confesses his/her inability, this would be a real relaxation for the locals.¹⁴ Empathy again helps in such situations. I remember how once Melina Mercouri in a program on TV showed the mosque in Athens (in Monastiraki) and called it an ‘Arabic’ mosque.

Do respect the sovereignty rights of the other side, the way these have been accepted by international and/or bilateral treaties and agreements. But, also do respect the ‘strange’ perceptions of the other side. After all, your perceptions look crazy to the other side too. As it is stated in the Old Testament ‘Every way of a man is right in his own eyes’ (Proverbs 21:2).

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There are some very delicate matters with which one has to be especially careful. The Turks are very much annoyed with the accusation of being ‘barbaric’.¹⁵ This is the Western image of the Muslims and of the Ottomans for centuries. There is no doubt that the Western Christian world had and still has prejudices against its historical enemy. The unending fights which took place in the past form a very suitable basis for these prejudices to breed. The Turkish side is aware of this and very annoyed by this situation. (What the Turks are not aware of and not at least annoyed by is that the Muslim Turkish side carries corresponding prejudices against the Christian Western world. The adjectives ‘barbaric’,

¹⁴ If you can even pretend you do not understand, in spite of the opposite, than you may start thinking of yourself as a sage. This is a test of wisdom and of a complete abandonment of declaratory national pride. Few can pass it.

¹⁵ The Turkish part is almost always on the alert to hear this accusation; especially from the Greeks. It is an opportunity to repeat again that the well known poem of K. Kavafis ‘Waiting for the Barbarians’ has nothing to do with the Turks, as so often has been assumed by many Turks. It refers to early Roman times.

‘backward’ etc., have been almost balanced with the ‘infidel’ (gâvur), ‘imperialist’ etc.)

The ‘Western’ image of the barbaric Turks (or Ottomans) which has been developed by the Western world and is being used quite often by the Greeks is met by the Turkish side by an overall refusal of any barbaric historical act of the Ottomans and/or of the Turks. The Turkish historiography presents the Ottoman rule, especially its policy against the ‘other’ ethnic groups, as tolerant, magnanimous, almost idyllic. The Greek thesis is the contrary. Advice: Do not exaggerate on these matters; neither Heaven nor Hell is part of this world of ours.

Once again it is not the ethical side of a past empire the issue that stirs this excitement on both sides. By indirectly associating the deceased with the living people, a negative or positive value judgment is passed on to the living. And what is worse, the actions of the living are not judged any more by the present-day practices and according to valid ethical criteria but by drawing similarities and reaching conclusions from previous barbaric or magnanimous (real or imaginary) acts. On top, the past is judged according to the present values and ethical criteria. The Turks who are under such a fire feel rather embarrassed. If they accept the wrongdoings of the past these are used against them; if they reject them they are ridiculed as trying to distort well known facts.

With this controversial reasoning the Turkish part underestimates the importance of the massacres against the Greeks performed by the Ottomans, the discrimination of Christians within the empire etc. The Greeks especially stress these deeds, forgetting similar acts of their own. Especially the textbooks of the two countries are full of this game.¹⁶ What to do? Do revise the textbooks to begin with (a really easy task once one decides to do it). Then try to disassociate the dead from the living (a really difficult task for nationalists to perform). After all, nobody is punished for the deeds of others, even if the ‘other’ is a very close relative, say the ‘father’.

¹⁶ The use of double standard will be discussed in a separate chapter. Two examples however, may show the magnitude of this practice. A) A Turkish historian claimed that the West is against the Turks a) because the Turks helped the Orthodox population against the Catholics in the 15th century and b) because the Turks were against the Christian Greeks in 1821. In other words, whatever the Turks chose to do, the Greeks were the cause of the western discontent. B) Greek and Turkish historians choose at will a) the periods of annexation of new lands or b) the later periods of ‘peace’ respectively, to judge the negative/positive ‘effect’ of the advance of the Ottomans. In both cases above the historical frame is selected freely to serve political aims. E.g., the frame of an ‘Orthodox-Catholic controversy’ can easily be abandoned and exchanged for a ‘Christian alliance’; the same selection is again tried arbitrarily with the ‘periods’ for the intended result.

The accusation of ‘barbarism’ is very problematic for the Turkish side for other reasons too. Turkey of today is not performing well in matters of human rights and democratic practices. This ‘living’ situation gives a kind of legitimacy to the unjust historical and even racist accusation of ‘barbarism’. So, do not associate your accusations with the past. Be specific and do not generalize. Do not especially say that Turkey is so, because of ‘cultural, historical, structural’ reasons. Many Turks sense the racism hidden behind this scientific explanation.

Do not mention the ‘Armenian issue’ and the ‘Kurdish problem’ when the Greek-Turkish relationship is on the agenda. The Turkish side will react harshly to the intended association. Do not praise in excess the Turkish performance in matters of democracy either; it may sound insincere.

For the Greeks the most delicate matters with respect to the Turks are probably three: the ancient Greeks (and Byzantines), the Turkish rule which lasted for centuries and the present feeling of insecurity against Turkish ‘expansionism’. The last issue will be discussed with the problems of nowadays below. The other two which are directly associated with a historic perspective are also directly associated with the national identity of the Greeks.

‘Greekness’ is based on the belief of an uninterrupted continuity of a nation from the ancient times to our time. This view will not change for the foreseeable future. And when it will change the Greeks would have changed considerably also. The Turkish side will contribute a lot if: A) It respects the right of each nation to form its ethnic myth according to its needs. B) It recognizes the liberty of the other to develop a different past from ‘our own’. Try to live with this discrepancy. Do not be frustrated if you do not manage to establish a unitary view to cover the needs of both sides. Coexisting ‘unilateralisms’ are part of the democratic process. People who form a ‘common’ interpretation of history can hardly compose two different nations. It is too early to expect commonly accepted histories.

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Application Exercises (optional)

Read the following eight passages of four Greek and four Turkish well known historians on incidents of 15th-16th century related to the Ottoman

Empire and the 'Greeks'. Try to guess which passages are written by Greeks and which by Turks. It is an easy exercise.

1. *"In spite of the clearly seen policy of the Turks in the Balkans which was based on justice and which has pleased the people, some (Western) historians who grudge Turks their success..." [present a distorted picture of this period].*

2. *"The basic function of the government as understood by the Ottoman rulers (was) to maintain harmony among social groups Indeed the local communities in the Ottoman state enjoyed a degree of self-government and administrative autonomy and played a crucial role in preserving the folk culture and the customary laws of various ethnic groups. The undeniable fact is that the Ottoman government became the defender and promoter, both of Muslim and Christian Orthodoxy... "*

3. *"... the Empire emerged at the same time as protector of the Orthodox Church and millions of Orthodox Christians".*

4. *"The rational, efficient and just rule was the main reason that secured the peoples that were occupied by the Ottomans to go on living in security and in confidence".*

5. *"The few examples presented here show how during those destructive years [of Ottoman rule] hellenism was dramatically diminished.*

6. *[During the Ottoman rule] "oppression, terror, forced enlisting in the army and various extra taxes... were enforced. What irritates the Turks is the fact that the Christians are always on the side of their enemies, helping them and that they are always ready to revolt. That is why the Turks are especially against the Greeks... The whole Macedonia suffers. Whole areas are deserted and are not cultivated. Many inhabitants chose to become Muslims to avoid these mishaps".*

7. *"Conclusion: When the Turks conquered Asia Minor and the Balkans they neither brought with them a high technology nor did they develop the relations of production. On the contrary, they were an underdeveloped people in all aspects of social and political life... So , the non-Muslim peasant had not a single happy day. His life was a misery".*

8. *"[The Greeks] were not allowed to ride a horse, to carry arms, to build new churches, to use the church bells and their testimony was*

considered worthless in the courts. They were obliged to wear special dresses... Worst of all was the enlisting of their boys from six to fifteen".

Answers and comments:

1. There is no doubt that it is very easy to find who are the Greeks and who the Turks. The correct answers are given here to enable an exact checking. The eight historians, by the order given above, are well known modern historians: I. Uzunçarşılı, K. Karpat, H. İnalçık, M. Kunt, K. Paparrigopoulos, A. Vakalopoulos, G. Kordatos and N. Svoronos.¹⁷

2. These passages are not selected with any special effort; this is the general 'ethnic' approach of Greek and Turkish historiography. The exceptions are really very few, found mostly among younger historians. When the issue is the Greek-Turkish relations a single page can easily show the ethnicity of the historian provided he/she is a Greek or a Turk.

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¹⁷ For more details see Millas: 2001, given in the Bibliography.

Chapter 4

BODY LANGUAGE, SYMBOLS AND PARAPHERNALIA

Mutual mistrust and bitterness are so high that it is a good idea to be cautious with one's appearance too. Greeks and Turks face some movements, habits, traits, symbols, even articles with suspicion. Some behaviors have a different meaning within each ethnic community.

Greeks speak louder. They come to the point faster than the Turks who would first converse about other things, asking routine questions of politeness. The Turks feel comfortable when they follow a ritual. They start with greetings (good morning, welcome), continue with asking about the well-being of the 'other' (how do you do?) and then, speak about the weather and other neutral topics before attempting to approach the agenda. And all this with definite breaks between each phase. The Greeks are more eager to discuss their problems, but not again as direct as, say, the Americans.

Greeks feel more free to interrupt and they are capable of running a conversation while speaking simultaneously. One may see a big group in a taverna enjoying a conversation where everybody speaks and nobody listens. In Turkey a group may enjoy the company in absolute silence. I experienced this when I served in the Turkish army in eastern Turkey. Turks do not hurry to answer. They do not feel obliged to interrupt. Later, during my ten year experience in Saudi Arabia I came to believe that the more you go towards the East the more people take their time and are less reckless and less excited.

Some advice. The Greeks should not speak so loud, should not hurry, should not interrupt, should not jump to answer; they should not think the 'other' side does not have an argument just because he/she does not hurry to present it. The Turks should not think they deal with impolite, arrogant people. The hurrying of the 'other' does not mean his lack of respect but just lack of patience.

Greeks are more active with their body movements; they move their limbs more than their counterparts. One may watch from a great distance a Greek speaking and one may understand his arguments from the way he moves his hands and body. The Turks are more leisurely and low key. The self image of each also complies with these traits. The Greeks enjoy believing they have a 'Mediterranean temper'; Zorba the Greek, who follows his passions, his instincts, his drives is supposed to be a typical Greek. The Turks like to think of themselves as 'ağırbaşlı' which means serious, dignified. Style can not of course change but one can be trained not to misinterpret appearances. One should not readily judge based on appearance.¹⁸

The Greeks should not judge the Turks with Greek criteria when they see them offer their respects to 'superior' people. Turks publicly kiss the hand of the prime minister, of the minister and of all other officials. They cross their hands on their stomach in the presence of 'superiors'. This some times is perceived by the other side as an act of traditional, even 'feudal' obedience; a sign of lack of democratic egalitarianism. This may be partly true. Turks on the other hand perceive the kissing of the icons by the Greeks almost something approaching paganism. The ceremony of the burial of Christ (epitaphios) is seen as such too. There are many daily practices that seem very strange and eventually disturbing to the other. The Turkish Minister who visited Western Thrace and marked his forehead with the blood of the sheep publicly sacrificed for him was disturbing for the Greeks. There is a very long list of similar national practices which are a source of surprise and even aversion for the other part. It is good if both sides respect the traditions of the other and both judge the other less traditionally.

Do not point or especially shake your finger in a didactic way when you speak to the 'other' or when you suggest what is good for him/her (a habit practiced more often by Greeks) . Both sides hate to be treated haughtily and with arrogance, at least as much as they like to patronize.

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Appearance has a second component: clothing. Many times Turks have expressed their disappointment to me that 'the Greek intellectuals' and 'well educated Greeks' expressed themselves and behaved in a manner that is proper only to chauvinists, extreme nationalists, fanatics

¹⁸ Bias is sometimes unsurpassable. Where the prejudice reigns the 'other' is perceived as expressing his inner negative attitude if he frowns; if he smiles then he is a hypocrite, if he has a neutral look he is 'cold' and 'frozen'.

etc. 'Even these men behave so bad!'. After an effort, I found out that the ultra-rightist Greeks were judged to be 'intellectuals' just because they were dressed as 'civilized people'.¹⁹ Many Turks are conditioned to distinguish individuals according to their dress: a man who wears a hat and a necktie and a woman who does not cover her head with a veil are seen, for some historical and ideological reasons that have to do with the Kemalist reforms, as 'modern' and also as 'progressive'. (This image is changing slowly in Turkey nowadays.) Whereas in Greece the dress does not secure 'progressives' or modernism; you may meet the worst part of the society in the best of suits. A necktie, however, play a symbolic role in Greece: its absence may mean a declaration of a 'leftist' identity, its presence the opposite.

The Greeks on the other hand highly esteem the well dressed Turks for altogether different reasons. After the established image of the Turk with the fez and the baggy trousers (*şalvar*), the smart looking Turk is a revelation; and almost an antithesis of the anticipated stereotype of a Turk. Consequently the Greeks believe that they have just met a modern, a 'different' Turk who will refute the negative Turk and almost repeat and back up the Greek arguments and theses. When they don't, disappointment follows. Greeks should appreciate that modernity in appearance should not be associated necessarily with philhellenism. On the other hand, the fanatics that I met in Turkey were fluent in foreign languages and very well dressed. So do not judge by the external appearance. Do not let the skill of a tailor disappoint you.

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Even some objects are a source of distress sometimes. The scene of the cross and of the crescent reminds each side of the negative aspect of the 'other' side. All the nationalist books which try to strengthen 'national consciousness' through hate and fear, present the other side as crude, merciless etc. These books are usually animated with paintings where the 'other' commits terrible acts of violence, of course against 'us'; the cross or the crescent and many other paraphernalia normally predominate in these texts.

The pictures of these books include the minarets, the turban (*sarık*), the harem, the windows with lattice (*kafes*), some terrible janissaries (taking away 'our' children), Muslim priests (*imam*), slave markets, scimitars (*pala*), chains, whips, gallows, stakes and similar paraphernalia.

¹⁹ The term 'intellectual' in Turkey ('*aydın*' in Turkish) has also the connotation of a 'dedicated pioneer', an 'activist for the benefit of the people'. In Turkey the 'intellectuals' are supposed to be the agents of positive movements.

All these of course are associated with the Turks. The Greeks go with things like evzones, priests all in black, prostitutes (preferably drunk) , 'our' people nailed on crosses, 'our' old and crying women and children, churches and belfries, barrel-organ (laterna) etc. The role that most of the objects play is self understood. The barrel-organ was disliked, and prohibited in Istanbul after 1923 because, as the story goes, the Greeks celebrated the victories of the Greek army during the years 1919-1920 by playing it.

Symbols such as the national flags but even some banners are hated or disliked. Even today during the basketball and football matches shown on the Turkish TV the banners of two Greek basketball teams, of AEK and PAOK, are not shown and instead a strange made up symbol appears on the screen. These two teams use the two-headed eagle in their banners; but this east-west looking bird was used as a symbol by Byzantium. So it is censored.²⁰ The Greeks feel there are too many national flags, as well as too many photographs and statues of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk in Turkey. Once a Greek historian was very upset and protested when a Turkish flag was hung in the room where a scientific congress was in progress in Turkey; I tried hard to persuade her that this act was not meant as a nationalistic provocation. Turkish friends in surprise mentioned to me that there are too many churches in Greece as well many priests in the streets. The priests are specially noticed by Turks who are not accustomed to seeing priests of any religion circulating publicly since this has been outlawed in modern Turkey.

Historically, the first thing that the parties used to do when they won a war against the other side, was to wipe out all the symbols which reminded them of the 'other'. Few years ago some officials of the Istanbul municipality reached the point of suggesting the demolition of the Byzantine walls of Istanbul which reminded them the old occupants of the city. Churches have been turned into mosques or are left to turn to ruins by the Muslims and/or mosques are left to deteriorate by the Christians. Today, the few cases where restorations of such monuments have been carried out, are presented as acts of 'exemplary tolerance'.

There is also a hectic effort in the field of 'language'. Both sides are 'clearing up' their languages from foreign words that have 'infiltrated' them. Turkish and Greek words are deliberately excluded from Greek and Turkish respectively (see for example the changing of toponyms in chapter 1). The linguistic impoverishment is considered worth the effort for the targeted cleansing. I read a book in Greek by Mr. Dizikirikis, who

²⁰ Albania uses a similar symbol of a two-headed eagle in her national flag. However this does not cause any problem on the Turkish side; the flag appears quite often on the TV screens. Symbols of course have a meaning within a context and according to the user.

ferverly supported that all Turkish words should be eliminated from the Greek language. (Dizikirikis is a Turkish word meaning ‘the one with a broken knee’!).

Even Turkish coffee, which has been known as such in Greece for a few centuries, has lately upset the Greeks. The last twenty years it has been renamed as ‘Greek coffee’. You can drink it, served by a contented waiter, only under this new name and with this identity.²¹

This high degree of ‘sensitivity’ is normally beyond the consciousness of the parties. They are surprised when they are reminded of their behavior. They resort to the usual defence of underestimating the tendency or insisting that only the other side is the one with the excessive behavior.

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What can one do with such a susceptibility, insecurity and emotionalism? Bringing to consciousness the burlesque side of the behavior may be of some help. Use the easily observed and detected biased attitudes, i.e., the acts of the ‘other’ side, to demonstrate (to your side) that they are also practiced by your side. Use the funny acts of your side to show (to the ‘other’) that they do exist on the ‘other’ side too. E.g., use a comparative approach. Never try to show only the weak side of the ‘other’. Do not present only the ‘other’ side as negative or biased. If you do, this will A) Infuriate the ‘other’ and/or B) will make your side act even worse, with a need of coming even.

There are also some desperate and not very realistic actions that can be take place. Do not use banners for example when you cheer your team. Do not drink coffee or, at least, order instant, filter, French coffee. Do not show to the two parties the objects that excite them: minarets, belfries, turbans, evzones, swords, eagles, etc. If they happen to see such things try to persuade them that they are not really Turkish or Greek but Arabic or Slavic. Some people use this latest method as a self cure: in Turkey I noticed that the word ‘levantine’ is used for many objects of Greek heritage; in Greece some eccentric historians started perceiving the Ottoman State as a Greek one (for example D. Kitsikis).

Actually the two parties are so distanced in these infinite number of details that eventually they live in two different worlds where many words, actions, articles etc., possess a symbolic and controversial meaning. In their own world everything is perceived as normal and acceptable where in the world of the other things are seen as strange, suspicious, unacceptable. The source is important. Mostly the product is

²¹ Few years ago I was harshly reminded by an Armenian from Lebanon that this coffee was actually neither Turkish nor Greek but an Armenian one!

judged not by its essence but by its source. This text for example is written in English and not in Greek or in Turkish for a very simple reason. A Greek or a Turkish text would be considered automatically as biased by the other side.

The two sides are conditioned to observing the other with mistrust. Even when they share a drink and propose to the health of the other the symbolic controversy may get into the picture: the Turks keep their glasses as low as possible as a sign of respect and humility; the Greeks raise their glasses as a sign of enthusiasm. The Greeks should try to lower their glasses, Turks should try to keep them higher. Do not anticipate first to demonstrate the proximity of the two parties in order to accomplish a rapprochement; aim at understanding in spite of the disparity and even the antithesis.

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Application Exercises (optional)

The years and the dates bear a symbolic meaning too. 1071, 1453, 1774, 1821-1829, 1897, 1908, 1912-1913, 1915, 1918, 1919, 1922, 1923, 1942, 1955, 1964, 1974, 1996 and many others are years have a significance in the national memory of Greeks and Turks. What is a happy event for the one is the opposite for the other. All the anniversaries of the above, for example, are perceived as positive or negative for the parties.

Q1 - a) Find what these dates stand for. b) Find as many as additional dates of the same category.²² Then c) assuming that these events are celebrated or used to mourn every 25, 50 and 100 years, find how often the two parties make these events a major issue in each society, on the average. d) Calculate the same, assuming the recent events of the last century are commemorated/celebrated every 10 years, too. (The final number should be more than fifteen days in each year, on the average).

²² It is very easy to increase this number. The Greeks for example, if they so prefer and only being confined to the 15th century may remember the following symbolic years: Turks conquer Athens (1456), then Peloponnesus (1460), Turks terminate the Empire of Trapezus/Trebizond/Trabzon (1461), they conquest Lesbos/Midilli, Samos/Sisam (1462, 1475), uprising of Greeks in Mani (1481), conquest of Nafpaktos (1499).

Q2 - A music concert in Cyprus in which a Greek and a Turk participated to promote friendship between the two communities of the island was criticized and boycotted mainly by some Greeks because that particular day (May 19) Turkey celebrates the beginning of War of Independence fighting mainly against the Greeks (1919-1922). The concert was perceived as a mistake since the Greeks were not supposed to enjoy the symbolic day together with Turks.

There are many such dates which are a source of sorrow or joy for the one and the contrary for the other. Here are a few dates of importance for the Greeks: March 25 (Greeks start liberation war against the Turks in 1821), April 10 (massacre by the Ottomans in Chios/Sakız 1822), May 15 (the Greek army lands in/invades Izmir in 1919), May 19 (memorial for the massacre of Greeks of Pontus in 1915-1922), May 29 (the conquest/fall of Constantinople/Istanbul in 1453), 14 August (Turks kill S. Solomou in Cyprus in 1996), 6/7 September (riots against the Greeks of Istanbul in 1955), September 9 (Turks liberate/recapture İzmir in 1922), October 26 (Greeks liberate/conquer Thessaloniki in 1912).

The following are some important dates for the Turkish side (the ones mentioned above are not repeated): February 13 (Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus is established in 1983), May 19 (Turkish Liberation War begins in 1919), July 15 (in 1974 Turkish invasion/peace operation in Cyprus), August 30 (Turks defeat Greeks in Anatolia in 1922), October 5 (Balkan War starts in 1912), October 12 (Crete/Girit is united with Greece in 1908), December 24 (Turkish Cypriots are killed by Greek Cypriots in Cyprus in 1963).

Try to find dates that are of some importance to either side and are associated with Greek-Turkish relations. Two sources of such dates are the dates in which important personalities have been killed by the 'other' and in which a great number of cities are captured by the 'other' and then liberated by 'us'. Make a list of all these dates. Then find how many days within a year are left, if any, in which a musical concert can be performed jointly with Greeks and Turks without injuring the historical sensitivities of either side.

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Chapter 5

THE 'USE' OF MINORITIES

The chapters of this guide are interrelated. The denominations of the minorities and the related dispute have already been mentioned in Chapter 1.²³ Here other aspects of this sensitive issue will be presented. With whom, for example, should one discuss the issue, from whom one should get information?

One should be careful in contacting and in arguing with some groups:

A) Do not get in touch or ever argue with the 'officials', i.e., the devoted advocates of the governments and of the states (Greece and/or Turkey). They have a well known unshaken obstinate opinion which is neither accepted by the 'other' side nor by a third party. In any case, if it happens and they are persuaded that they may be in error, and if they err and confess it publicly, they will instantly lose their jobs or they will disappear from the scene and they will stop being 'officials' from that moment on anyhow. Ignore them, assume they do not exist.

B) Do not approach or discuss their case with the minority members themselves. They may refrain from exposing the situation or saying what they believe, simply because they are afraid of the consequences. They will normally say they are very happy with their past and present situation and/or that they have only some minor complaints. Actually they only try to avoid having more.

If you meet some really brave members, they are unreliable: they may be either mad or masochists or simply disguised officials, e.g., spokesmen of the mother country. Still if one insists to contact minority members, the masochists (or idealists) are the best to contact. Ask for members of the minority who are seen by the majority as 'suspects' and 'agents' of the other side.

²³ The 'name' of the minorities is of course connected with the desire to negate the right of self-identification to the minorities. Both sides, through their official or academic spokesmen work hard in this direction. There are efforts to prove who is who based on 'scientific', historical, linguistic, anthropological even biological studies. Do not try to expose these efforts and especially the 'academics' involved, it leads nowhere, do not waste your time.

C) Avoid ex-members of a minority group. Having kept silent and having abstained from demanding their rights for many years in their (original) country, they need to talk a lot in their new country to cover their past frustration; they are also under the urge to exaggerate.²⁴

D) Who is left to contact? Do listen to third parties and especially try to deconstruct the narratives of all. Their exaggeration and Manichean presentation (where we are all white and the other always very dark) is very illuminating. This may show the way to start seeing some aspects of a human tragedy.

E) Occasionally some Greeks and Turks, for some curious reason, come forward and enumerate the wrongdoings of their own governments and states which have been or are presently exercised against the ethnic minorities. This very rare phenomenon may help in obtaining information. The researcher faces an ethical dilemma however. The other side presents these people as evidence of the shortcomings of the 'confessing' side, and their compatriots present them as naive people or agents of the other side since in the last resort they create difficulty to 'us'. One has, in such cases, to choose between collecting data or protecting individuals.

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Best, it seems, is to stay away from this minority issue and let the people involved suffer by themselves in their privacy. Nevertheless, quite often people, and especially Greeks and Turks, get involved in this sensitive issue. Weakness is human. If you ever get in this tough situation, try the best you can which is the following:

Do not make the mistake of approaching the matter as a Grecoturkish issue. Do not compare the status of the Greek (Rum) minority of Istanbul with the Turkish (Muslim) minority of Western Thrace. Once minorities are discussed in this context, the sum total of the Greek-Turkish argumentation will be presented by both parties. All past and present grievances, complaints, etc., will be once more presented. Then, in order to solve the simplest thing, e.g., to let a minority member be treated on an equal basis and obtain the right to become a civil servant, one may end up

²⁴ As an example of exaggeration I can mention the case of a Greek from Istanbul who enumerating the Greeks killed in the riots in 6/7 September 1955 managed to persuade the interviewers and put on record in official reports of an international organization 'victims' whom one can recognize as persons who died many years afterwards. In one case an allegedly assassinated priest coming from a very small island is mentioned whose 'name and identity is unknown'. The interviewer, not having read this guide, recorded the unrecorded missing priest as such. Do not take for granted the statements of minority members, this one included.

discussing the Aegean, the Cyprus issue, the Balkan Wars, the recent Yugoslavian conflict with Bosnia and Kosovo, the fall of Constantinople, even the migration of the Turkic tribes from Central Asia in ancient times and Alexander the Great.

If the issue is seen as a Greek-Turkish controversy, then the final judgment is passed, not according to a specific act and/or approach in question, but according to the overall performance of the parties: 'since' the argument will be, 'we have acted so well up to now, in general, then some possible mistakes of our state or some accidental mishaps of few isolated individuals are immaterial'. 'We' are always right, in general, whatever happens. In short avoid generalities which drive parties to unresolved confrontations. Isolate the issue.

Otherwise, the end result of an approach which is very 'general' will not improve the status of minorities, since a comprehensive bargain and settlement of all Greek-Turkish controversies will take a longer time than the life span even of the younger member of the minority which one tries to help.

Do not attack, accuse etc., the other side (in case you appear and feel as a 'side'.) One should try to get involved, not with his/her national identity but with his/her human one (if one is able to). If one is vexed with what happens and his/her 'national' emotions are beyond any possible restraint, it is better that one does not cope with such issues; one is simply wasting time. Probably one is also harming the minority he/she intends to help.

If one is really strongly in favor of the minorities and of their human rights, then one can show some originality and can be concerned with the situation of the minorities in his/her own country (see also 'E' above). This is also a test searching if one is really concerned with minority/human rights or if the whole issue is a pretext to fight for national rights (i.e., the 'interest of one's nation').

Criticizing the conditions under which the ethnic minority lives in the 'other' country, especially if the minority is conceived and presented as an ethnic/national one, is understood as a general criticism of the 'other' side. To approach the issue on such an ethnic/national basis creates the conditions for an ethnic/national reaction. One then deals with a controversy of two sides where 'our' side consequently is perceived as the best, good enough or at least better and the other the worst, bad enough or quite negative.

Be aware that the double standard is the basic approach when this minority issue comes forward. Either be honest and don't use it, or use it and enjoy it. If you want to enjoy it, set a series of defence lines. A) first, deny as an outrageous lie any accusation against your government's past

or present negative practices against the minorities. B) If this does not seem possible due to the jeering laughter of the third parties or of their threatening anger upon your complete denial, get to the second line of defense. Try to lessen the importance of the negative practices. C) Attribute everything to 'irresponsible' individuals and not to officials. D) Present the events as contingent, erratic, coincidental etc. E) If all these can not stop the attacks of the other side use your last recourse: it is always possible to select some cases which can be presented as evidence that the 'other side is even worse'. Comparisons always win.

Doing the above, gives great satisfaction to the Greek and Turkish combatants (each side separately) but it is of no real use to the minorities. If you seek to improve their lot, reverse the do's and the don'ts.

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The use of 'double standard' will be discussed again in a separate chapter. It deserves our attention. This chapter will be completed with some specific hints.

Do not give the impression that 'your minority' in the neighboring country is perceived and may be used as a kind of a fifth column or as an avant-guard of yours. The minorities should not be shown as fighting squadrons but as peace seeking groups of citizens. Do not refer to them within a discourse of military or diplomatic warfare. This is especially required even if you really intend to use them in this direction; be as concealed as possible.

If however one suspects that there are many foreign agents among a minority community, mathematics may still help. A hundred spies make only a percentage of one 1/1000 in a community of hundred thousands. Do not let paranoia harm the 99.9% of a community fighting the 0.1%.

Do not pompously demonstrate that it is 'you' who controls the minority in the other country. This is done, sometimes with pompous visits, sometimes with aligning the minorities with short term political targets. Sometimes the governments, the officials and/or the public, exert pressure on the minorities which live in their country to align with the day to day policy of the government and especially to declare it publicly. One then may see the tragic/comic scene where minority members explain how happy they are in sharing the official views of that country. Do not do this: the country itself is ridiculed because few are convinced and most people know what is going on. Apart from that, minority members never forget the humiliation and they wait for the time to come even.

If one intends to manipulate the minorities, to take advantage of their special case and use them as a lever to create problems for the 'other' side

in order to exert political pressure, then of course things change. Then, on the contrary, try to give the impression that the minority group is under your command, that it obeys your orders and therefore it can be used any time against the other. This approach is effective, it creates panic and a substantial insecurity which also aggravates bilateral relations.

Sometimes it is really unfortunate that steps are taken exactly in this direction of controversy but not with the intention of using minorities as such, but only because the sense of fear created on the other side gives a tremendous national pride and satisfaction. Try to suppress these atavistic instincts. Try to find pride in more productive utilitarian selections; unless of course the satisfaction of psychological inner drives is weighed as heavily as the material happiness of citizens. In this case reverse DO's and DON'Ts.

Do not discuss the 'minority issue' but the issue of the 'members of a minority'. The generalized perception of a group, basically different from 'us', becomes by itself a problem. If the situation is approached on an 'individual' basis -but still connected to minorities- the tension is less. Always remember that the issue is about concrete 'members' and not of abstract 'minorities'. Do not use for example a title in the mass media that 'a Turk' or 'a Greek' is mentioned committing a crime, that he had an accident or whatever if he happens to belong to a minority group. Refer to the incident as it is done with the 'normal' crimes and/or accidents: the religion or ethnic identity of the perpetrator and/or victim is never mentioned when they belong to the majority.

Even when one accuses the wrongdoing in the other country, one should not generalize. Whatever happens, it happens by the initiative of individuals, even if they are many. There has not been any incident in history where 'everybody' participated. Do not get involved in the simplistic understanding of 'us-they'.

Do not associate minorities in any circumstance with historical incidents of military aggression. The Turkish side should refrain of saying that Western Thrace problems will be resolved the way the problems of the Turks of Cyprus have been resolved. The Greek side should stress less the mishaps of the non-Muslim minorities which occurred during war situations (1915, 1919-1922) and more the problems of normal peace times. These measures will help alleviate the present problems of the living.

Finally do not forget that, in a sense, many Turks and Greeks, as a whole, very often feel as minorities: the Turks as Muslims in a greater Christian Europe and the Greeks as Orthodox in a greater Catholic and Protestant West.

Application Exercises (optional)

Q1 - Make two lists which include all the complaints that the Greeks and the Turks have regarding 'their' minorities in the 'other' country. Contact the 'other' to compile the list. The complaints should include issues such as: citizenship rights, equality among citizens (e.g., in becoming civil servants), opportunities in education, freedom of communication and in mass media, freedom in expression and preservation of minority culture, efforts in assimilation, riots, discriminatory taxation, expulsion or threat of expulsion , etc.

Q2 - Find the similarities and the differences in the two lists. How many of the complaints do you think are fair complaints? Is there a tendency on your part to agree with either one of the lists?

Q3 - If you agree with one of the lists and you believe the list of the 'other' is exaggerated, how do you explain this judgment of yours? Can it be due to an ethnic bias?

Q4 - Try to estimate how often you read about the ill treatment of minority groups which occur a) in your country, b) in the 'other' country.

Q5 - After these exercises do you think that you can add some more Do's and Dont's to the existing list?

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Chapter 6

THE USE OF DOUBLE STANDARD TO OPPOSE DOUBLE STANDARD

Is it a paradox that those who resort often to double standards at the same time criticize the others for their use of double standards? Actually not, this is the result of the nature of double standards: those who employ a double standard, consistently (and unavoidably) also use it to blame others for its use. By a single standard they mean their own; the supposed critics of double standard oppose fervently the validity of general principle accepted by third parties.

‘Double standard’ could have been the title of this guide since this trend runs through Greek and the Turkish ‘national’ argumentation. As it has probably already been noticed, most of the ‘negative’ acts blamed on the ‘other’ side are somehow practiced by one’s own side too. This however, is not perceived by the actors themselves. The discontent against this human weakness, i.e., not “knowing oneself”, is at least as old as Plato. In the Bible we see those Pharisees and hypocrites who “stain off a midge, yet gulp down a camel” (Matthew 23/24). In other words, ‘the pot calls the kettle black’.

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It is a terribly cumbersome task to try to show to the parties that they resort to double standards every time they judge a situation. Do not try to demonstrate to the users their practice of double standard; rather try to find it in your own behavior. Both parties approach double standards with a double standard. They are very successful detecting the use of a double standard when exercised by the other side, and they are so blind when they scrutinize themselves. This is so because it is not the bad intention of the parties that blinds them but the different perceptions of the past, the present and the prospects of the future; the three constituents that make the difference in the human groups which are called ‘nations’. Whatever is ours, is habitual and consequently right and acceptable; the others are the strangers with their strange and unacceptable doings.

This dual use of apathy/sympathy with respect to double standard is backed up by the fact that there is nothing identical in life; there is always a detail which ensures that ‘things are not the same’. It is of no use trying to show that a party contradicts itself, that it has done or is doing the same

thing as the ‘other’. Do not try this method. The answer will always be ready: “this case is different”. This is the fallacy of nuances.

Do not start a useless discussion; avoid mentioning double standard, hypocrisy, insincerity, pharisaism, demagoguery and sophistry. This approach is a dead end. The message that your listener gets is that you apply a double standard and that the accusations originate from ill will and prejudice: ‘How is it ever possible for the opponent not to see that the two cases are so different? He/she pretends that he/she misses the obvious difference’.

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As explained in Chapter 3, ‘The common history which divides’, each party sees a different past and present. The presentation of some typical cases where double standard reaches its climax may help few participants to become aware of the dangerous areas they are venturing on when dealing with Greek-Turkish relations. Those few are special personalities to begin with; still it is rewarding to try and meet those few who respond to the effort.

The past, i.e., history itself, is dualistic. The Turks read how they ‘reached Anatolia’, the Greeks read how their ‘Asia Minor was grabbed’ by the Turks. The Turks ‘conquer Istanbul’, the Greeks see the ‘fall of Constantinople’. The Greeks see that they had been for centuries under an oppressive ‘Turkish’ rule, the Turks see a benevolent ‘Ottoman’ state. The Greeks ‘revolt’, in 1821, the Turks call it ‘rebellion’. The Greeks ‘liberated’ Thessaloniki in 1912, the Turks ‘lost’ it; the Turks fight for their liberty in 1922, the Greeks call it ‘catastrophe’ (of Hellenism). The Turks ‘liberate’ the Turks of Cyprus after a ‘peace operation’, the Greeks see an ‘invasion’ on their island.

One can easily demonstrate that just about every page of Greek and Turkish history is written and expressed with words, images and value judgments which embody and exhibit (one sided) ethnic feelings. A study on Greek and Turkish textbooks has demonstrated that happy and positive incidents of one side are presented as unhappy and negative for the other.

In short, double standard, in the sense of each nation having its own standard, is the standard approach in historiography: a loss in battle is a victory for the ‘other’, a fall of a city is an glorious conquest; oppression is a triumph; liberation is the retreat of the ‘other’; peace is invasion and slavery, liberty is a catastrophe etc. There does not exist one common language but two; and the words in these transmit from generation to generation a context with dual values. In other words, double standard is mostly historical; both intrinsic and acquired by education.

Sometimes the parties not only see different things when they watch the same object but they also have blind spots. Here are few examples:

The Greeks are annoyed that the ‘fanatic’ Turks in Turkey want to turn the museum of Saint Sophia to a mosque; they never noticed however, that those who want to turn the Rotonda to a church in Thessaloniki may be the Greek counterparts of the other side’s ‘fanatics’. The Turks voice their discontent that there is not a single mosque in Athens for the Muslim population; they never voice their discontent that there is no church in Ankara.

The Turks are wholeheartedly for the human rights of ethnic minorities in Greece; the same sensitivity is not shown for the ethnic groups in Turkey.²⁵ The Greeks are enthusiastic about the self determination of the Kurds in Turkey but not of the Turks in Cyprus or elsewhere. The Turks do want Bosnia’s integrity and the minority status of the Serbs there, but they do not like a similar practice in Cyprus; loss of property has a different meaning in Bosnia and in Cyprus. It is normal both for the Greeks and for the Turks to send their armies to help compatriots in foreign countries (İzmir in 1919, Cyprus in 1974) but at the same time such a practice is conceived as an invasion when roles are reversed (Cyprus in 1974, İzmir in 1919). Even massacres are seen as ‘self defense’ when it is the others who die: e.g., the massacres of Tripolis/Treblice in 1821 and of Chios/Sakız in 1822.

The help of foreign powers to any of the parties during an interethnic or a bilateral controversy is an ‘outrageous intervention’, it may be an ‘intrigue’ which proves that the foreigners (usually the ‘West’) are shamelessly helping the ‘other’ or it is a righteous act which proves that ‘even they’ had at this time to accept our just cause; depending on whom the help goes. Both sides perceive the Western powers to be ‘always’ behind the ‘other’ and the Greeks forget that it was the West that so many times saved them from the Turks (1827, 1897 etc.) and the Turks that they survived (as a state) due to the Christian states (1830, 1839 etc.) and

²⁵ Here the reader may notice the dexterous avoidance of sensitive words. The Kurdish issue is almost a taboo in Turkey; as is the ‘Turkish minority’ in Greece. Therefore here the words ‘Turk’ (Turkish minority) and ‘Kurd’ (Kurdish ethnic group) are avoided to lessen the tension and hamper probable undue reaction. On the other hand, nothing is missed from the intended meaning; all readers are aware to whom one is referring. Only those whose main desire is to irritate the Turks or the Greeks will not be satisfied with a more discrete use of the words. As for this footnote which deciphers the ‘method’ and brings to the open the whole language game, it does not hamper the desired results as behavioral psychology predicts. This is so because my intention is to respect the sensitivities of both sides (without ignoring the rights of third parties) and to make a case for mutual sensitivity as well as constructive self-criticism.

that the West sided with them against the Greeks in 1821 and in 1922. National memory has to be selective.

Wars in general are triumphant when they are won, a source of pride; but a human tragedy when they are lost. It is good when our side wins, a tragedy when we lose. During the crises in Kosovo in 1999, both the Greek and Turkish media raised images of Hitler's Germany; the Greeks showed scenes from the Second World War with Nazi Germany's planes bombarding Czechoslovakia, reminding one of intervention against a sovereign country, and the Turks depicted again the Nazis but this time forcefully deporting the Jews reminding viewers of the suffering of the Kosovars.

Dialog is a panacea in solving Greek-Turkish problems according to the Turkish side; but not in Cyprus. In Cyprus first some legal/political preconditions should be met before the dialog. The same view is valid for the Greeks but with the converse reasoning.

Do not try to prove to the 'other' his/her inconsistency. An effort in this direction will be perceived as a direct and biased attack of some people who do not want to see, or rather pretend they do not see, 'that these two cases are not the same'. Attack on the double standard may be effective rather in 'our' camp where 'our' shortcomings are criticized. Also it becomes a useful tool when we first point out our own mistakes before focusing on the shortcomings of the other side

This approach is widely used indirectly in this guide as any experienced reader can notice. Parties are more ready to yield with grace and magnanimity when the 'other' yields too, than under the force of sound arguments and binding principles.

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The double standard mostly means change of paradigm, basic criteria, frameworks or principles. In the Cyprus issue for example, 'rights' and 'claims' on the island can be defended referring to various basic 'principles': 1) historic; 2) legal due to international law; 3) legal due to bilateral treaties; 4) principle of self determination; 5) minority rights; 6) strategic sensitivities; 7) distance from 'mother land'; 8) 'lebensraum'; 9) self defense; 10) being the winner in a war, etc. In a discussion of the Cyprus (or other) issue parties can choose any combination of the above 'principles' and use them to their ends.

Do not get involved in this bilateral monologue. The speedy shifts of frames only raise the tension and the frustration.

Instead, it may be useful to discuss what bothers the parties, what they do not like in the approach of the 'other', how they see each other and if they agree on their image as perceived by the 'other', what their worries,

fears, dreams, expectations of the future are, how they visualize the world they would like to live in, the future of their children and other more personal and concrete issues. A fight based on the (equivocal) 'principles' will not be very productive.

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Application Exercises (optional)

Q1 - Make a list of principles you think it is necessary for the two parties to follow when they deal with each other.

Q2 - Make two more lists of the same kind: a) one for the principles Greece officially promotes, and b) the principles Turkey favors. To which of the two lists is your personal list closer to? How do you explain the 'closeness' ?

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Chapter 7

BITS OF TIPS

(Mostly for diplomats and politicians)

Some do's- don'ts cannot be classified under a general heading. Here are some suggestions, especially to those who take an initiative with the intention of promoting friendship and reconciliation between the parties and get involved in casual conversations during meetings organized for such occasions.

One should not remind the 'other' how good willing his/her party is or has been in the past. Both sides are really tired of hearing this. Do not try to persuade the Greeks and/or the Turks that the two parties had very good relations in the past, that they lived happily, etc. Since both sides, deep inside, are convinced of the opposite, one's credibility is lost as soon as this attitude is taken. The listeners get on guard feeling they have to do with a biased person.

Some Greeks or Turks intend to point how close the parties are by referring to inter-ethnic marriages or love affairs. Unfortunately almost all examples given by each side remind us that 'our' side is the male and the 'other' is the female.²⁶ This is a law: let's call it I-rape-you Law (or I-rape-you Syndrome). This taboo issue creates a tension and a sense of uneasiness on both sides every time it comes forward. Parties presumably feel something like having 'their women' being grasped! Avoid associating friendship with sex.

Especially refrain from reminding how 'wealthy' are the minorities which live in your country. Both sides perceive this discourse of well off minorities as: 1) a claim of magnanimity, 2) a sense of danger on your part since the wealth of the 'other' brings power to him, 3) a source of jealousy against the minority group, 4) a sense of injustice against the majority due to this imbalance in the standard of living. The 'other' automatically suspects that you have sinister intentions or at least feelings. The 'well off minorities' discourse creates also negative connotations for those familiar with the Nazi German practices against the 'rich' Jews. It is better to be omitted.

²⁶ My study based on hundreds of Greek and Turkish novels shows that among approximately three hundred cases there is not a single case where the woman is not 'theirs' and the man is not 'ours'.

Do not say that ‘it is all the fault of the governments and politicians, the people between themselves do not have any problems’. This argument is well received by people who do not like democratic regimes but it is understood as a direct rejection of the representative parliamentary system by those who perceive the politicians as representatives of the people. Some may perceive the advocat of this point as a conscious or unconscious adherent of authoritarian regimes.

Do not blame the public that exerts pressure on governments for the shortcomings of the governments. People and governments compose a unity which together can be blamed (or sometimes praised). If not, then the question arises: are the governments agencies which act contrary to people’s will and intentions?

Do not insist that peace, positive relations, friendship and the like should prevail between the parties (countries, nations) because they are so much alike. It is thus inferred that friendship etc., can exist between ‘similar’ whereas everybody is familiar and some insist on the existence of important differences. Good relations can develop between all nations, alike or not. Doesn’t the formula ‘similar equals friend’ sound racist?

If one really feels the need to mention how close the cuisine of the two parties is during those routine friendship fiestas, one should at least refrain from mentioning the origins. The Turks should not hint ‘Ottoman’ nor the Greeks ‘Byzantine’ origin . Let it be the food of the ‘region’. Why should one give the impression of a ‘nationalist’?

Turks should refrain from repeating that Greek governments can not promote friendship because they are populist and yield under the pressure of opposition and popular protests and Greeks should refrain from reminding that Turkey lacks the capacity to promote good relations because of its poor performance in human rights and democratic issues. Good relations or bad relations in international level exist irrespective of the relations of governments with their people. Both Greece and Turkey have good and bad relations with countries which are fully democratic or fully un-democratic.

Do not say ‘You do not know/understand us’, say ‘We do not know/understand you’.

Do not think that ‘nobody understands us’; think that ‘we understand nobody’.

One should respect the ‘oldies’ and not shock them, expecting them to transcend old and traditional beliefs. It takes time for the societies to change perceptions. Be especially gentle with the older generations, they are more tied to well-established beliefs.

Do not insist too much and hastily on all kinds of inter-ethnic contacts. For example it is rather good that there are not many translations of Greek and Turkish publications. If parties read what the 'other' writes about 'him/her' things may get worse.

The Greeks and/or the Turks should not say respectively, full of surprise, every time they are introduced to a Turk and/or to a Greek that 'the person is really very nice' and that 'he/she does not look like a Turk or a Greek'. This utterance reveals the image they have for the 'other'; and this is not a pleasant experience for the 'other'.

Both parties are proud of their own image. Do not present, draw or describe directly or indirectly the 'other' as he is but always a little better! I have noticed that 'realism' is understood as a biased approach. Do not present for example Turks as dark skinned and Greeks as disorganized; it pays back generously to show Turks with blue eyes and Greeks punctual and reserved.

I have noticed that parties are upset when the 'other' uses in a matter of fact way, characterizations which are not used in the 'our' country. There may exist parties which belong to the extreme right and even 'fascist', but they should not be called so but only with their proper name, the way they like to identify themselves.

Do avoid to criticize the other publicly. Criticism in private or at least in a discrete fashion highly appreciated. It shows that the 'other' has a real intention of improving things and not to discredit publicly.

Do not start by criticizing the 'other' but first accept few points or your 'own' mistakes and wrong-doings. (If your weak points do not come readily in mind ask for the assistance of the 'other'.) After this start of confidence building, criticism sounds more persuasive.

The Greeks should not say 'we can be of some assistance in this problem of yours, because we have faced similar situations'. This is understood by the other side as a patronizing statement with which Greece once more hints that she is ahead! A statement of the kind 'contacts may help both of us to face our problems better' is much more productive. Turks should not use the 'we are a big country, strong country' discourse so often for obvious and practical reasons. In general, do not irritate the 'other'.

Do not say 'we are less nationalist than you'; it is a typical utterance of nationalists. Everything of 'ours' naturally seems normal to us; everything different seems peculiar: hence xenophobia.

Try to overcome the tendency to perceive the basis of all bilateral problems coinciding with your own field of interest or profession. Inter-ethnic relations are influenced in various ways. Historians, politicians, experts of law, military advisers, activists, diplomats, anthropologists, psychologists, artists, writers and others think that their expertise will

help the situation. Relations are a complex phenomenon and all may contribute; hardly however does a single field resolve all the issues.

When faced with criticism do not react by saying that the greater share belongs to the other side. Do notice that the 'other' says exactly the same.

Greeks should refrain from mentioning two issues when discussing Greek-Turkish relations with Turks: the Armenian issue of 1915 and the Kurdish issue in general. (These topics can of course be discussed but as a separate issue.) The introduction of these topics normally signals the end of communication. The reason for this Turkish reaction is not clear: either they feel they had too much or that irrelevant issues are introduced to prove the general bad will of Turkey. In other words, the Turkish side may be suspecting a racist approach against them. On the other side the Turks should not attempt to justify acts with naive argumentation of the kind, 'actually the Armenians killed the Turks' or 'Turks and Kurds are brothers' etc.

Greeks should refrain from mentioning to the Turks 'lebensraum' and 'Panturkism' and the Turks to the Greeks 'Megali Idea' (as they both do so often presently).²⁷ Not because this irritates both and these nationalist ideals belong to the past, but mainly because each side sincerely *believes* that these ideals, in general and officially, have been rejected after 1923 by their modern states and their societies. The claim to the contrary is perceived by each side as a direct refusal by the 'other' to accept the declared ideology of his/her state and society. If parties believe that the 'other' is still following old practices, at least a new terminology should be tried.

Third parties should not use identical terms and wording when discussing similar topics with the two parties. Use the 'language' of your addressee. Do not start claiming he/she is wrong; first demonstrate that you have noticed how right his/her party has been by reminding certain incidents and then introduce arguments which may sound controversial.

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The diplomats should refrain from the practice of praising the superb qualities of the 'other' side's diplomacy. Each side is bothered by being praised since what they 'hear' is the following: 'Your diplomats are really very capable; this is the only reason of the support you can still find internationally in spite of your being so much on the wrong and having done so many unacceptable things'. Actually this praise is a concealed

²⁷ 'Lebensraum' and Panturkism are used by the Greeks in order to attribute to the Turkish side the ill intention of expansionism. The Turks very often use the 'Megali Idea', the historic Greek ideal of a greater Greece for the same end.

accusation. That is why the parties disagree and try fervently to prove that the 'other' is best in this field.²⁸

The political disputes between Greece and Turkey - Cyprus, Aegean, minorities. etc. - are the most well known bilateral problems between these two countries. These disputes may be seen however, basically as the result of a hidden historic/psychological controversy. Whatever the reason of the problems, those who try to understand the issues and to help to resolve them face some major difficulties. The two parties use a very different language.²⁹ Actually a new dictionary which will interpret the words and terms used by the two parties seems necessary before any attempt at reconciliation. So do not jump to conclusions based on what you hear; consult this (still-to-be-prepared) dictionary or ask the people what they really mean.

Some bilateral issues were reviewed in previous chapters where 'minorities' and 'double standard' were discussed. Here some additional points will be touched upon in passing.

On the Cyprus issue the Greeks speak of the problems that started 'with the invasion of 1974', the Turks speak of the 'anti-Turkish policy that started in 1964'. I recently attended a symposium where none of the Greek speakers, who discussed the historic dimension of the issue, mentioned the coup in Cyprus carried out in 1974 by Greece (the colonels). The Turks on the other hand never suspect that there has been a kind of ethnic cleansing in the north of the island. The Greeks seem willing to guarantee the rights of the Turkish community (minority) in Cyprus but they reject the existence of a Turkish ethnic group in Greece; the Turks fear the future of the Turks of Cyprus in a united island in light of the experience of the Turkish minority of Western Thrace. The Turks in North Cyprus see a South getting continuously stronger and much superior in power with respect to them; the Greek Cypriots see a huge military power to their north: Turkey. Turks complain that the Greeks never respected them; the Greeks reciprocate. Greeks have a series of arguments which show that the Turks are not to be trusted; the Turks reciprocate.

What can one do or not do in such a situation? The words themselves are like explosives. One should know as much as possible of the

²⁸ This is the second case where the parties praise the 'other' side so generously; the other case is when they praise the beautiful women of the 'other'.

²⁹ I have been criticized by some activists - who believe that their side in all issues, all the time is mostly right - that I try to appear neutral and do not voice how right their side is. This is not true; I have a clear opinion on many issues and I believe that each party has sometimes in some issues a considerable amount of 'right'. However, to voice this is a completely different enterprise than trying to develop the environment for a fruitful inter-ethnic communication.

nomenclature used by both parties and try not to 'provoke'. The past is so different for each side! Try to show that you follow the arguments of the 'other' side and that you have understood (not necessarily accepted) what has been said.

There is little hope, however, for a creative communication between persons who have a strongly formed 'general negative' perception of the 'other'. This is so because whatever one hears, he/she will interpret it according to one's national perceptions. The change of perceptions related to the 'other' is as hard as changing one's national identity; normally people die of old age before such a change ever occurs, and sometimes sacrifice their lives so that this change does not occur.

Similar problems exist in the Aegean issue. The Greeks accuse the Turks of violating the Greek air space; the Turks look surprised (or they pretend they are surprised) believing/claiming they fly over international air space. Greeks accuse the Turks of intending to change the status quo in the area; the Turks accuse the Greeks for the same reason.³⁰ The Greeks say the Turks want (some Greeks add 'for the time being') half of the Aegean; the Turks say the Greeks want all of it. The Greeks claim the Turks refrain from the obvious action: applying to an international court if they have claims on some 'Greek islands' in the area. The Turks repeat that Greeks refuse the obvious: to develop a bilateral dialogue through which all problems can be solved. Turks accuse the Greeks that they militarise the Greek islands against existing treaties, the Greeks point to the Turkish landing fleet just opposite these islands and talk of legitimate self-defence. The Greeks feel threatened by the 'casus belli' of Turkey and Turkey by the intent of Greece to extend its territorial waters. There are many volumes of argumentation for each single detail of these theses.

The Turks are furious and tired of the obstacles Greece creates in Turkey's advance towards her integration with the European Union; Greeks are tired of a country like Turkey which acts as if there are not urgent standing problems between the two countries.

The first step and the most difficult one is to listen to and to understand the arguments of the 'other' side. The man in the street knows nothing about the point of view of the 'other' side. Worse than that, this 'average citizen' who happens to be the one who many times limits the freedom of the politicians, who is nonetheless, willing to reach a compromise, believes that he knows the 'other' very well. But the people in the Media, in parliaments are not very different. They can not disassociate knowledge from perceptions (bias, prejudice).

³⁰ The Greeks mean that the Turks are after new arrangements of national frontiers in the area and the Turks mean that the Greeks intend to increase their territorial waters by inhabiting islets and by other legal means.

Do not assume, as I did for years and until I happened to know diplomats and politicians rather closely, that there is a substantial difference in the way simple Greeks and Turks and the professionals of politics think. They think, feel, conceive, fear, hate, imagine, accuse, provoke almost the same way. Only the diplomats have definitely a more sophisticated parlance. They can utter for example the most hideous insult with a serene and amiable smile. Another difference between the man in the street and the one in the embassy and in the parliament is that the second is more sure of what he claims. Consequently it is almost impossible to shake his convictions.

Still, reading 'guides' like this one may be of some help. Communication may be the key word. 'Communication' in the sense of conversing not only politically but also on a hermeneutic level: understanding the 'other' and 'ourselves'.

Do doubt the correctness of your convictions; forget for a while that you stay in an embassy or in a building of the ministry of foreign affairs . Some say this is the first step of learning something new and fresh. Do not be totally unyielding in your convictions. At least think that the 'other' who has a completely different opinion on the same issue, is as sure as you that he/she is right.

Probably there is nothing for the parties to do in these practical bilateral issues but, 1) to insist in their policies with the hope of 'winning', 2) to compromise with a temporary solution and wait for a better conjuncture to finish the fight. The other alternative could be a more general and roundabout approach which will be handled in the final chapter.

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Chapter 8

SUMMARY: TWO SIMPLE MYTHS

All these DO's and DON'Ts are difficult to master, to keep a track of them and to apply them in the proper moment. Also there have been more DON'Ts than DO's up to this point and this makes things also difficult for those who want to 'do something'. A summary and some more general DO's will be presented here.

The Greek and the Turkish 'point of view' will be reduced into two simple myths. These two national argumentations can also be perceived as a framework in which national identity is nourished.³¹ In general one has to keep in mind that preserving a distance from these myths and from the relevant discourse is the thing one should DO.

The Greek myth goes as follows: We are the Greeks and we compose a nation. We have existed continuously for many thousand years. We have developed great civilizations (composed of the ancient Greek, the Byzantine and the modern). In this respect we are unique and superb. Now, if our present might is not so apprent is due to the 'other'. The Turks, so different from us, are an Asiatic and barbaric nation. Their characteristic is repeated through history: they captured our lands, destroyed our country (Byzantium), they enslaved us for hundreds of years. We suffered a lot. Eventually we shed our blood and we liberated ourselves. However, the same Turks are still nearby and similar problems still exist: the Turks still occupy Greek lands in Asia Minor, Constantinople and Cyprus, they are threatening our sovereignty in the Aegean and in Thrace, treat badly our ethnic groups in Istanbul. They hate us since they know they are the invaders; we are the original inhabitants of those lands. The 'West' is not helping us, as it never did, because it is in its interest to align with Turkey, since Turkey occupies a strategic area and/or because the Catholic/Protestant West does not like

³¹ These myths can be named paradigms, metaphors, national discourses, (imagined) national past and/or identity, perceptions of us versus the 'other', national 'consciousness', world-views (weltanschauung) etc. Actually not the 'name' but the existence and function of these myths within the nations' perceptions are of importance.

us. That's why Westerners pretend to be unaware of our problems and of the attacks we face.

The Turkish myth goes as follows: True, we originated in Asia, but we have lived for centuries in Europe. When we came we encountered the ruins of an Empire. This empire was not Greek but Roman to begin with. The claims of modern Greeks to be heirs of Byzantium are not valid: they are not the same race or nation with the ancient people; i.e., the Ionians and the Byzantines are not 'the same' with modern Greeks. Their claim on these lands is not justified. We treated them so well during the Ottoman rule and this rule was beneficial to them.³² Turks proved their good will and unbiased attitude toward all the 'others'. We lived together within one benevolent Turkish state for centuries, so closely. They did not want to live with us, they revolted. And from there on, they continuously attacked and captured our lands: in 1881, 1897, 1912, 1919. They tried the same in Cyprus in 1974. They discredit us as 'barbaric', they hate us, they always mistreat the Turkish populations, especially in Western Thrace. Actually it is the Greeks who are not civilized and are ultra nationalists. We are Europeans too, but the whole 'West' is against us because they are prejudiced: they have a negative image of the (Muslim) Turks and they always back up Greece because they form a Christian family.

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These two myths act as the base for most of the ethnic Greek and Turkish discourse with respect to the 'other'. It is natural that these arguments are presented in different 'styles': nationalistic and aggressive, academic and 'scientific', sophisticated and disguised, hinted and in a roundabout manner. The fact however remains the same in every case: the 'other' side almost always gets the message. Both sides react furiously to most of these arguments of the 'other' side.

The two myths are not symmetrical however. Time wise and in general, the Greek myth precedes, the Turkish one is a counter attack. In other words, the Turkish side is more aware of the Greek argumentation. The Greeks give grater importance to the 'facts' of history. The Greeks use predominantly 'history'; the Turks 'social psychology'.

The greatest difference appears in the area of the use of these myths. Both sides address them to the 'West', from which they expect alliance or at least neutrality. The Greek myth however is more 'inward' oriented than that of the Turkish one. For the Greeks the myth and the related Turks are necessary to explain the past and the formation of the national

³² With this argument the 'Greekness' of the Byzantines is naturally recognized; but the contradictions of the national myths are part of the national historiography.

identity. The existence of the present Greeks is associated with the historical existence of the Turks. The Turkish national existence, or more precisely the sovereignty of the Turkish state however, is based on the non-existence of the Greeks, on 'forgetting' the Greek heritage. The Greeks cultivate the past, the Turks silence it.

The Turks have a sense of social and national cohesion around the state. The state ('devlet' in Turkish) is respected, feared and trusted; and the Greek-Turkish relations are controlled and directed mainly by this 'devlet'. In Greece the sense of the nation is stronger ('ethnos' in Greek). The opinion of the people is important in forming the foreign policy. In Turkey it is the state and in Greece the masses that give the tone of the bilateral relations.

Each country has a different historic time perception that goes with their national myth. For example when the Turkish side proposes that the islets of the Aegean which are of unspecified ownership should be returned to the previous owners, i.e., Turkey since she is the heir (she is the continuation) of the Ottoman Empire, she clearly sets a time span of approximately six hundred years. There is no time before that. The Greeks can claim the same islets by referring to older periods of Byzantium and Ancient Greece. The Greeks appear as original inhabitants (and not as invaders) of Pontus, of the present North-east Turkey, by limiting in the same way the time margin to a few hundred years B.C. There is no time, or at least time of some importance before that period.

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The two myths mentioned above might be still compacted to their bare nucleus. Actually all basic complaints of the parties against the 'other' can be found in this microcosm. The grievances of today as well as the worries about a possible negative future, strangely, resemble the past incidents, as perceived separately by each side. The future is an interpolation or a repetition of the past. It is as if nations can perceive their future in terms of a national past. It is interesting how the feared future reminds one of the imagined past as it is presented in the national historiography.

The Greek myth, giving a predominance to the dimension of coming years and the 'other', can be phrased as follows: We Greeks have suffered a lot from the Turks. We face today problems which remind us of this unhappy past. We are by ourselves facing a powerful enemy. Our independence and sovereignty are endangered.

The Turkish myth is not much different: Greeks, having the support of the Christian West have extended their borders against our lands. They

never feel satisfied. They still claim to be the heir of our motherland. This enemy and this trend should be stopped.

The political, military, historical and cultural disputes spring out of these myths and find their justification. All the arguments about the past, the relationships with ancient people, the present legal theses etc., simply support the basic myths. The whole fight seems to be one of securing some national targets: national integrity, sovereignty, independence, supremacy, liberty. All these are probably understood by the nations involved as the basic needs for a happier and more secure life.

The accusations against the 'other' can be seen as an argument that the 'other' is not liable for his claims. The anger may be seen as an expression of fear and anxiety for possible future negative developments. All symbols and names are related to these targets and phobias. Then all behaviors of the parties, as strange as they seem, now acquire a meaning which originates from national worries, fear and shame for a possible future disaster.

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If this is the case, or if it is closely so, there are some general DO's-DON'Ts that should be followed:

Do not excite and aggravate the insecurity of the 'other' side. One should avoid all utterances and actions which disturb the parties and have a direct or indirect connection with matters of national security, sovereignty, national integrity etc.

Do develop a less aggressive language. The Turkish side for instance may stop or at least lessen the rhetoric of power, of being a 'great state', of having a 'powerful army', of 'past lessons which can be repeated' etc. The Greek side may refrain from using characterizations which directly or indirectly infer that the Turks are not entitled to the rights secured by international treaties, international law etc. The usual Greek accusation of 'barbarism' is an insinuation for the alienation of Turkey from the rest of Europe.

There are indirect ways of attaining the same ends and these should also be avoided. For example the word 'barbarism' (especially disturbing the Turkish side) can be substituted by other words or deeds: 'social structures which are foreign to our civilization' is a sophisticated way of saying the same thing. Declaration of the sort 'Greeks should be afraid of us if they continue to behave like that' is the worst the politicians can do. The parties should refrain from presenting to the 'other' a self image of 'great power' or of the 'civilized judge'.

The 'peace' discourse is also very often disturbing especially to the Greek side. The Greeks perceive this peace discourse which is more often

voiced by Turkey as a kind of hypocrisy. Since, they believe, the issue is not if parties seek peace or war but the conditions that the parties put in order to follow a policy of peace. Naturally both sides are enthusiastic followers of peace provided their conditions are satisfied; and they are determined to fight if the 'other' side insists on its political line and/or demands.

Some times even the calm approach and the soft complaisant voice is disturbing to the parties. It is as if with the exhibited serenity each side tries to show its self confidence. Politeness is sometimes understood as a patronizing high-brow attitude, understanding shown to needy parties. Actually it is difficult for both parties to hide their real feelings. On top of that, the 'other', being biased, very often imagines negative intentions and insinuations. The best approach is to lessen the acting part and try to believe to what one says and does.

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Probably the phrasing is as important as these basic national worries. One should present his/her views as a subjective evaluation: 'I think...' instead of 'It is...'. It is possible to accept a view of the 'other' which is worded as a personal interpretation, but really very hard to welcome an arrogant and authoritarian judgment with sounds like a verdict.

The predictions and the image one creates for the 'other' and the bilateral relations are important too. Do not give an optimistic picture of the 'other' nor even for the future of these relations. Disappointment may follow. Do not make very pessimistic prediction either. Positive expectations play a constructive role in forming the future.

Generally be frank with the 'other'. Express your grievances with an open heart but with empathy.

It is also advisable that the parties discuss their problems in the afternoon and late at night, e.g., having a good lunch or dinner. People have less stress, they are more relaxed after a rich meal.

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Greek-Turkish relations are not marked only with stress. Probably an enjoyable part of the Greek-Turkish relations is the endless discussions associated with them: they are rich, variable, deep, mysterious, exciting and a little frustrating. I hope you have enjoyed this guide. But the guide actually never ends. You may continue adding up DO's and DONT's as you will be watching Greeks and Turks discuss their problems which are as real as they are also imaginary.

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EPILOGUE

This guide does not aspire to present the means to solve the various political problems between the Greek and Turkish states. The problems will be hopefully resolved by the politicians in both countries through diplomatic channels and political means. The guide does not aim for “excellent” Greek-Turkish relations but only for “better” ones. It suggests ways of lessening tension so that the people involved can do the talking in a calmer atmosphere. A calm atmosphere, even if it does not secure solutions to the problems, makes communication more promising and our daily lives less tense.

The guide, except for the epilogue, was written before the earthquakes of 1999 that shook Turkey and Greece and which signaled the beginning of a “better” climate between the two countries. The two foreign ministers have not yet solved any the big issues, but they have changed the political atmosphere for the better. It is as if they tried to follow some guidelines of the Do’s and Don’ts mentioned here and this has made the difference. Those who do not appreciate the importance of détente by installments actually understand very little of the way human beings (and nations) feel and behave and also of the actual bottlenecks the Greek-Turkish relations had been confronted with.

Further, we should review anew the frame of referenced in which these matters should be perceived. We should transcend the daily, the ephemeral, the short term perspective and look at Greek-Turkish relations within a broader frame.

We should not forget the following: All the issues which today seem so important to some individuals may be bypassed by the flow of events. In a very short time our world will change so drastically that the issues of today will appear to have much less significance. We, ourselves, as individuals and as nations, are not necessarily at the center of the universe nor of a paramount significance in the first place. The whole history of mankind is a tiny bit of the history of our globe, and the history of the solar system is a split second of the history of our galaxy, and there are

infinite numbers of galaxies around. And our Sun 'soon' - in about five billion years - will fade away together with our solar system.

Therefore, whenever you deal with Greek-Turkish relations keep these caveats in mind and remember that 'vanity of vanities, all is vanity'. Nationalism does not secure eternity. I do not mean that we should despair and lose all hope. On the contrary, I am trying to send the message that one should care less about national issues, should relax, should focus on the positive side of things and enjoy life. As a minimum we should cultivate our individual gardens. Life is really very short to waste over issues like some of the ones mentioned in this volume.

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Appendix

INSTEAD OF BIBLIOGRAPHY / REFERENCES

The topics which are presented in this guide are related to many disciplines: history, politics, political science, international relations, literature, social psychology etc. To include here a bibliography and references seemed an impossible Herculean task to me. Instead, some of my publications which contain similar issues and ideas as the ones presented here are added in this appendix. A related bibliography is included in these publications.

Some texts are in English, others in Turkish and in Greek. I am sorry for not having included works of so many scholars who have helped me in ‘understanding’ my environment. My greater thanks however is to the Greeks and to the Turks who have been a source of inspiration and frustrating creativeness for me.

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