



THE  
IMAGINED  
'OTHER'  
AS  
NATIONAL  
IDENTITY

GREEKS & TURKS



CSDP

Hercules Millas



Civil Society Development Program (CSDP) run by the  
EC Representation - NGO Support Team (Euromed).

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The Turkish-Greek Civic Dialogue Project, a component of a larger ED funded programme - Civil Society Development Programme (CSDP) - has been implemented by NGO Support Team during the period between November 2002 and November 2004.

This Civic Dialogue Project was foreseen by the Commission as a demonstration project along with other similar micro projects. Its aim was to foster better relationships between the two societies by encouraging cooperation and partnership between the NGOs and other civil forces present in Turkey and Greece. In this respect our overall mission has been to contribute to the reconciliation process between the two countries rooted back in 1999.

For the implementation of this well programmed project by EC, NGO Support Team has decided to work with experts who are dedicated to improve Greek-Turkish relations in both countries. As members of NGO Support Team we were very ambitious to introduce an innovative perspective differing from earlier approaches and to come up with a sound methodology. During the whole project, especially during the workshops, we emphasised the lack of knowledge about the "other country" and the existence of stereotypes, prejudices, and moreover, the reasonless fears from strangers/neighbors. In this process we also tried to identify the needs. It was agreed that present networks and joint projects could not go as deep as it was desired and that fears and prejudices would still block fruitful cooperation, even in the resolution of modest technical problems.

We believe that the first step toward a solution on to improve civic dialogue between the two countries is to engender some kind of a self knowledge among the workshop participants. As an expected result (ideally of course); we hoped to contribute to a positive kind of transformation on several levels such as attitudes, behaviors and access to knowledge and information among both societies. This book can be considered as the embodiment of our contribution.

With this occasion we would like to thank all our contributors namely Mr. Gorgios Terzis and Mr. Halil Naçaoğlu for their kind support to the design of the workshops, to Ms. Paulina Lampsas for sharing with us her specific experiences on Turkish-Greek relations and for promoting our activities in Greece and to Ms. Damla Demiröz for her kind contribution. We also like to express our gratitude to our workshop participants for the work they put forth and for their sincerity about their own prejudices. Without them this book would not be possible.

On behalf of the NGO Support Team special thanks go to Mr. Hercules Millas; not only for writing this impressive book but also for his great energy to make us understand better the other's perception on various occasions. We know that in the 60's he was a champion sprinter of Turkey (100/200 meters), today, he is the champion of Turkish-Greek Civic Relations.

The participants of first workshop will remember the suggestion which came from gender and human rights thematic area subgroup "on cloning Mr. Millas" for a better cooperation in two countries. We believe that instead of cloning Mr. Millas, it would be better if we could create new names among the youth. We are hopeful to see this to happen in the years to come.

Finally we would like to thank to our Task Managers at the EC, Ms. Meriç Özgüneş and Ira Kaliampetsos as well as to the Delegation of European Commission to Turkey itself for their generous support to our project.

We hope that this book will help to give to the readers the right-message: "self knowledge . Enjoy !

CSDP NGO Support Team

## Preface

This book is a side product of three workshops that took place in Istanbul and in Athens in 2003 and 2004 and its object is to shed light to chronic conflicts that arise between neighboring countries.

The workshops were conceptualized and designed (together with other activities) under the auspices of the Civil Society Development Program (CSDP) run by the EC Representation and put into practice by NGO Support Team (Euromed). A separate general report is issued showing all particulars and outcomes of this wider program.

During the three workshops, among other activities, two questions were asked to the Greeks and Turkish participants who were all NGO representatives or academics and policy makers:

- a) What do you think as the negative qualities of the Other / what do you not like about the Other? and
- b) What do you think the Other thinks as your negative qualities / what do you think the Other does not like about you?

The answers in conjunction with other findings from other investigations and observations are illuminating. They shed light to issues that are related to national conflicts and national identity. This study is limited to this part of the workshop. The views, the evaluations and the conclusions presented in this analysis are of my own and they do not necessarily represent the views of the other members of the CSDP group. I participated in the workshops as the local focal point of Athens and as one of the moderators.

The answers to the said questions not only provide, for the first time, a 'list' of complaints, grievances, resentments and laments of the Greeks and Turks but they also show the way the two sides perceive and experience differently a conflict that at first glance seems to be symmetrical and/or reciprocal. Each side has its own repertoire of issues and complaints, its own sources that reproduce the conflict, as well as its unique way of confronting and coping with its frustration.

The evaluation of the findings also showed that the citizens of the two countries, irrespective of their intentions, operate on different levels of consciousness. Sometimes they silence some crucial issues, not only to be politically correct, but also because they do not accept them as such. And some other times, they voice complaints only indirectly, not even noticing that they constitute expressions of acute grievances and anger. There are various areas of conflict that are 'suppressed' and expressed as simple political issues, hiding the real questions such as standing fears, sense of shame, communal identity based on 'history', etc.

Greek-Turkish conflict and the craved rapprochement are more complex in the laymen's level than it is with politicians. National identity - the common denominator of all participants in any interethnic conflict - does not function to maximize social interest. It has its own intricate course. For this reason the general purpose of the three workshops was to accomplish 'self-knowledge'. It was a very ambitious target. Definitely we did not reach it but I hope we made a good start. The findings of these workshops together with other investigations and findings on Greek-Turkish relations compose a proposal to conceptualize an inter-national conflict on its inner dynamics.

Hercules Millas

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## Introduction

The Greeks and the Turks, especially after 1999, as if they wanted to make a fresh start in the new millennium, signaled a new period in their bilateral relations. The two parties, both on the level of the dignitaries, and of the citizens and NGOs now enjoy amicable relations. The question that is difficult to answer is the following: was the passed years of controversy an anomaly and a parenthesis that will not be repeated or is the present rapprochement a temporary situation that may give way to the old skirmishes?

The question can be put in another way too. Are the issues between Greece and Turkey of a contingent nature, in other words 'technical' and therefore can be resolved when tackled with 'good will' and systematically, or is there a more fundamental basis that nourishes and recreates enmity continuously, which in turn changes simple issues to serious problems? Naturally there may be a third alternative too: some issues may be of one kind and some problems of the other – or some individuals may behave as if the issues are easy to handle and others as if there are insuperable obstacles and a continuous crisis.

There are many analysts lately who are confident that the present day rapprochement is a 'one-way' leading to permanent peaceful coexistence. However, the questions are still valid. Since optimistic predicaments can only be verified in the future and especially since it is a necessity to assess the present amiable relations, a more thorough analysis is worthwhile.

I will first present some texts of Greeks and Turks to demonstrate that the issue is complex. One of the difficulties lies with the parties involved and not with the issues of controversy, as it is the case with most interethnic conflicts. The Greeks and the Turks do not perceive themselves as the intermediary (the subject) of each issue and problem. They do not even doubt that it is their evaluations – which often is exactly the opposite of the other side - that turns issues to problems, differences to enmity and small difficulties to a crisis. They perceive themselves as objective observers. They are confident that only the Other is ill informed, biased, obsessed, uneasy with and not ready to face reality. They have a great trust in their 'eyes' and their judgments and they do not suspect that human beings are not neutral detectors.

A second difficulty lies with the national identity of the participants. All issues in Greek-Turkish relations are associated with this identity since they are characterized and perceived within a national context. Once a problem is classified or is perceived as 'national' it is handled as such. Even the ecological issues in the Aegean become national ones once they are connected to 'Greek' or 'Turkish' sea, air space, territorial limits and eventually to 'our' and 'your' fish, birds, turtles etc.

This 'identity' is a complex issue in itself. It seems to consist of a self-identification that involves a perception of a past and a real or imagined group with which the citizens associate themselves. Modern citizens of nation-states are not neutral *vis a vis* this past and this in-group. They need to feel honored

by ‘their’ heritage and they enjoy portraying this heritage and history in a manner that is not traumatic to their identity. The Other plays an important role in this process. Sometimes the Other is what ‘we’ do not want to be and therefore he/she is described as the most negative person or nation. Sometimes we present him/her as a friend and as a positive Other, again with similar drives: the Other may be metamorphosed to the one who loves us and thus confirms ‘our’ superior and magnanimous past, our worth and our right to be appreciated; in short the positive Other is turned to a messenger who trumpets forth ‘our’ superiority.

On the theoretical level these introductory remarks do not pose any difficulty to anybody. All may accept the above as ‘general truths’ because they perceive them as realities associated only to the Other. Accepting the existence of prejudice, obsession, shortsightedness and even fanaticism, inability to introspect (self examination) and absence of self-doubt that are the result of a deep-seated ‘identity’ is not a problem; provided we talk about the Other.

Therefore the Greek-Turkish relations is a complex situation since the ‘national’ dimension of human relations is intricate, difficult to pinpoint and especially hard to be accepted by the interested parties. Silencing issues is one of the commonest manifestations of the parties, especially when they meet. Developing a selective national memory, i.e, forgetting some past incidents and living emotionally with some centuries-old other ones as if they happened only yesterday is another common phenomenon.

I will try in this analysis to discuss these issues. I will try to demonstrate the validity of my arguments hoping this enterprise will comprise a basis for a fruitful dialog – with the Other but especially with ourselves. I believe that ‘self-knowledge’ is the key to transect prejudices and harmful grievances.

#### Some texts (or behaviors) that need deconstruction

Some people often present contradictions in their arguments. Contradictions are very helpful in finding problematic areas. Self-contradictory statements show strain and confusion, they may present topics that cannot be handled effectively and calmly. Wishful thinking is characterized by fallacious arguments. Contradictions also demonstrate how complex a situation can be.

I will first present an article of a Turkish journalist that was published two days before I wrote these lines.<sup>1</sup> N. Özgentürk had just visited Greece, participated in a festival for Greek-Turkish friendship in North Greece and he wrote his impressions. He started saying that ‘with the Greeks we are like twin brothers. *Even* our plaki (boiled beans), our tsifteteli and zeybek (two dances) are the same.’ Another issue that shows that the two sides are like twins is the football victory of Greek team in the European championship and the Turkish success in the World Cup. Especially ‘both sides’ celebrate their victories with great enthusiasm. The journalist also narrates how both Greeks and Turks cheered ‘long live peace’ during this festival. Then he gives some cases where ‘we’ differ and concludes again that ‘we’ are very close: ‘both they and we, like to enjoy life and know how to face the sorrows of life.’

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<sup>1</sup> Nebil Özgentürk, ‘Komşuyla Ayrımız Gayrımız’, *Sabah*, 4 July 2004.

The surprise in the article is the list of differences. There are so many that the metaphor of ‘twins’ seems redundant. I mention some that the journalist noticed during his visit to Greece: politically the Greeks are in peace with democracy and they have imprisoned army officials who dared to establish a dictatorship, whereas in Turkey dictators are treated as heroes; Turkey has political problems and ‘contradictions’; in Turkey intellectuals go to prison for having expressed their opinions; Greek politicians (even though they speak a lot like their fellows in Turkey) move around without bodyguards contrary to their counterparts; women are more free and can enjoy life going out at nights; in short the membership to European Union and the high income make the big difference.

The journalist goes on enumerating differences of everyday life. Greeks ‘know how to rest and enjoy’: they have the habit of having a siesta in the afternoon and then they go out to enjoy themselves. When they drink they do not quarrel and do not start shooting like the Turks. People are not killed for that in Greece. Greeks sing their own songs, not foreign ones like ‘us’; and they dance for themselves not like ‘us’ just to show off. Their marriages are not so ‘official’ and the bride and the groom are relaxed. In the hotels the waiters and the receptionists are uninterested in serving, they are even rude, whereas in Turkey the dynamic young counterparts are very good at this.

Naturally one may disagree with these evaluations and can make his own list of differences and/or similarities. The question lies somewhere else: how is it possible to call ‘twin’ brothers two sides which share so few similarities (some of which, celebrating football victories for example, are actually shared by many nations), and which have so many serious differences on the political/ideological level as well as and in everyday life? (Let alone the differences in language, religion, nationality and national identity). If a father had two sons with so many behavioral differences he would suspect the loyalty of the mother!

The Greeks do not share this discourse of ‘we are very similar’ and not at all the other enthusiastic motto of being ‘the same’. ‘Sameness’ is a Turkish perception shared mostly by a portion of intellectuals. Naturally all Turks do not share this view; many feel they belong to a unique nation and religious group. Therefore the article of the journalist in Turkey is being understood as a political thesis: some will agree and will not notice the contradiction; others will disagree for his ‘conclusions’. In Greece on the other hand, a discourse of this kind will be perceived as an ‘eccentricity’; an act of goodwill but still ‘a strange thing to say’.<sup>2</sup>

Four days before the above article was published my students at the University of Athens who study ‘Political thought in Turkey’ had to answer in their final exam, among other questions, a) if political Islam poses a threat to secularism in Turkey, b) on what do they base their conviction and c) if there are prejudices in Greece against Islam in Turkey. One of my students (who did not attend the lectures regularly!) said that the followers of Islam normally impose their way of life to others, that the Muslims being ‘without capability of critical thought’ behave like ‘sheep’ and that they always follow

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<sup>2</sup> An interpretation of the phenomena will be tried further ahead. For the moment I try to show some contradictory ‘national’ approaches.

their leaders since this is required by their religion. Islamists specially oppress women. She based this knowledge on what she had 'heard'. This student also knows that in Turkey when a girl is raped her father orders her execution. This is of course 'barbarism'. The Muslims cannot tolerate different religions either. They are conservative and resist modernization. Alterity creates anxiety to Muslims.

As for the prejudices in Greece against Islam in Turkey; yes, she said, there are: Some people believe Islam is an austere religion, even a barbaric one that does not allow women to live freely. For those prejudiced people Islam is as if it does not preach love among human beings. 'Probably we exaggerate when we associate Turks with barbarism but religious fanaticism is really a problem' she added.

The article of the journalist and the answer of the student have some common characteristics. They contain contradictions in spite of their effort to write sensible texts; the journalist addressed to at least 400,000 readers (this is the circulation of his paper) and the student had to prove to her teacher that her answer makes sense. Their second common point is that they did not notice their contradictions. For them their writing is 'normal'. As for me, these approaches towards the Other are 'usual' but not persuasive.

I have learned a lot about Greeks and Turks and their feelings for the Other from my students. I taught Greek literature at Ankara University for four years and another four years Turkish literature and 'political thought' in three universities of Greece. The exams, the papers prepared on selected issues and the discussions in class were revealing. I noticed that these students did not know anything about the way the Other side thought and felt. One student in Ankara, in a composition related to a Greek novel, wrote that it was the first time in her life that she had heard that the Turkish side might have committed atrocities against the Other during a war. She said she was shocked. Based on the answers that I received to a privately distributed questionnaire, I found out that half of the first year students of Ankara University who were studying international relations did not know that Ottomans had captured Athens. In Greece the situation may be worse because not only do they not know the Other but they also have deeply rooted misinformation about the Other.

Few additional examples may show the extent of absence of self-knowledge. Once I had given a quotation from a novel of a nationalist Turkish author and had asked my Greek students to characterize him ideologically. The author was accusing the Greeks (as a total and uniform body) for atrocities during a Greek-Turkish war. A student correctly called him 'nationalist' and explained that she called him so because he mistakenly had characterized 'all the Greeks' as violent, generalizing and forming nationalist stereotypes in the way nationalists usually do. Then she continued and explained that the author is wrong because the Greeks, on the contrary, are the opposite: civilized, do not commit atrocities but they only fight when they have to, etc. Apparently she had learned what a stereotype meant, but at the same time she also preserved the image she had for her side.

It is not only the students and the journalists that contradict themselves, that they do not see that their views do not make sense or that they contain

surprising ‘silencing’. In a book of mine where Greek and Turkish novels and the image of the Other was discussed I dedicated a whole chapter on contradictions. There is a great variety of them: some authors claimed that they respected the Other but in fact they systematically used only humiliating characterizations against ‘him’, others claimed their side was just and magnanimous but the examples that they gave proved the opposite, some others had ‘forgotten’ the most important historical incidents when dealing with the history of ‘them’ and ‘us’, simply because the events did not fit to the thesis developed.<sup>3</sup> The same tendencies are noticed in the texts of Greek and Turkish historians.<sup>4</sup>

Even psychoanalysts, who are experts in detecting the unconscious side of human beings and experts in conflict resolution showed weaknesses of this kind. The prominent researcher Dr. Vamik Volkan for example, in his book on Greek-Turkish conflict uses different wording and characterizations for the similar phenomena, depending on who the actor is: ‘us’ or ‘them’. As I wrote in a criticism of this book,<sup>5</sup>

The Turks ‘conquer’ (p.64), the Greeks ‘invade’ (p. 102); the Greeks purify their language to ‘reject’ Turkish words (p. 88), the Turks simply initiate ‘language reforms’ (p. 144); the Greeks grow ‘against’ Turkish territories (p. 77), the Turks expand ‘against Anatolia’ (p. 28); the identity discussion among the Greeks show their ‘confusion’ (p. 87), but Turkey’s recent ‘identity crisis’ is simply a process of ‘searching for a newer identity’ (p. 186-188); Crete is ‘absorbed’ by the Greeks (p. 203), Turkey ‘conquers’ Cyprus or ‘triumphs’ in Cyprus in the sixteenth century and ‘intervenes’ in 1974 (p. 131); the Turks were ‘humiliated’ by the Other in Cyprus (p. 142), but the Greeks ‘thought’ that they were insulted by the Other (p. 204). The word *self-determination* is used only once, as a right of the Turks (p. 101). When innocent people are killed, they are ‘massacred’ if the dead are ‘ours’ (p. 78) and they ‘lose their lives’ if they belong to the Other (p. 67).

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<sup>3</sup> See - *Türk Romanı ve ‘Öteki - Ulusal Kimlikte Yunan İmajı, (The Turkish Novel and the ‘Other’- The Image of the Greek and National Identity)* Istanbul: Sabancı, 2000. (The study is based on approximately 500 novels and includes a chapter on Greek novels and the image of the Turk).

- *Εικόνες Ελλήνων και Τούρκων - σχολικά βιβλία, ιστοριογραφία, λογοτεχνία και εθνικά στερεότυπα, (Images of Greeks and Turks - textbooks, historiography, literature and national stereotypes)*, Athens: Alexandria, 2001.

<sup>4</sup> For the Greek historians see: H. Millas, - *Εικόνες Ελλήνων και Τούρκων - σχολικά βιβλία, ιστοριογραφία, λογοτεχνία και εθνικά στερεότυπα, (Images of Greeks and Turks - textbooks, historiography, literature and national stereotypes)*, Athens: Alexandria, 2001. For Turkish historiography see: H. Millas, - *Yunan Ulusunun Doğuşu (The Birth of The Greek Nation)*, Istanbul: İletişim, 1994. (Includes a chapter on how the Greeks are presented in the Turkish historiography.) and ‘Non-Muslim Minorities in the Historiography of Republican Turkey: The Greek Case’, in *The Ottomans and the Balkans: A Discussion of Historiography*, Ed. By Fikret Adanır and Suraiya Faroqhi, Leiden: Brill, 2002.

<sup>5</sup> Dr.Vamik Volkan and Dr. Norman Itzkowitz, *Turks and Greeks: Neighbours in Conflict*, The Eothen Press, 1994. For the critic of this book see: H. Millas, - ‘Greek-Turkish Conflict and Arsonist Firemen’ in *Istanbul : New Perspectives on Turkey*, Spring 2000 (No 22).

I remember a comic-tragic instance during the closing session of a meeting of Greek and Turkish NGO representatives in 1999 in Athens, one with the widest participation ever, where the Greek representative with his capacity of the organizing committee that had initiated the meeting with the purpose to accomplish rapprochement between the two parties (and to transcend stereotypes, too, I suppose) had said in his last sentence of the closing speech, thanking the participants, that ‘everybody was very cooperative and productive, even the Turks!’ The Turks started laughing and I am afraid that few Greeks understood why.

How should we interpret these attitudes? It is for sure ‘one sidedness’, ‘prejudice’, ‘stereotypes’, ‘lack of empathy’, ‘wishful thinking’, etc. However, what do actually these words mean? Why does this kind of behavior reappear so often? Why is it so difficult to behave more ‘rationally’?

A final example - among many that can be presented – showing the complexity that characterizes Greek-Turkish relations is the following. In 2001 the foreign minister of Greece George Papandreou hosted his counterpart Ismail Cem in Samos Island and at a certain moment he danced a Greek dance (zeybekiko, which is executed solo). Ismail Cem clapped his hands during this dance. Until now Papandreou has been criticized by his opponents, even by some members of this own party for this dance. His mistake has never been openly stated, but an ironical meaningful smile always appears on the faces of his critics when they remind him of this ‘error’ and the presence of Ismail Cem: ‘you danced as he clapped his hands!’

On the other end of the Aegean the photograph that showed this scene was immediately censored. The official Turkish news agency Anatolian removed Ismail Cem from the background and replaced him with a handsome gentleman. (Somebody told me that this gentleman belongs to the body responsible for the protocol but I cannot confirm it). Actually both photographs appeared in the Turkish press but the one that is censored appears more often.<sup>6</sup>

I personally never understood what was wrong with this dance and why there was so much uneasiness about it in both sides. Why were the parties so much disturbed? For the Greek side my guess is that the prime minister danced like a dancer entertaining the Turkish dignitary (does this remind you of a harem of Hollywood?). TH But why the censoring in Turkey? One may suspect that Papandreou looked self confident with his masculine dancing figure whereas ‘our minister’ was only passively watching. Whatever the reason of these ‘sensitivities’ - that cut across the masses, the intellectuals and the ministries of both societies – it shows that Greek-Turkish relations are multi-dimensional.

This complexity is the problematic of this book. Some observations and findings of the three workshops mentioned above will be presented below and then a general assessment and discussion will follow.

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<sup>6</sup> For the photographs see *Toplumsal Tarih* (history journal), August 2001, no. 92, p. 66.

## Chapter One

### First List of Complaints

The three workshops were held in Istanbul (the first and the third) and in Athens in November 2003 and in March and June of 2004. The total number of participants that answered the first question – What do you think as the negative qualities of the Other? / What do you not like in the Other? – are 74, 42 Greeks and 32 Turks. Very few participants did not select either identity or abstained and therefore they are not included in the interpretation.

The participants were selected and invited to the workshops according to some criteria. They were mainly representatives of Greek or Turkish NGO's, active in interethnic arena, preferably having prior experience with the Other, but also academics, mayors and other dignitaries in policy making. Care was taken that the participants were of both genders, various age groups but preferably young people and able to communicate in English. The selected thematic areas of the organizations and/or individuals invited to the workshops were the following: issues of women, youth, human rights, environment, culture, media, disaster preparedness and rescue groups, trade and industry, G-T relations, municipalities, preservation of cultural heritage, minorities, academics, education of history and policy makers.

It is clear that even though the thematic areas are very wide the invited participants are highly selective because they were individuals with some particularities. They were educated people able to speak a foreign language. Actually almost 80% of the participants had higher education and more than 50% were members of a university. Most of the participants had experience in working with the Other, shared the willingness to communicate with the Other and were optimistic in fruitful results. Apart from the above, the participants were active personalities, mostly in NGO's but also in various public activities. No doubt this group is not representative of the 'average' Greek and Turk and this will be taken into consideration when evaluating the results.

During the workshops the participants discussed the general framework within which the bilateral relations are carried on. They reviewed the stereotypes and preconceived notions about the 'Other' that prevail among the citizens of the two countries as well as the bureaucratic and the practical issues that still hamper the best possible relations. In the end, the participants, who were all experienced in working in various NGOs that were in touch with a counterpart in the other country, suggested ways to further improve their cooperation.

On the first day of these three-day long workshops I had the opportunity to address to the participants. In my presentation I reminded how only ten years ago when Greeks and Turks met they used to attack and insult each other, and how the situation has changed and now we communicate in peace and in a friendly climate. Then I noted that what was presently missing was the sincerity to state our complaints and grievances. We silence many issues and we only imply some others. I tried to encourage an open communication and to stress the need for 'self-knowledge' (See Attachment 1). The two 'questions' were asked later, after this presentation.

The idea of asking these specific questions to the participants was not based on a ‘scientific methodology’ or on a well-defined and known procedure. It originated from a playful personal curiosity. I wondered what the answers of such a group would be and I was not very confident of substantial findings at the start. As a very pleasant surprise however, it proved that the participants themselves showed a great interest in the answers of their group that were discussed at the end of each session. (The subsequent groups were not informed about the findings of the previous workshops.) I also believe that eventually the ‘answers’ compose a basis for a fruitful discussion of the relations between the Greeks and the Turks.

### The lists of complaints

The 42 Greeks wrote down a total of 97 complaints (2.3 complaints per person) and the 32 Turks 72 complaints (again 2.3 complaints per person). (For the complete list of the complaints of Greeks and Turks see Appendix 2).

Some of the grievances were voiced by various participants. For example, the Turks mentioned six times that the Greeks are ‘nationalists’ and the Greeks three times the same for the Turks. On the other hand, even though some accusations were phrased differently they seemed very close. The Greeks stated that they did not like ‘the role of the Turkish military in politics’ (5 times), ‘political and military intervention at all levels of life’ (3 times) and that ‘the Turkish army is imperialistic’. These three complaints that were heard nine times in total may form a group of complaints since they all seem to point to the same direction: annoyance with the role of the army. Therefore the complaints were grouped to compose close clusters as shown (as a1, a2, etc.) in Appendix 2.

All the answers were also grouped in three main categories (a, b, and c). The grievances directed to the state, government, politicians, army, dignitaries etc. of the Other compose the first category. Complaints that are directed against the ‘character’, behavior, tendencies of the Other compose the second category. Complaints that could not be classified in the first two were shown in the third category. Quite often complaints of different categories are indirectly interconnected since some characteristics of the Other, for example, may be perceived as backing up the negative state and/or the government.

A comprehensive interpretation of the test results will be tried further below when a thorough study of all the answers are considered as a whole. The complaints of each side against the Other will be presented first.

#### A. The complaints of the Greeks

The Greeks do not like the Turkish ‘state’ and the role of the army. The army is accused (in a1, total 9 times) for its ‘role’ and its political intervention at all levels of life. It is also characterized as ‘imperialistic’ (once). The state which is called various times in Turkish ‘*derin devlet*’ (i.e., *the deep state*) is accused being ‘oppressive’ and negative in general (4 times). It ‘influences’ the Turkish people and does not treat the Kurds well (4 times). The state influences relations with Greece negatively and delays solving problems such

as the Cyprus issue, the school of Halki, etc. The Turkish politicians are not good either (a2).<sup>7</sup>

Other complaints give an indication as of what is not good with the 'state' and the political system in general (a3). The Greeks do not like the absence of 'democracy' and respect of 'human rights' (3), the lack of 'freedom of expression', the 'negative state-citizen relationship', the 'suppression on journalists' and the 'intolerance of secular identity on religious groups'. 'Ethnocentric education (2) and the 'situation of women' should probably be included in the shortcomings of the Turkish 'state' (a4).

These grievances sum up to a total of 33 and they comprise the 34% of all the complaints of the Greeks. The category 'b' complaints, which are directed to the 'character' and 'behavior' of the Turks are not completely irrelevant to the shortcomings of the 'state'. In some cases it is as if the 'negative' behavior of the Turks sustains this negative 'state' and 'army'. Many of the shortcomings of the Turks, such as 'chauvinism' and 'nationalism' for example, can be directly attributed to a citizen-state relationship that indirectly backs up a negative state. In other words, the 'negative state' is explained through a political and ideological milieu, which the citizens themselves compose.

Some complaints of this kind against the 'Turks' are the following (b1). Chauvinism and obsession with nationalism and/or with Atatürk (6) and nationalism (3) are mentioned 9 times in total. Arrogance 'of a big country' (3) superiority complex and aggressiveness, submission to political figures, not critical attitude (2) are political 'complaints' too. Kemalism is criticized twice: 'devotion to father figure' and as 'confusing internationalism with Kemalism'. Turks are perceived as feeling they are the heirs of a big empire (this can be associated to superiority complex). Finally 'Islamic fundamentalism' is mentioned without further explanation. The total of these complaints are 20 (21%) and if added to the previously given 'a' category, all together comprise the 55% of all complaints of the Greeks.

There follows another group of complaints which resemble the above, but they are rather less political and more idiosyncratic (b2). They appear as political tendencies but they can be interpreted as the 'characteristic' of the Other, too. The statement 'the average Turk accepts the deep state' (2) is a complaint that presents a temperament of the Other. Statements such as 'Turks do not have respect for human rights' (3), they give 'importance to hierarchy in work and family' (2), they follow 'strict social stratification', they are not open on matters of family, (2), they are conservative and they 'delay in adjusting to new developments' (2) sound as 'sociological' observations and which endure time and compose rather to social reality than a political climate. They appear as 'diachronic entities' or in other words as stereotypes. Turks also 'do little to change public life'; they are conformists and lack solidarity with the poor and weak. These are in total 15 statements and comprise the 21% of the complaints.

Another group of nine complaints (b3) are more closely associated with the Greeks. They compose a unity where the Turks appear with some

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<sup>7</sup> Unless it is otherwise specified, the complaints mentioned appear only once. From here on the number in parenthesis show the frequency of the complaint.

'national characteristics' vis a vis the Other. Turks have general insecurity about the Other, low self-esteem, they are paranoiac with the Treaty of Sèvres and the *Megali Idea*, feel a conspiracy coming from the West (syndrome of Sèvres), they are 'attached to old hatred', they do not understand the culture of the Other, they talk of 'common culture' too much, they present a superfluous friendship with the Greeks and are ignorant of 'common history'. Naturally all these 'national characteristics' are in a sense political since they can be viewed as composing a unity of 'anxiety about the Other' in matters of security and historical references. The question remains however: whose is the 'anxiety'? Is it of the Turks or of the Greeks who perceive an environment as the above? These complaints are nine in total (and only 9% of the total).

Turks seem to have some 'personal' shortcomings ('vices') too (b4). They do not 'express their minds openly' (4), they 'conceal intentions under politeness' (2), they are cunning and are easily carried away/influenced (probably by those higher in the hierarchy). The eight complaints of this kind comprise the 8% of all complaints.

There is a final category of complaints – 'c', Various – which is not easy to define. Some of these statements are quite technical, others difficult to classify and some others very humorous and/or irrelevant. In general these complaints seem the least ideological. There are twelve of them, seen in Attachment 2 and will dealt with in the final assessment.

#### Preliminary comments on the complaints of the Greeks

One should be very cautious in interpreting the above. These may not be the complaints of the Greeks but the ones voiced 'in the presence' of the Turks. The first interesting aspect is that there are very few complaints that are directly connected to Greek interests. There are two 'political' references to Greece (the Turkish state plays a negative role in matters of Greece, it does not solve Cyprus and Halki issues) and one stating that Turkish friendship with Greeks is superfluous. All the other complaints are either completely disassociated with the Greeks or one has to infer the connection in order to suspect the Greek connection of the complaint.

Why do the Greeks complain for issues that do not affect them? It is not clear why the negative perception of Turkish 'state' with the alleged negative effect on Turkish society is a main topic of grievances to Greeks. *Derin devlet*, lack of democracy, negative treatment of Kurds, bad politicians etc. (the first 33 complaints, except the two), are all internal problems of Turkey. Can we infer that the Greeks have only complaints about the local issues of Turkey or should we think that the Greeks believe that negative state apparatus is eventually harmful to Greek-Turkish relations? If it is the second, why don't the Greeks directly say it but 'silence' their main concern?<sup>8</sup>

The same questions apply to the next group of complaints. Is chauvinism, nationalism, arrogance, obsession with political figures, etc., shortcomings and vices of Turks or are they characteristics that eventually threaten and harm the Greeks? If the second case has predominance, why was it

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<sup>8</sup> It is like the dialogue that I remember from an old film of François Truffeaut. To the question what he wants most in life, the second guy says 'money' and when he is asked what he is going to do with that money he answers 'I will travel around the world.' Why didn't he say he likes most to travel around the world in the first place?

systematically avoided and not declared? Nobody said, for example ‘Turks have nationalistic intentions against Greece’, or ‘Turks have chauvinistic feelings against the Greeks’. How are we going to interpret the complaint of ‘big country complex’? Is it personal weakness of the Turks or a threat to Greeks?

These ‘shortcomings’ are valid for many countries of the world but also of the Balkans and the Middle East. But the Greeks have ‘problems’ almost exclusively with Turkey. Is it because of Cyprus and Halki only? Why did we not hear other complaints that would justify and explain the long duration of Greek-Turkish problematic relations? A systematic silencing and an avoidance of directly and openly stating the complaints seem to be in effect.

The complaints about the ‘character of Turks’ need also be interpreted first in order to make sense out of them. Acceptance of ‘deep state’, lack of respect to human rights, conservatism etc., – if true – are definitely negative aspects of Turkish society and it is normal for the Greeks not to like them. The question that comes to one’s mind is the following: are the Greeks so much concerned about the ills of the Turkish society or are they worried that the ills will have a negative effect on the Greeks? This possibility has not been voiced either.

The complaints that need a thorough deconstruction are the ones that have to do with the ‘insecurity’, the ‘Sèvres syndrome’, the ‘*Megali Idea*’, the ‘common culture discourse’ etc., of the Turks. Connected with a tendency (of the Turk) not to ‘express his mind openly and hide it behind politeness’ (one wonders what intentions the Turks hide) the ‘cunning Turk’ appears rather as a threat than a neighbor with weaknesses and shortcomings. The word ‘threat’ however, was not mentioned; not even once!

A final assessment will be tried below, jointly with the answers given to the ‘second question’: what do you think the Other does not like in you?

### The image of a negative Turk

One should not misinterpret the above. Each Greek did not voice the 61 different complaints enumerated in Appendix 2! This is a list of all complaints of all 42 Greek participants. Each Greek declared different grievances. The reader should also be reminded that the participants were specifically asked to write their complaints. Had they been asked to write down the aspects they ‘liked’ in the Other, we would have ended with a much more cheerful list.

There is not a consensus about Turkish image either. Each individual has normally a different image of the neighbor. Some may even refuse to think in these terms, i.e., with stereotypes of Turks and Greeks. However, I will venture to draw a profile of the Turk based on the above complaints. I will put them all (or almost all) together, in one person. This portrait is not the worst possible ever! The stereotype will be ‘completed’ when the grievances of the ‘second question’ are also analyzed and the new ‘shortcomings’ of the Other will be added to this one. Try to see the humorous side of this exercise.

And try to answer the question: is this ‘the image of a Turk’ as it is reflected by ‘him’ to the outer world or is it ‘the image of a group of Greeks having an image of a Turk in their minds’?

An arrogant Turk  
(Collectively sketched by Greeks)

Why does he look so *arrogant*? He behaves as if he is still the ruler of a *big empire*, and probably because of that he often reminds us that *Turkey is a big country*. He always wants to feel *superior when he communicates with ‘us’*. But he cannot fool me! In reality he is trying to hide his *insecurity* and his *low self-esteem*. (Because ‘we’ have always been superior to him) He has *paranoiac fears against the West and the Megali Idea*. He thinks that *the West and the Greeks conspire against him*.

It may be due to this *insecurity* that he feels the need to develop a powerful *state (derin devlet) and an army, which controls all aspects of life. The military intervenes in all aspects of life. This state cannot but become oppressive. Not only by interfering and manipulating even the consciousness of the people but sometimes by directly suppressing the citizens themselves. See the situation of the Kurds for example. There is no freedom of expression, journalists are suppressed and even a secular identity is imposed to religious groups and to minorities.*

And what does our arrogant Turk do when all these happen? Due to his *devotion to ‘father figure’ Atatürk* and his tendency to be *carried away (and be persuaded) easily*, let alone his *lack of critical attitude*, not only does he not fight against the state but on top of it he *submits to political figures, he accepts the ‘deep state’ and he succumbs to the set hierarchy*. In this country of his *a negative state-citizen relationship prevails*. He is *unwilling to change this public life* because he is very *conservative, actually a conformist*.

Is he clever? Maybe, but I would prefer to say he is rather *cunning*. He looks very *polite* but I am afraid *he hides his intentions and his feelings behind this mask*. To tell you the truth, these hidden intentions are what bothers me most. Let me explain why.

Right next to us he have this *Turkish army which is imperialistic, very bad politicians and a state that negatively influences Greek-Turkish relations*. See how they *delay in solving standing issues such as the Cyprus problem and the closed-down school of Halki. This Turk is a nationalist and even a chauvinist*. But no wonder, he has been brought up with an *ethnocentric educational system*. On one hand he talks a lot *about our supposed common culture, about ‘dolma’ etc.*, but on the other hand he *understands nothing about the culture of the Other*. His *friendship is superfluous* and he is *ignorant of our common history*. He is actually *attached to old hatreds*. Considering his *lack of respect to human rights and democracy* I believe this Turk constitutes a threat to me.

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## B. The complaints of the Turks

The asymmetry is most striking in the complaints of the Turks *vis a vis* the Greek 'state' (a1). Actually the complaints are not targeted to the Greek 'state' *per se*, nor to the 'army'. The complaints are against the policies of the Greek 'government': supporting separatist PKK, ill treatment of Turkish minority in Western Thrace, provoking the masses, 'exaggerating' Cyprus issue and creating tension and enmity in the bilateral relations. Some complaints are directed to bureaucracy (a2): visa problems, red tape (2 times) and the 'behaviour in the consulates' and in the national borders and customs. Some criticized the 'left' political groups as 'religiously dependent' (a3). The image of the Turks in textbooks is a source of complaint as well as the 'state-individual' relationship. These sum up to 14 complaints and constitute 19% of the total of 72 complaints.

Complaints by Turks related to the 'character' of the Greeks show similarities with their Greek counterparts (b1). The Greeks are 'nationalists' (6), arrogant, fanatical and too 'preoccupied' with the Turks, both left and right believe in conspiracy against them, they are 'too critical' and 'exaggerate political issues' (12 complaints, 17% of the total). The two groups of complaints, which are mostly 'political', put together (a and b1) comprise the 36% of grievances, whereas the corresponding Greek complaints, as we saw above, were 55%.

Then follows a list of 'historical' complaints, of concerns of negative Turkish 'image' and some resentment associated with the first two (b2 and b3). These complaints sum up to 20, (27%) of the total, whereas in the corresponding case of the Greeks the grievances comprise only 9% of the Greek complaints.

According to the Turks the Greeks are 'proud of their past (of Ancient Greece for example) (4), 'they write Ottoman-Greek history nationalistically' and they 'disregard our common past'. They do not 'feel one community with us'. They have an ideological history' and they 'appropriate our common traditions (coffee, cheese etc.). (Total 9 complaints).

Next we have the 'image' complaints - a category of resentment that is not encountered on the Greek side. The Turkish participants complained that the Greeks think Turks are 'aggressors' (occupied Greek lands), see Turks as 'barbarians', Greeks have stereotypes, they think Turks smoke hashish and nargile and that they do not drink alcoholic drinks. Greeks believe everything they read in the media, do not trust the Turks, they dislike, they even hate them and they develop insincere relationships. The indignation is expressed with long sentences and a rhetoric question: 'Greeks did not invite Turks, not even as tourists (to a meeting?) while they invite all the rest of the world' and 'why aren't the Greeks on top of the list of friends of Turkey?'

An asymmetry is noticed in complaints having to do with the 'character' and 'behaviour' of the Other too. According to the Greeks the Turks are 'arrogant' (4 times) on the political arena and with respect to the balance of power: 'big country' and 'ex-empire'. The Turks on the contrary see lack of 'humility' in a different framework; rather at a historical/cultural level. Greeks lack humbleness, they are snobbish, they think they are Europeans (2), 'they are sure they are right' (2), they are self-satisfied, they do not listen to

the Other, it is difficult to communicate with Greeks, they are restrained (3), they are superficial, they use demagogy and they always complain.

These lamentations are coupled with some more complaints that are associated with the negative 'character of the Greeks' (b5). Greeks are hot tempered (2), noisy (2), pedants, untrustworthy, too religious, not considerate, not punctual, honest but harsh (10 complains, 14%).

The third category (c-Variou, c1) of 'complaints' is a surprise. Four different Turkish participants did not point any complaint saying that that do not have any: 'I meet Greeks for the first time', 'Greeks are not the Other', 'I wish peace between Greeks and Turks' were the answers given. (These answers were not included to the 'complaints'). There were two other answers with great sense of humour! 'Greeks do not cook well' and 'they always win in basketball games'.

### The Preliminary comments on the complaints of the Turks

Turkish participants voiced in total 72 complaints worded in 55 different ways (Appendix 2). When grouped together we obtain three big categories (a, b, c) and 9 groups (a1, a2 etc). Looking closely to see what the complaints about 'situations' that may cause a conflicts are, i.e., the situations that 'harm' or distress the Other, we see that these are of two kinds: a) real situations that need to be corrected, and b) 'psychological' attitudes that should be abandoned by the Greeks (or ignored by the Turks).

The real problems mentioned in the workshops originate from the Greek government or the bureaucracy: Greeks back up separatist PKK, the Turkish minority is not treated properly, the Turks face difficulties in the consulates and in the boarders (visa problems). These complaints are voiced in total 6 times (8%). Some other grievances against the Greek government (and Greeks) do not refer to real problems but only to 'images' and perceptions. The politicians (and the Greeks) are perceived to 'exaggerate' some (presumably) minor issues: 'Greek government exaggerates Cyprus issue', 'Greeks exaggerate political issues'.

The majority of Turkish complaints seem to consist of 'misperceptions', 'misunderstandings', 'prejudices', non-valid 'images' etc., originating from the Greek camp. Apart from the 'exaggerations' mentioned above the policy of the Greek government to 'provoke masses', to 'disturb cultural bilateral relations' and to promote a 'negative image of Turks in the textbooks' are actions of this kind too. The Greek government behaves *as if* there is a problem (where in fact there is not); and this of course becomes *the* problem.

It is as if the whole difficulty is one of an 'image', of the image of the Turks. The whole group of b2 and b3 seems to consist of this image problem. Greeks disregard 'our common past', 'write Ottoman history nationalistically' and by ideological history writing they develop tension: 'they do not feel one community with us', 'they think Turks occupied their lands', 'they see us as barbarians', they have stereotypes etc. Actually, have these not happened the 'Greeks would have been on top of the list of friends of Turkey'. These 'image' problems (voiced as complaints) are in total more than 30 (42%).

Some of the negative 'Greek characteristics' are also related to this image and prejudice problematic. The lack of humbleness of Greeks and the whole

of group b4 (and partly b5) complaints can be associated to the unwillingness of Greeks (due to their haughtiness, pride, superiority complex) to transcend nationalism (6 times in b1) and fanaticism against the Turks (total about of 10 complaints).

When the complaints related to images and related issues (exaggerations, lack of humbleness etc.) are summed up we reach the total of about 40 complaints (55%). This is an interesting figure because it equals to the Greek case where we saw that 55% of the Greek complaints are directed to the Turkish 'state' and to the related power relations. Tentatively we can infer that the Greeks have voiced complaints of 'state relations' and political, and the Turks grievances, or rather resentments and offenses of image, misunderstandings and prejudices.

An additional indication that the Turkish participants are more inclined to 'play down' the differences and instead bring forward 'misunderstanding' is seen in the answers of four Turkish participants who, contrary to the instructions, declared that they have no complaints and talked of peace and good will. But all these comments are preliminary and tentative. The final assessment will follow the evaluation of 'question two'.

#### The image of a negative Greek

Can we sketch a portrait of a negative Greek based on the list these complaints? Why not!

(And try to answer the following question: is this portrait 'the image of a Greek' - in the sense of an image reflected to the outer world by the Greeks- or is it 'the imagination of a group of Turks' - in the sense that the image is nothing but the perception of a group of Turks about some imaginary Greeks, and of course about themselves?).

#### My Greek Brother (Collectively sketched by Turks)

*As a Turk I feel we are one community with my Greek brother. I do not have any complaint from him. He is not the Other for me and the more I meet him the more I like him. My wish is to live in peace with him. We have the same traditions and under normal conditions this Greek is on the top of the list of friends of Turkey.*

*But the conditions are not normal! The Greek politicians and governments have provoked the Greek masses (and this Greek friend of mine), disturbed the cultural bilateral relations, created a negative image of the Turk in textbooks and media, exaggerated situations such as the Cyprus issue and other political issues and, what a pity, my Greek brother displays a strange attitude. He became a fanatic against Turks; he is preoccupied with me, all his compatriots, left and right, think we conspire against them.*

*My brother especially thinks that we occupied his land and he calls me barbarian. There are a thousand of stereotypes for a penny (this is a Turkish*

expression that means, abundance of stereotypes). Can you imagine it? *He believes everything that he reads in media against me* and the next day he reaches the point to ask me if I *smoke hashish and nargile!* Lately, I mean the last hundred years or so, he refrains from *inviting me even though he invites everybody else.*

I suspect *he does not trust* me any more; I feel that he dislikes me, maybe he even *hates me.* I think this nationalism of his is not an accident. It is the result of *ideological history* education. He has read books that *present Ottoman-Greek history nationalistically.* He ended up being too *proud of his historical past, of Ancient Greece.* He lacks the traditional *humility and humbleness,* now *he thinks he is a European.* You have to see how *self-satisfied* he looks. He *never listens* to me, and it is *very difficult for me to communicate with him.* *He always thinks he is right,* let alone his *demagogy* and his *superficial* behavior. Don't you think that this means an *insincere relationship?* And what I hate most is that he always *complains, complains, complains.*

I forgive some of his personal weaknesses. Who is perfect? He is *hot tempered, noisy, 'ukala' (smart ass), untrustworthy, inconsiderate, too religious, not punctual and harsh.* But mind you, he is *honest!*

I am sure he is very upset that his *government helps PKK and treats Turkish minority very badly.* He told me personally that he is sorry that I *suffer in the Greek customs and consulates to get a visa.* He *does not like Greek bureaucracy* either.

Thinking it over, I think he might have some faults. But I repeat, under normal conditions this Greek likes me very much, because we lived for years together happily (under the Ottoman rule). Earnestly, I feel this Greek is my twin brother.

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In the next chapter we will see the answers the Greek and Turkish participants gave to the 'second question'. As you will see, many of the above will have to be reconsidered. Among the items to be reinterpreted are the two 'collectively sketched portraits'. One possibility is that there is not one 'portrait' but many, as are the images, depending on the number of the painters!

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## Chapter Two

### Second List of Complaints

#### The answers of the Greeks to the Second Question

First the answers of the Greeks to 'second question' will be reviewed then of the Turks. There are in total 89 answers of the Greeks worded in 44 different ways (the few 'various' answers which are irrelevant to our study are not included in this figure – see Attachment 3). The 44 different answers are grouped again to compose comprehensible unities.

The answers given by the Greeks bring a new dimension to the 'complaints' of the Greeks: they change the agenda of the grievances and introduce issues of sovereignty, irredentism, historical rights, etc. Even though when the Greeks were asked to list their complaints about the Turks they did not mention similar issues, whereas when asked indirectly they 'complain' that the Turks see the Greeks as having claims on Turkish lands.

The Greeks see Turks as perceiving the Greeks to 'have claims on Turkish lands' (2 times), to follow *Megali Idea* (4), to claim Aegean as Greek (2), wanting the 'Enosis' of Cyprus and 'not forgetting 1919-1922' (in total 10 times, 11%). In connection with these complaints, which are partly connected to 'historical issues', some other 'historical' grievances are voiced (7 in total). The Turks (according to the Greeks) see the Greeks being arrogant about their history, emphasizing their cultural background, 'ungrateful to Ottoman period', etc. Greeks also believe that the Turks see them in a kind of alliance with the West: 'Greeks are the spoiled children of Europe' (4 times) and they have convinced Europe that they are Europeans. These complaints total to 24 (27%).

There are some other 'usual' complaints and characterizations 'against the Greeks' which seen in the new perspective of 'sovereignty rights' they acquire a 'meaning' and 'explanation'. The Turks supposedly see the Greeks as 'hostile against the Turkish people' (4), 'against friendship' (2), arrogant and selling Europeanism' (4), creating obstacles and harming Turkey on issues of EU (5), etc. These are in total 19 (20%) complaints.

Taking all these as a package of complaints (43 in total, 48%) it can be seen that the image of the Greeks *vis a vis* the Turks is as follows: The Turks see 'us' as a nation which has irredentist claims on Turkish lands, operates contrary to the interests of Turkey, has Europe as her ally and does not like Turks (see Attachment 3, a, b).

There are other negative characteristics that the Turks attribute (according to the Greek perception) to Greeks that 'make sense': if a nation is irredentist it should have the following aspects too: Greeks are nationalists, chauvinists, arrogant, aggressive, tricky, manipulators, etc. (total 25 times, 27%). Only 21 complaints (24 % of the total) do not 'fit' directly to the package of the sovereignty/historical claims: Greeks speak too much, are emotional etc. Still even some of these can be seen as part of the Magali Idea project: for example the Greeks lack an 'open mind' (3 times), they have egocentric education, they follow religious leaders (in the sense of 'conservative', 'backward' leaders), etc.

Therefore irrespective of how the Turkish side perceives the Greeks, the Greeks themselves see themselves perceived as dangerous neighbors of Turkey and of the Turks.<sup>9</sup> The interesting part is that when asked to name their complaints (first question) there were only two complaints (2%) that were associated to this issue of ‘sovereignty’ and ‘irredentism’: ‘Turks have *Mageli Idea* paranoia’ and they ‘have a syndrome of Sévres’

#### The answers of the Turks to the Second Question

There are in total 67 answers worded in 43 different ways (see Attachment 3). The 43 different answers are grouped again to compose comprehensible unities.

The Turks also change their agenda of complaints when they answered the question ‘what do you think the Other does not like about you?’ They too present concerns and complaints when they state their opinions about the Other. The Turks see the Greeks having complaints against Turks many of which are directly associated to sovereignty, to historical rights and power relations

According to the Turks the Greeks have complaints against ‘them’ for the following reasons: The Greeks do ‘not like Ottoman past’, they believe that ‘the Turks have oppressed them for hundreds of years’; ‘occupied and destroyed Greek civilization’; expelled Greeks from Anatolia; Istanbul and other presently Turkish lands should belong to Greeks; and Turks claim Greek cultural heritage. In total these complaints number to only 9, but a second group of (imagined or real) complaints follow the first group, and these appear supplementing the first, presenting Turks as a power that is still capable of ‘repeating’ this historical past. So the Turks think that the Greeks see them as follows: ‘militaristic and invaders’ (6 times), ‘a threat for Greeks’ (4), aggressors and arrogant (2), admiring the army and spending money on arms, dominating etc.

The total of these supposed Greek complaints, which can be read anew as Turkish grievances, total to 29 and are the 43% of the Turkish answers. When the Turks had been asked to state their complaints against the Greeks (first question) they mentioned directly only once that ‘Greeks think Turks are aggressors occupying their land’ (1%) and twice in a roundabout way (3%): Greeks ‘disregard our common past’ and ‘Greeks write Ottoman-Greek history nationalistically’.

Consistent with the image of the Greeks shown above, the Turks infer that the Greeks (should) think that Turks ‘dislike them’, ‘do not trust them’, ‘ask too much from Greeks’, etc. Turks also believe that the Greeks have a low esteem of them: Turks are nationalist, conservative, ignorant, hypocritical, primitive, too religious, not democratic, corrupt etc. (total 32 negative characterizations, 48%).

In short the Turks, in the same way as the Greeks, ‘expect’ many grievances directed to ‘us’ and originating from history, from biased

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<sup>9</sup> This of course does not mean that the Greeks are dangerous neighbors with irredentist claims, or that they see themselves as such. It means that they see the Turks perceiving the Greeks in this manner. Which, as a consequence, raises the tension between the countries: once one sees the Other (or better, perceives the Other) so ‘prejudiced’ and negatively inclined against ‘us’ he develops the corresponding defenses and defensive feelings.

evaluation of history, from historical rights; all complaints pointing toward the same direction: sovereignty issues, militaristic treats, allies and power relations. However, these issues become apparent only when the questions are asked indirectly.

### How much do the parties know the Other?

#### A. The predictions of the Turks

This is a difficult question to answer. When we try to match the complaints of one party and the guesses the Other party predicting these complaints we see that in some items there is congruence and in some other fields not. For example, the Greeks had complaints about the militaristic character of Turkey (9 times, 9%) and the Turks foresaw that (10 times, 15%) but with a difference. The Greeks did not specify what is negative in being militaristic, whereas the Turks perceive the Greeks to characterize the Turkish army as ‘invaders’. Both sides ‘match’ in characterizing Turks as nationalists, but the Turkish side missed completely that Greeks would have complaints about Kemalism and submission to authority and hierarchy (8%). The Greeks saw Turkey as not democratic, conservative etc. (15%) but the Turkish side noticed lack of democracy by only 1% and used the word ‘barbaric’ which is not used by the Greek side at all.

The Greek side had many reservations about the Turkish state (and the infamous ‘deep state’) but the Turkish side missed it almost completely (only one participant mentioned this item). The Kurdish issue is mentioned only by the Greeks as a grievance that ‘they are not treated well by the state’. ‘History’ and (the related) threat are the issues where the greatest discrepancies are met. The Turkish side predicted that the Greeks would complain about ‘occupied Greek lands’ (13%) whereas the Greeks shortly mentioned that the Turks are paranoiac with the *Megali Idea*. Also the Turkish side mentioned that the Greeks would complain that the Turks compose a threat, that they are imperialists and the like. However the Greeks did not mention – at least directly – such ‘dangers’. They only mentioned a few times that Turkey has an imperialistic army and a complex of being ‘a great power’, but they neither specified the targets nor its being a ‘threat’ to Greece.

At first glance it looks as if there is not real ‘knowledge of the Other’ and that the Turkish side did not guess successfully. One can not be sure however, that the Greeks expressed themselves in sincerity. All that discourse of ‘arrogance, nationalism, militarism, oppressive state, lack of respect to democracy and human rights’ against Turkey and the Turks look irrelevant and thus sound suspicious. To whom is all this supposed potential ‘negativity’ directed if not to the neighboring country? But the Greeks did not voice this complaint. In that respect the appearance of lack of congruity may be misleading.

But more importantly, both sides declared and foresaw complaints of the same kind. Both mentioned the army, politics, nationalism, ‘history’, the way the society operated (politicians, democracy, etc.) and many negative national ‘characteristics’. Neither the Greeks mentioned concrete practical or technical operational shortcomings on the Turkish side, nor the Turks foresaw any.

Both sides moved around similar parameters. At least in that respect they matched.

#### B. The predictions of the Greeks

Almost the same can be said about the guesses of the Greeks. The Greeks foresaw successfully that the Turks would complain that the European Union is used by the Greeks against Turkey. Also they predicted that the Turkish side would have grievances about the way the Greeks interpret the Ottoman history and the so-called 'common past'. They correctly guessed that there would be complaints about how the Greeks are 'too' religious. On the other hand the Greeks only partly saw how important a complaint of a negative image of the Turks was for the Turks (27%) and thus they just mentioned the issue in passing.

Some other issues mentioned by the Greeks as possible complaints of the Turks did not appear in the list (of 'first questions') of the Turks. For example the Turks did not mention that the Greeks had claims on Turkish lands (10% for the Greeks). It seems that neither party mentions that the Other might compose a threat to their own sovereignty. Either because they do not want to give the impression that they have worries and fears – since this may be interpreted as a sign of weakness and will not be very flattering to the national pride – or because they want to behave politically correct and not accuse the Other on such a sensitive issue. But both sides systematically claims that the Other 'thinks' that 'we' have such alleged claim.

#### Asymmetry in the perceptions

Even though both parties have an agenda of 'sovereignty', of 'history', etc., there is an asymmetry with respect to the 'lands' in question. Whose lands are in jeopardy? The question can be answered having in mind two different perspectives. For the Turkish side it is their 'present' lands that are in question: 'the Greeks think that the Turks occupied their land, etc'. Therefore the issue for the Turkish side becomes one of sovereignty of the 'present' rights - irrespective of the Greek view on the same topic, i.e., if the Greeks do want to 'recapture' these lands.

For the Greeks, the lands in question – the Turks think 'we' have *Megali Idea* and irredentism in mind – are 'old' Greek lands. Therefore for the Greeks, again irrespective of their 'intentions', the issue has a 'historical' dimension.

The two sides have an agenda of 'sovereignty' but on different bases. The Turkish side perceives the 'present' issues whereas the Greeks the 'historical' ones. It would be expected that in this case, in order to confront the real or imaginary claims of the Other, the Turkish side would be inclined to develop a reconciliatory historical interpretation of the Greek Turkish relations. On the other hand the Greek side uses 'history' to legitimize a national past, where they had been the 'victims', especially in the field of 'sovereignty', having lost their 'homeland'.

Many Turkish complaints obtain 'a sense' once seen from this point of view. In the 'first question' one-fourth of these complaints were about the Greeks who disregard 'our common history', 'are proud of their history' and about the Greeks who see 'us as aggressors, barbarians and dislike us'. In the

'second question' too, the Turks perceive the Greeks as seeing them as invaders, aggressors, as a threat in the 43% of the complaints.

The Greeks, on the other hand, almost completely silenced the issues of 'lands' in the 'first question' and they did not 'complain'; and in the 'second', where the question is addressed indirectly, they presented the Turks perceiving the Greeks as having historical claims on the Turkish lands; having the *Megali Idea*, being arrogant, in alliance with the West, hostile to Turks, etc., in short irredentist by 48%.

The overall impression is that the parties are somehow aware of the issues that occupy the mind of the Other. Their guesses are in the 'vicinity' of these issues: national, historical etc. However, their guesses presented serious omissions on the one hand and important distortions on the other. They are as if they view the same picture but using eyeglasses of different colors and at the same time looking at different parts of the same picture.

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## Chapter Three

### Assessment of the ‘Answers’

#### Interpreting the answers to the First Question

What are the different meanings that may have any answer given to a question of the kind: ‘what do you think as the negative qualities of the Other / what do you not like about the Other?’ This was the ‘first question’ discussed in the previous chapters. The answers may show one (or combinations) of the following:

1. If there are complaints and they are valid then this may mean a sound ‘knowledge’ and ‘information’ about the Other; a knowledge that describes a (negative) state of the Other;
2. or the complaints may be related to the ‘image’ of the Other, in the sense that this is only ‘our’ perception, ‘our’ mood, ‘our’ stance with respect to the Other. (The existence of complaints does exclude the possibility that some *other* complaints are still silenced).
3. If there are no complaints or only minor ones, then the answers may be hiding, silencing or avoiding the question.
4. or such an answer (with no complaints) may mean a sincere declaration, i.e. there may not be any major complaints about the Other and/or the Other is not seen or perceived as a national Other.

Some of the above may be excluded from our analysis for simple reasons. There have been many ‘complaints’ of our participants with very few instances where they declared that they had ‘no complaints’, or that they ‘did not know’. Therefore the last two possibilities seem not applicable in our case.

The first and the second possibilities are more likely to have happened. However, very often what is ‘information’ for one side tends to be perceived as ‘prejudice’ and ‘image’ for the Other. This becomes clearer in the answers of the ‘second question’. More importantly, the complaints voiced as answers to the ‘first question’ do not match with those of the ‘second’. In some instances it appears as if there is neither ‘knowledge’ about the Other, nor the acceptance of its absence. The parties are not even conscious of the discrepancies and contradictions in their answers. Therefore our analysis will be based on the presumption that ‘our’ answers and ‘complaints’ are a result mostly of our ‘image’ and identity and secondarily of our ‘knowledge’ and ‘information’ about the Other.

When one says the Greeks/Turks are nationalists, arrogant (against *me*) or ‘they do not like *us*’ etc., he/she at the same time expresses a mood, a feeling of discontent, a complaint, an opposition, a grievance etc. In this sense the ‘image’ is an expression of a relationship with the Other and a result of ‘our’ identity. In the case of Greeks and Turks the identity is a national one. It is of interest that almost all the answers given to the ‘first question’ were ‘national’ in the sense that the respondents perceived the Greeks as a community with some common tendencies, attitudes, etc.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> The situation is more complex and will not be handled here. Actually the question itself (what do you not like in the Other?) leads the respondent to the ‘logic’ of national

Irrespective of the extent to which the answers possibly ‘contain’ valid information (the ‘reality’) about the state of the Other, the ‘image’ part of the answers (no. 2 above) is valid and even predominant. Taking the list of complaints as a whole we see, not only the grievances that may exist on one side for the other, but also the domain on which these complaints are concentrated. Very few complaints refer to areas that are not ‘national’.<sup>11</sup> The complaints of the kind ‘there is poverty’, ‘the streets are dirty’, ‘heavy traffic’, ‘food is not good’ are exceptional.<sup>12</sup> Almost all of the complaints are in a domain where national interests are apparent: national history; national prestige, pride and dignity; national gains and security; difficulties that ‘our nation’ faces, etc.

Therefore the answers given to ‘question one’ should be analyzed as an indication of a national identity that is expressed through the perceptions of the Other. The image of the Other is a sign of the mood of the source of the image, i.e., of the one that states the complaint.

As for the ‘truth’ that this image may contain, it is debatable. To the extent that a) it contains contradictions and silences, and b) it is not accepted and/or it is challenged by the Other, this ‘reality’ expressed (only) by ‘us’ will remain rather as a hypothesis still to be demonstrated.

### Interpreting the answers to the Second Question

The second question that the participants answered was ‘what do you think the Other thinks as your negative qualities / what do you think the Other does not like about you?’ How can an answer to such a question be interpreted? The answers can be evaluated in different ways according to different points of views:

1. Knowing the Other. One can find ‘how much *we* know the Other’; if ‘we’ can predict the attitude of the Other. This can be documented by comparing our ‘predictions’ (of the feelings and the complaints of the Other about ‘us’) with the complaints of the Other already expressed in the ‘first question’. To the extent that the two sets match we can infer that we know or we do not know the Other. A precondition for accomplishing this is that the Other

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perception. We ask him/her to accept that there is a category called Greeks or Turks, i.e., to accept the national paradigm and to answer accordingly. However, on the other hand, this question was received as a ‘natural’ one. One or two of the respondents mildly voiced some reservations to the ‘generalization’ but more importantly, when they were enumerating their ‘complaints’ none used the adjectives ‘some’ (some of the Gs/Ts) or ‘the majority of’ or a similar adjective to avoid stereotyping the Other and to disunite the ‘negative’ from the ‘whole nation’. ‘The Gs/Ts are nationalists’ was considered a normal answer by almost all.

<sup>11</sup> Two examples are worth mentioning. Two very young participants, actually representing youth organizations, not only did they give original ‘non-national’ answers but they also made it clear with a kind of self-satisfaction and pride, and a lot of humorous mood, that it was them who wrote down these answers. (The written answers were handled anonymously) The Greek girl had written down as her complaint that Istanbul is very humid (and her hair did not look well) and the Turkish young man said that the Greek basketball teams always win!

<sup>12</sup> Even some innocent looking answers may be interpreted as nationally biased ones. The Greek who perceives the Turks ‘disorganized’ may have ‘missed’ that the Greek society is at least as disorganized as the Turkish one. Or isn’t it legitimate to suspect an answer stating ‘I haven’t got any complaint’ as an indication of silencing grievances?

expresses his complaints earnestly without silencing some and exaggerating others.

2. Image-complaint. One can also evaluate these answers as an indication of a kind of 'self-image'. Supposedly one tries to guess the complaints of the Other; we talk about the perceptions of the Other about 'us'. But actually 'we' talk on behalf of the Other and produce an image of 'us'. The answer to the question 'how does the Other see you', once is answered by 'us', it becomes 'our' image about 'ourselves': our self-image.

However, this is a self-image of the second order: it is 'our image' but as this is envisaged in the Other. Such an image in practice does not differ from a complaint. Every time an image of this kind appears to us as 'unjust' it equals to a complaint of 'ours'. 'The other thinks I am a barbarian' or 'the Other thinks I want to capture his lands' are images of this kind. Let's call this image 'image-complaint'

3. Self-knowledge. The answer may contain 'self-knowledge'. To the degree that our 'self-image' complies with 'reality' it can be understood as 'self-knowledge'; and conversely, if there is considerable discrepancy between our 'self-image' and 'reality' we may conclude that 'self-knowledge' is missing. However, there is a problem to these 'theoretical' assertions: what is 'reality', whose reality is it and how is it reached?

Actually, as mentioned above, our image, which is expressed by the Other, in most cases is turned into a 'image-complaint'. Naturally this image is not accepted by 'us' either as a 'reality' or as a 'self-knowledge' anyhow.

4. 'Our' image of the Other. The answers definitely is a manifestation of 'our' image of the Other. The response to the question 'what the Other thinks of you?' is the outcome of 'your' image of the Other. If 'you' perceive him as a friend you will say positive things, if you consider him an enemy or an opponent (or the Other) your answers will contain real or imaginary grievances of the Other.<sup>13</sup>

5. National identity. All the above can be seen as identity relations. The two 'groups' identified as Greeks and Turks come to existence because of a 'group coherence', which in turn is possible due to a 'national' identity. The relationship with the Other and especially Greek-Turkish relations are connected to 'national history', to 'national events and interests' etc. All the relations with the Other and especially the perceptions and images about the Other are connected to this 'identity'. Or maybe it would be wiser to say that what makes each 'group' see things in its own particular way is a socio-psychological dynamic which conventionally is called 'national identity'.

This identity, which is being felt in all answers, but most importantly in all Greek- Turkish conflicts will be our main subject below.

### Who are the 'Greeks', the 'Turks' and the 'participants'?

The national/ethnic categories used until now in this study need some clarification. The 'participants' of the workshops were 'special' Greeks and

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<sup>13</sup> Or vice versa, if you believe that the Other has a negative image of you (or negative attitudes against you), you will feel 'yourself' an 'opponent' to the Other. The premise that one is friendly towards the Other even if the Other hates him is not very persuasive and it rather camouflages grievances and/or unconscious aggressiveness.

Turks. As mentioned above ('Chapter One') they were mainly representatives of Greek or Turkish NGO's, having prior experience with the Other. The participants that communicated with the Other for the first time were less than 5%. Almost 80% of the participants had higher education and more than 50% were members of a university. Most importantly they all shared the willingness to communicate with the Other and almost all were public activists with critical judgement. Many were working in fields that had to do with conflict resolution, stereotypes, prejudices, ethnic skirmishes, etc.

This 'sample' is far from representing the 'average' Greek or Turk. Especially the group of the third workshop was composed mostly of academics experts in education, minority rights, policy making, all involved in issues of stereotypes and images. There was a 'third question' that was asked only to this group and their answers are indicative of the 'quality' of the participants. The question was: 'what do you see as a negative attitude in your side *vis a vis* the Other?' (See Appendix 4).<sup>14</sup>

The answers show that the participants are ready to accept many 'shortcomings' of 'their side' and negative attitudes *vis a vis* the Other. This is not a typical and widespread behaviour of nations worldwide. Twelve Greeks and eight Turks 'confessed' 26 and 18 of their shortcomings respectively.

A closer look at these answers however, may give the impression that even this group silences and/or avoids some issues. Classifying 'our own vices' as 'political', 'prejudices' and 'bad behaviour', one sees the following interesting situation. As political mistakes the Greeks accept only two: having territorial claims 'to articulate national identity' and to act as if they know 'what is right' because they are 'autochthon nation'. The wording of these 'confessions' is intricate. Do the Greeks have claims or do they simply 'articulate an identity' by voicing a claim? As for being an 'autochthon nation' this should be understood in contrast with the 'Other nation' which, automatically, is understood as not being 'native'. The Turkish 'political mistakes' are only one: not recognizing the minority rights of Greeks (3 times). It is interesting that the Greeks did not complain about the minority rights but only about the school of Halki. In other words politically the parties seem to face few minor issues.

Both sides accept that they have prejudices with respect to the Other, they blame the educational system for this and they accept in general that they do not feel at ease with the Other. The Greeks accept that they have a 'superiority complex'. 54% and 66% of the 'confessions' of the Greeks and of the Turks respectively comprises the 'negative behaviour' group. The Greeks accept that they are nationalists, arrogant, not sincere during communication (silencing issues) and the Turks add to the above military arrogance and lack of empathy. (See Appendix 4 for the details.)

On one hand these 'acceptances' are impressive and show the high degree of 'self-knowledge' and willingness of self-criticism of this particular group of participants. On the other, the list of shortcomings poses some problems and triggers questions. Are these the only 'mistakes' of the two parties in the

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<sup>14</sup> It was a mistake not to think to ask this particular question to all participants (of workshops no.1 and 2, too). Then we could have tried a more reliable evaluation of 'self-knowledge'.

political arena? Accepting prejudices and problematic education, as well as nationalism and arrogance ‘in general’, i.e., without mentioning the areas where these are implemented and affected the Other, can’t it be interpreted as avoiding the issue?

Even in this group ‘silencing’ seems predominant. The accepted shortcomings and mistakes are without ‘object’. Why is ‘nationalism’ a vice? How does nationalism operate *vis a vis* the Other? The question was not ‘what shortcomings each group had’ but the wrongdoings ‘with respect to the Other’. *This* question was not answered directly. The wording of the answers give the impression of a systematic avoidance of showing and naming the shortcomings and the problematic areas in Greek-Turkish relations and this is done by ‘generalizing the mistakes’.

### Silencing the major issues

A personal experience from the workshops in question will be helpful at this point. At the end of the first workshop I was in a taxi heading to the airport to return home together with a participant that I knew quite well. During the workshop I had pointed at him and I had expressed my hope that this time he would name the difficulties he met during his cooperation with the counterpart NGO and the state officials of the ‘other country’ and he would not simply generalize, the way another colleague from his NGO had done in another meeting. In the taxi we were discussing the various problems he encountered during his work with the Other. I asked him if he had mentioned all these complaints in the session they had in the workshop. His answer was a blunt ‘no’. When I asked why he did not speak up since this was the purpose of the group’s session he simply looked at me!

I will quote few paragraphs from our ‘Final Report of the Greek Turkish Civil Society Dialogue Programme’ that give an indication of the extent of the problem:

‘A good example of this subconscious process could be the argument made by Murat Belge in the First Workshop. According to Belge, Greeks and Turks suffer from communication problems not only because of the content of their communication, but also, and more importantly, from the basic ‘codes of communication’—that is, Turks and Greeks understand different things from a dialogue. When the dialogue is the issue, a Turk, for instance, means a general declaration of good will and reconciliation. A Greek, on the other hand, demands answers for specific issues. On several occasions these views found considerable support from the plenary, and illuminated by various examples from both the Turkish and Greek sides.’

‘Both countries are still under the effect of real or imaginary plethora of ‘nation-building’ ideology. All over the Balkans, the way ‘state’ is constituted (in minds) is problematic.’

‘‘Attitude/behaviour problems’ are of more daily in nature and therefore could misleadingly be considered as ‘minor’ or

‘temporary’ problems. In fact the problems collected under this category could be the most persistent ones due to the fact that they are mostly practiced unknowingly. The problems of attitude or behaviour mostly originate from prejudices and stereotypes established during the formal and informal education of the people. The so-called ‘historical baggage’ attached to the behaviour of the Greek and Turkish people is an important factor in this issue; the only healthy solution is defined as coming to terms with the past of each society by their own people.’

‘Furthermore, due to emotional intensity of the workshop experience first-time participants often ‘exaggerate’ their friendship and relationship to the ‘Other’. Later on in their workshop, they are afraid to speak up and raise their objections because they don’t like to destroy the atmosphere.’

‘After studying the results of the three workshops it is becoming apparent that the relations between the two countries are dominated by discursive strategies that present the ‘other/enemy’ as a homogeneous, internally undifferentiated entity intending to deprive ‘our’ country of her identity and territory.’

All these ‘discursive strategies’ plus the surprising avoidance of my friend in voicing his complaints in the most appropriate moment shows the complexity of a situation that mostly passes unnoticed by the actors themselves.

#### Assessment of the ‘Answers’

The three workshops produced concrete results. The participants a) met, established acquaintances with each other and developed communication links, b) discussed many issues and defined problematic areas, and c) produced ‘strategic policy position papers’ which intended to be public declarations as well as policy suggestions for policy makers.

Apart from the above the following may also be considered as additional conclusions:

1. Even though the participants were experienced in communication and cooperation with the Other they still refrained from developing an open dialogue and silenced many issues.
2. Various reasons may have contributed to this: worries that bringing up problematic issues may spoil the ‘good atmosphere’; trying to be ‘politically correct’; feeling embarrassed to express grievances that may sound ‘old fashioned’ and/or ‘nationalist’, etc.
3. Whatever the reason is, this reluctance to communicate earnestly with the Other operates mostly on an unconscious level. People voice different kinds of complaints when they answer; depending on whether the questions were asked directly or indirectly.
4. Therefore the decision taken by the organizers of the workshops to concentrate on ‘self-knowledge’ was correct. The workshop report specifies the following:

There is still the need to deepen the understanding of each party about themselves in relation to the Other. This objective is defined as ‘self-knowledge’... Self-knowledge does not limit the perspective of dialogue with a single identity. On the contrary, this objective is rooted in the conceptual understanding that there is no essential, internal, self-same entity that makes an identity unique, that is to say, keep a given identity standing alone like an island. In this respect, self-knowledge is at the same time the knowledge of the Other (Report 2, p. 15).

5. ‘The questions and the answers’ discussed so far have a limited use and help. They successfully showed that direct communication cannot clarify all aspects of bilateral relations and related grievances, complaints and most importantly the deeper reasons – e.g., identity issues – of the parties that limit their capability to resolve some persisting problems and perceptions. The parties have many more ‘complaints’ than those ‘officially’ declared.

6. Other sources, such as opinion polls, historiography, literary texts, textbooks and texts of students, art in general, etc., can be of decisive help in understanding the ‘self’ and the Other. These ‘sources’ will be reviewed below in conjunction with the ‘questions’ discussed until now.

7. Finally a word of caution, which may sound a little pessimistic. The interethnic relationship of Greeks and Turks is not at the level of the participants of the workshops mentioned above. Deep seated and unconsciously operating prejudices and stereotypes are widespread among the people of the two nations. The good omen is that the parties had never before been so ready and willing to cope with the past and with their ‘self’ as they are now.

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## Chapter Four

### Antagonistic historiographies and identities

Both Greek and Turkish nation states were founded through a proclaimed process of negating the Ottoman Empire: Greece by rejecting the Ottoman legacy, and Turkey by transforming it. Irrespective of the degree of practical success of this 'rejection' and 'transformation' - and in spite of the common past that the two societies shared - the national founding myths of the two countries, which were used to legitimize their new political formations, differ and at some domains are even almost opposed to each other.<sup>15</sup>

The historiographies that were developed within each state, even though they presented in their course many changes, in order to comply with the new local and international political and ideological developments, maintain some basic national premises until today. Greeks and Turks have their 'own' interpretation of the Ottoman past but of a recent past too. The Greeks try to demonstrate how distant they had been from the rejected legacy, whereas for the Turks the Ottoman history composes an indispensable part of their historiography.

All of the above lead to two different and, due to historical coincidences, opposing national identities. What has been said for culture probably applies to identity too: 'identity is more often not what people share, but what they choose to fight for'.<sup>16</sup> Conjectures brought Greeks and Turks to political and military confrontations in the past; or if the same is expressed conversely, the confronted parties chose different identities, such as 'Greek' and 'Turk', to legitimise and 'explain' these fights.

In the following paragraphs I will present how the Greeks and the Turks proceeded with their ethnogenesis, how they developed different approaches of historiography to legitimise policies and how they formed the Other to define the limits of their own identity. The Greek preceded establishing their state in 1830 by fighting a war of liberation against the Ottoman State and the Turks followed, founding modern Turkey in 1923 after a liberation war too, which they fought mainly against the Greek army. The search of a national identity started a few decades before the founding of these nation-states and the production of nationalist historiography right after the founding of nation-states.

#### The 'Greek Identity'

The majority of present-day Greeks believe that they belong to a nation that has an uninterrupted life of four millenniums and that they are autochthons in Greece. That nationalism and the 'nations' is a modern phenomenon and that the ancient Greeks, as tribes called Achaeans, Dorians and Ionians, moved into 'Greece' - where already others were living - is

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<sup>15</sup> The national myths are so deeply rooted that it is difficult even to use a lexicon that is not nationally biased. The 'two societies', the Greeks and the Turks, is a modern invention. In the Ottoman milieu there were not distinct communities with these 'ethnic' characterisations.

<sup>16</sup> 'Culture is more often not what people share, but what they choose to fight over', G. Eley and R. Grigor Suny, 'Introduction: From the Moment of Social History to the Work of Cultural Representation', in: eidem (eds), *Becoming National: A Reader* (New York 1996), p. 9.

normally ‘forgotten’ or rather silenced. The Greek language, which changed enormously but survived to our days, was used in teaching the Bible for almost two millenniums. The Greek speaking populations that lived as citizens of Byzantine and later of Ottoman Empire associated themselves with Christianity (Greek Orthodoxy), and not with the Ancient Hellenes. They called themselves ‘Romaioi’ (Roman).<sup>17</sup>

When the philosophical movement of Enlightenment shook the 18<sup>th</sup> century Europe questioning political and ideological authorities, many Grecophones, mostly members of the diaspora Greek communities outside the Ottoman Empire, were deeply influenced. Ancient Greece (Hellas) was *en vogue* in Europe even from the time of the Renaissance (14<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> centuries). The idea that the ‘*Romaiko genos*’ – the way they self-identified themselves: ‘Roman descent’ - could have been a ‘Hellenic nation’, started to gain ground among the grecophone intellectuals. The French Revolution created new dynamics for revolutionary and antiroyalist/anticlerical action.

All these ‘favorable’ conditions created a new movement with various components. The romantic idea among the intellectuals of Europe of the revival of ‘Ancient Greece’, the ‘republican’ political ideas that the revolutionaries propagated, and the state expediencies of some of the big counties in opposition to the Ottoman Empire, formed an ‘enlightenment’ among the Greek intellectuals. An interest for Greek language, for Greek history and especially for the identity of the ‘genos’ became apparent and was discussed in the decades prior to the Greek Revolution of 1821.

At the beginning everything was blurred. There was no agreement for ‘their’ name, for example. There was an identity of ‘we’, the ‘genos’, basically meaning a community that spoke Greek and followed Christian Orthodox belief; but for the rest there were disagreements. Some self-identified themselves as ‘Romios’, some proposed the name ‘Grekos’ and others believed they were ‘Hellenes’. Some liked the idea of reviving ancient Greek language; others proposed the vernacular. Politically, things were even more confused. The idea of a ‘French type’ revolution, where ‘all’, irrespective of religion and language would join and revolt against the ‘tyrants’, i.e., the Ottoman establishment, founding a republic of absolute political equality was the program of Rigas who was active mostly in Moldavia, Wallachia and Austria; others, e.g., Korais who was active in Paris were inclined towards a state of the ‘Greeks’; as for the Greek Church centered in Istanbul, it was against any such ‘anarchical’ and ‘atheist’ political actions.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> The Western world called the ancient and modern Hellenes ‘Greeks’ and the East (Persians, Arabs, Ottomans) ‘Yunan’. The first is derived from a Hellenic tribe called Grekos that lived in western Greece and the second from ‘Ionia’, which was the first Hellenic tribe that the ancient Persians met. The Grecophones of the ‘Byzantine’ (actually, East Roman Empire) and of the Ottoman empires did not call themselves ‘Greek’ but ‘Romios’; even though they knew that they spoke ‘Hellenic’.

<sup>18</sup> See: H. Millas, *Yunan Ulusunun Doğuşu* (The Birth of Greek Nation), İletişim, İstanbul, 1994

### The role of the Other

The Greek Revolution started in 1821 by forces that had different objectives. Some planned a revolt in the whole of the Balkans, and failed; others gave priority to the Peloponnese (South Greece) and managed to keep the initiative for more than eight years. It was during that period that the identity of the revolution and of the ‘Greeks’ started taking shape; and the role of the Other played an important role in this process.

In 1814-1815 the republican forces in Europe had been politically defeated. The Congress of Vienna in 1815 under the direction of the Austrian Prince Metternich decided not to tolerate popular and democratic revolutions (i.e., antiroyalist ideological republican ‘class’ revolutions). The Greek revolution on one hand was enthusiastically welcomed by the republican forces that saw their project in action again, and on the other with great suspicion by the victorious royalists. It was as early as 1824 that the Marc-Philippe Zallony (a Catholic Greek, fervent of the Greek revolution) wrote that he ‘wants a monarchy because he does not see feasible a republican regime’ and that ‘in our days it is doubtful if the kings will show sympathy for a national liberation war’.<sup>19</sup>

The Greek revolution ended as one fought against an oppressor Other that tyrannized the Christians. The Ottoman regime was proclaimed ‘negative’ not because it was not ‘republican’ – not ‘democratic’ as we would have said today – but because it was Islamic, a barbaric enemy of ‘us’, anti-Christian. A foreign aristocrat was invited to Greece to rule as a king and all the previous rhetoric of ‘republican equality’ was abandoned. The pre-revolutionary controversy between the revolutionary forces and the Greek Church not only was silenced but the Patriarch that was hanged by the Sultan because he had not prevented the revolution, was now proclaimed a martyr of the uprising and a national hero.

‘Greekness’ became miraculously connected both to Ancient Greece since this glorious past was a source of admiration for the powerful ‘Westerners’; at the same time it was associated to Orthodox Christianity since this religious idiosyncrasy legitimized the purpose of the revolution and satisfied the basic belief of the masses. In few decades the term ‘Hellene-Christianity’ (*Ellinochristianismos*) was invented and widely used to describe the new national identity.

The ‘national’ past was interpreted in accordance to this national founding myth. *Turkokratia* (the Turkish rule) was the period of ‘darkness’, of an existential threat and/or ‘death’, which ended in the ‘rebirth’ of the nation – through the revolution with the many martyrs. This ‘resurrection’ not only does it save ‘us’ from darkness, the tyranny and the Other, but it also secures the eternity since the nation (and hence ‘us’) will live ‘forever’. It is easy to see how the history of the nation is narrated as a metaphor of a very popular story: the life of Christ. All actions in history are familiar to the citizens of the new state. Every phase makes sense. Even the centuries of ‘bondage’ seem to be predestined. All worked out, as they ought to.

A new term, the *Megali Idea* (the Great Idea) was used for the first time by the Greek prime minister Ioannis Kolletis in 14 January 1844. In short time

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<sup>19</sup> Marc-Philippe Zallony, *Essai sur les Phanariots*, Marseille, 1824. Also in H. Millas, *Yunan Ulusunun Doğuşu*, İletişim, 1994, pp. 194-199.

the slogan meant to expend the Greek borders so that the Greeks living in various lands are 'liberated'. The Greek state had felt a capability of expending its borders at the expense of an Ottoman Empire that had so much weakened that all major states flirted with the same intention. The *Megali Idea* was a simple idea: The Greek revolution of 1821 did not liberate all the Greeks that were under the 'Turkish yoke'. The rest of the Greeks and Greek lands had to be liberated. In the same years J.P. Fallmerayer claimed that the modern Greeks, race-wise, were not the continuation of the ancients but that they were rather a mixture of the Albanians, Slavs etc. It was just in this milieu when two intellectuals, a literary critic and a historian, Spiridon Zambelios and Konstantinos Pappariopoulos have 'discovered' the Byzantine Empire.

Until then the Greeks (actually, the intellectual nationalists) perceived themselves as heirs of Ancient Greece; and Byzantium was seen as an alien state that distorted this heritage. In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Byzantine Empire was raised in status; it was portrayed as a Greek civilization. Two objectives were thus met: Fallmerayer's thesis that the Greeks did not have a continuous national presence was proved false and the expansionist policy was legitimized. As for the Other, in the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, he had changed status. The 'Turk' not only was he the *old* historical oppressor but also the *present-day* invader who still occupied 'our lands'. He was the target enemy.

In spite of some major military defeats, until 1947 the Greeks managed to expend their national frontier a few times at the expense of prior Ottoman conquests, (Thessaly in 1881, Macedonia and Crete in 1913, Western Thrace in 1920, Dodecanesse in 1947) either through wars or as a consequence of diplomatic agreements. The 'Enosis' ('joining' with Greece) of Cyprus was the last effort to annex an old Ottoman land – but British after 1878.

The Turks, in other words, constituted the Other at least from 1821 until today. From textbooks to academic historiographies, from politicians to authors and poets, and from artists to the Greek Church, the Ottoman State and Turkey (which for the Greeks are the same thing) are portrayed as the negative Other who in the past had caused the loss of 'our' homeland and a lot of unhappiness due to the imposed 'backward' regime and the 'yoke'. If the future actions of Turkey are needed to be estimated, this is done, with a kind of racist extrapolation, by foreseeing that 'they' will do what 'they' did in the past: invade, suppress etc. This is the most common stereotype of the 'Turk'.

#### Alternative historiographies in recent years

There were alternative interpretations of the past, especially from Marxist historians. Yanis Kordatos in 1924 challenged the taboo of the Greek revolution claiming that it was not a 'national' uprising against the Turks, but a class struggle of the oppressed against the oppressors who were both Turks and Greeks landlords. He showed that the Patriarchate of Istanbul was against the Revolution too. Other historians followed and distanced themselves from the national paradigm. Nikos Svoronos for example, stated that the modern Greek national consciousness appears for the first time in the 13<sup>th</sup> century (not in Ancient Greece).

These historians did not show any particular interest to deal with Greek-Turkish relations in particular and/or with the ‘Turks’. Actually Greek historiography did not revise the traditional image and ‘role’ of the Turks, even though these historians did not reproduce the nationalist extreme stereotypes. During the last decades a considerable number of historians, following the developments of international historiography, have produced texts distanced from nationalist interpretations but these efforts do not seem enough to change the generally accepted traditional national narration.

### The ‘Turkish Identity’

According to Seaton-Watson there are three models of nation states. First, the case where the nation identity and the national state develop together (e.g., France), the second case where first national identity develops among a population and then political efforts are taken to possess a state (e.g., Greece) and the third case where there is a state and later a national identity develops based on this political formation. As examples of this last case the historian mentions the countries of South America, which originally had been provinces of Spain or Portugal. Turkey can be included in this group too.<sup>20</sup>

During the last decades of the Ottoman Empire the authorities initiated various desperate efforts to save the state. Parallel to economic and administrative reforms ‘identity’ also became a major issue. To accomplish a binding ideology in order to stop the successive secession of various Ottoman provinces, first an ‘Ottoman’, then an ‘Islamic’ and finally a ‘Turkish’ identity was ‘tried’. As it happened with the Greeks a lot of discussions carried out as of what the ‘identity’ ought to be. The difference was in the agent: in the first case the ‘state’ was absent where in the second the state itself played a major role.

The crisis of ‘secession’ started with the Greek revolution of 1821. Until that time the Ottoman Empire had lost lands due to attacks of foreign countries (e.g., Russia, Austria, France). With the Greeks it was the ‘people’ that revolted and withdrew. In 1939, nine years after, with the *Tanzimat* reforms ‘Ottomanism’, which was to secure equality among all citizens was tried. Bulgarians seceded and Armenians revolted next. ‘Islamism’ was tried to secure at least the Muslim populations within the Empire. But there was unrest among the Arabs and Muslim Albanians who revolted and seceded too. ‘Turkishness’ seemed an alternative solution to accomplish a unitary state on ‘ethnic’ basis.

There is a very wide literature about these developments. What only recently comes to light is the role that the Other played in the formation of ‘our’ identity. Identity until recently was conceived as an essence that dwells in ‘us’ or in the ‘nation’; it is conceived as a part of ours. It only needs to come to our ‘consciousness’. It was always there but it skipped our attention. That is why the term ‘national consciousness’ was used during the highlight of nationalism: the said identity was always there, it was only not seen! Whereas today, ‘identity’ is seen as a relationship and it acquires sense only when viewed in connection with the Other (or Others).

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<sup>20</sup> Hugh Seton-Watson, ‘On Trying to be a Historian of Eastern Europe’ in D. Delatant & H. Hanak (editors), *Historians as Nation Builders*, School of Slavonic and East Europe, London, 1988.

The second big shock that came from the Greeks to the ‘statesmen’ of the Ottoman Empire, and which still is noticed in the national discourse of Turkish politics, is the thesis of the *Megali Idea*. The idea of the Greeks that the Byzantine lands are actually Greek and that they should be ‘liberated’, posed a theoretical and even a ‘legal’ claim on Turkish lands. The *Megali Idea* was voiced when ‘historical claims’ were very popular. All irredentist and expansionist policies were based on similar arguments.

But the Greeks did not limit themselves with claims. They first annexed Crete (1908) and then with the Balkan Wars (1912), jointly with their allies, ‘liberated’ Macedonia and Western Thrace. The Turkish side evaluated this action as ‘grasping of its lands’. The *Megali Idea* was taking place! The Muslim populations were expelled from their homelands. Actually an ethnic cleansing took place. Finally in 1919, at the end of the First World War and following the defeat of the Ottomans and of its allies, the Greek army was landed in Izmir. The Greeks had liberated ‘ancient Ionia’ and the Turks saw their homeland to be under occupation by a special enemy: one that had developed a strong historical pretext - and Western (Christian) allies – to keep the occupied lands permanently.

The Turkish liberation war was won against the biggest powers of the World, like England, Italy and France (and this is the self-image of the Turks). But it was only the Greeks who came to stay. And the war, the critical battles and the associated military victories were won in practice against the Greeks. By a strange act of chance both the Greeks and the Turks had thus a) fought against the Other their ‘War of Independence’ and b) established their national-state as a consequence of this victory. In other word, both sides possess all the qualifications to become the *par excellence* Other of each other.<sup>21</sup>

#### The role of the ‘naively positive Other’

The role of the ‘Turk’ in the Greek national myth was discussed above; the Other in general was ‘negative’: the cause of all past misfortunes and, by means of ‘extrapolation’, of possible similar ills in the future. Political issues such as the Cyprus, the Aegean controversy and the ethnic minorities are mostly perceived – by the ‘average’ Greek – in this context. The role of the ‘Greek’ in the Turkish national myth presents similarities as well as some differences not to be overlooked.

‘The Greek’ (*Yunan*) does not sound very ‘friendly’ in Turkish – in the same way that the word ‘Turk’ is not at all flattering in the Greek language.<sup>22</sup> ‘He’ brings to mind the forces that occupied and threaten ‘our’ homeland; or ‘he’ is ‘negative in general’, without necessarily the name being associated to a ‘reason’ or explanation. In Turkish, one uses other words when one wants to give a positive message with respect to the Other. Even though the Turks themselves are not very conscious of this mechanism, they use the words

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<sup>21</sup> For a detail account of the role of the ‘Greek’ in the formation of Turkish nationalism see: H. Millas, ‘Milli Türk Kimliği ve Öteki (Yunan)’ (The National Turkish Identity and the Other/the Greek), in *Modern Türkiye’de Siyasi Düşünce, Milliyetçilik*, vol. 4. İletişim, İstanbul, 2002.

<sup>22</sup> Two sayings will give some idea: ‘if you have a Turkish friend, better carry a stick too’ is a Greek proverb. A Turkish one says: ‘you can not have a fur coat out of a hide (???) of a pig, the way you can not have a friend from the infidel (or, from the Greek)’.

‘Hellene’ or ‘Greek’, or ‘Roman’ (*Helen, Grek, of Rum* in Turkish) when the aim is to be reconciliatory or when one feels he needs to avoid the word *Yunan*. The same tendency is encountered in Greek language too. The Greeks sometimes use the word ‘Ottoman’ (*Othomanos*) to avoid the word ‘Turk’; even though this alternative usage is not so systematic as in Turkish.

The Turkish case presents however some interesting peculiarities with respect to the Other. The Other is sometimes presented as positive but in a special way: he appears as a ‘historical witness’ that testifies the righteousness, moral superiority, magnanimity etc., of the ‘Turk’. This Other is developed as an antithesis to the Greek accusations. The Greek myth created and announced a ‘historical Turk’ who is all-negative. The Turkish myth created a Greek who testifies exactly the opposite. This Greek is positive not because of his/her ethical etc., merits, but because in the last analysis he/she appears to ‘confess’ that the Turks have been always ‘positive’ and/or the Greeks not so good. This Other I called ‘naively positive Other’ because it incorporates a naivety: the Greeks themselves would not recognize such a character as ‘Greek’ in the first case; he is stripped from his identity.

This kind of ‘naively positive’ characters appears in literary texts of all nations. The Greeks too, have imagined (and described) Turks who ‘accept’ that Greeks are ‘good’ or that Turks are ‘bad’.<sup>23</sup> In the Turkish case however, due to a heritage of an empire, the Other obtains a special importance. The testimony of the Other means a direct evaluation of a political regime with which modern Turks associate and identify themselves with presently. Obtaining the ‘approval’ of the Other is highly appreciated by and is flattering for the nationalist Turks. The Turkish national myth therefore developed a ‘historical interpretation’ – among other interpretations – where the Greeks appear very happy under the Ottoman regime, declaring their liking for the ‘Turk’. Well known Turkish authors like Cevat Şakir and Kemal Tahir developed a ‘historical thesis’ of a ‘golden happy age’ where all ‘subjects’ of the Turks lived happily.

### The Turkish historiography against the Greek claims

Turkish mainstream historiography (especially textbooks where the ‘official’ approach is clearly seen) ‘confronts’ the Greek accusations with various counter arguments. One can imagine a Greek-Turkish dialogue (or quarrel) on history where Greeks first pose their arguments and then Turks develop their counter-arguments. The Greeks present themselves as the grandsons of the Ancient Greeks; the Turks in almost all books on Greek-Turkish relations remind Fallmerayer and his thesis that the modern Greeks

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<sup>23</sup> Moskof Selim for example is such a Turk and appears in the novelette (that has this name as its title) of Viizinos, written in the years the *Megali Idea* was at its height. Selim (is depicted in such a way that) he accepts that Turks captured the Greek lands and that therefore they should leave Anatolia to the Greeks and should go back to Central Asia. For a detailed analysis of ‘naively positive Other’ in Greek and Turkish literature see H. Millas: a) *Türk Romanı ve ‘Öteki - Ulusal Kimlikte Yunan İmaji*, (*The Turkish Novel and the ‘Other’- The Image of the Greek and National Identity*) Istanbul: Sabancı, 2000. (The study is based on approximately 500 novels and includes a chapter on Greek novels and the image of the Turk), and b) – *Eikones Ellinon kai Tourkon, sholika biblia, istoriografia, logotehnia kai ethnica stereotypa*, (*Images of Greeks and Turks - textbooks, historiography, literature and national stereotypes*), Athens: Alexandria, 2001.

are not same as the ancients. The Greeks claim Anatolia because of its Greek history; the Turks developed the Thesis of Sun-Language (in the 1930s) with which they claim that all populations that ever lived in Anatolia (and elsewhere) were of Turkish origin anyway. The Greeks claim barbaric treatment against them by the Ottomans; the Turkish side repeats that all 'minorities' lived happily and were protected under the Ottomans – even though at the end they proved ungrateful.<sup>24</sup> Greeks claim Byzantine was Greek; the Turks say it was (East) Roman.

These two oppressed and mutually exclusive national historiographies not only reached a point where they operate in each country as self-understood popular 'beliefs' but at the same time they have created their own lexicon where the words are loaded with undertones of approval or condemnation. The cities have two names (Istanbul/Constantinople), the military operations different meanings (revolt/ revolution, peace movement/invasion) and different consequences (liberation/ catastrophe), the treatment of the same citizens contrary evaluations (tolerance/slavery) and the same personalities opposite roles (liberator/butcher).

Even the date the Greek-Turkish relations began differs considerably. When the related books published in the two countries are examined we see that for the Greek side these relations started a) either in 1071, a date which infers that the Turks 'captured' Asia Minor from the 'Greek' Byzantines, or b) after 1923, the date modern Turkish state came to life; thus skipping the Balkan Wars and the seizing of the Ottoman lands and the military expedition of 1919-1922 within Anatolia, i.e., all the actions that may be evaluated as Greek expansionism. For the Turkish side the relations begun in 1821, a date that silences all the previous 'Roman' periods and brings to the front the Greek 'advance'.

#### Minimum national consensus and alternative historiographies

Generalizations and stereotypes are closely related. When all Turks (and Greeks) are presented with their 'most common' or 'general' characteristic there is no doubt that stereotypes are in operation. In practice each individual is unique. The notion of an 'average' or 'representative' ethnic character sounds even racist. On the other hand, sociological approaches can only operate with statistical data which usually serves to generalize from a given sample. The dilemma can not be solved easily but it does not harm to remind often a) that generalizations are very risky and can lead even to racism, b) that there are always many exceptions to any generalization, and – this is the most important point- c) that any generalization describes a situation at a given time and can not be attributed to any group as a 'permanent' characteristic. As it was said many centuries ago, communities are, like 'everything, in a flux'. Generalizations do not apply for tomorrow.

And now, generalizing, we can conclude this chapter by reminding that the Greek and the Turkish communities differ with respect to the degree their

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<sup>24</sup> A book published by the Turkish Historical Society is titled *Minorities and the Destruction of the Ottoman Empire*, as the 'official' thesis that the 'ungrateful' minorities betrayed the benevolent state. If the Greeks were to publish a similar book they would have normally given the title, *The Ottoman Empire and the Destruction of the Minorities*.

ethnogenesis is advanced. Ethnogenesis, i.e., the development and establishment of a national identity is not a process that can be readily 'measured' or 'counted'. It is not easy to say when it is 'completed' either – or if such a completion ever happens. The first signs of a national identity among the Greeks can be traced back to some centuries, as it is the case with the Turks and with most modern nations. Academics also developed initial stages, such as the case of 'proto-nation' where it is not clear if national identity is present or it is in its first stage of appearance.

Few parameters are, however, easier to comment on. The Greeks started to discuss their 'national identity' – their 'Greekness' – *as a community*, in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and in the first quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> they established their nation state.<sup>25</sup> The Turks followed almost a century later. 'Turkishness' started to appear as a mass movement in the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century and the Turkish national state was established in the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> (for some in 1923, for others in 1908/1910). Apart from this lagging, modern Turkey was the outcome of a transformation of a multi-ethnic empire. This means the Turkish community is more 'accustomed' to living with the Other – the Other in the sense of 'alterity'. Modern Greeks on the other hand established a nation state where minorities and 'other' ethnic groups compose a very small percentage of the population. Actually Greece is a country having one of the highest degree of national homogeneity.

These different backgrounds seem to affect the degree of ethnogenesis as well as the image of the Other. The Greeks have a minimum national consensus both on their 'identity' and consequently about the image of the Other. 'Identity' is not discussed much in Greece as it is in Turkey. Neither are there social groups who quarrel about similar matters. The Greek Church quite often stresses the role of Orthodoxy in 'preserving the nation' but there is no social opposition to this discourse. In Turkey ideological and identity issues are still quite *en vogue*. Islamism, Kemalism, 'Westernization', let alone the Kurdish issue, are issues that have not yet subsided.

National identity is defined mostly according to the Other. This is seen in the way the Greek and the Turkish communities perceive the Other. Greeks, with their 'advanced' minimum consensus, disclose a consensus about the image of the 'Turk'; too: he is negative (with limited exceptions). The Turkish society has a greater 'multiplicity' about the image of the Other. Apart from the nationalist 'standard' approach of describing the Other negatively, as we saw above, there often appears the 'naively positive Other'. There are also more cases in Turkey than in Greece, where the Other (the 'Greek') is not perceived in negative terms, but a 'human being' or 'a citizen' if he/she is a minority member. This can be interpreted as a legacy of a multinational empire, an inheritance which is absent in the monolithic Greek community.

In the next chapter some examples of the image of the Other in various public spheres in the two countries will be presented and in the last one, in the light of the respective images and identities, the answers given to the 'two questions' will be re-evaluated.

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<sup>25</sup> Naturally sporadically and among the intellectuals 'Greekness' was discussed much earlier. According to some even in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. However, the community did not sponsor this 'nationalism' at that period.

## Chapter Five

### 'National identity' and the Other

The most unreliable source of information about our identity is our opinion. Especially when our identity is associated with the Other, subjective 'judgments' can not be trusted at all. Also the study of 'national identity' itself poses a major problem: once its sources and its mechanisms are investigated and understood they lose much of their function. An 'identity' that is treated as an object, that is to say, as a mechanism distanced from ourselves, or as a historical and a social outcome, and consequently as a finite entity destined to perish within time, contradicts itself.

Identities secure a kind of continuum. Especially national identity is a source of consolation and hope for eternal existence. 'Nationalism has become an ersatz religion. The nation, as understood by the nationalist, is a substitute of god; nationalism of this sort might be called *ethnolatry*... Much more numerous ... are those who think themselves to be above nationalism but are in fact full of unconscious national prejudice'.<sup>26</sup>

In other words investigating national identity is like investigating a god that is believed. If his existence is investigated as a historical entity his essence is disturbed. Anything socially described cannot be superior to 'us'; but our own creation, a creation of a human society. God – in order to play his role - has to be beyond sociological contingency. National identity too, is not prone to study. It is not a coincidence that national identity is studied by those who are not enthusiastically attached to it. Those who study it, mostly search for the mechanism that created this identity. The nationalists themselves 'study' only the outcomes of nationalism but they do not treat it as a social creation. For them national identity is an essence, probably not characterized as such but handled as if it is something that does not have a beginning and an end.

National identity does not manifest itself in politics only. For some, 'nationalism' is a 'mistaken' approach on issues of peace and war, on coexistence and on matters of ethics in the international arena. Such a definition of 'national identity' obscures its essence and its myriad manifestations. An identity leaves its imprint on anyone's many actions, beliefs and especially sentiments. The consequences of an identity can not be characterized as a 'mistake'; once this is done the relationship between the identity and the action is denied. This is usually done when some actions – like undeniably aggressive and especially unsuccessful wars of 'ours' – need to be condemned, trying at the same time however, not to condemn the 'identity' that actually caused the actions.

In other words, national identity is not prone to investigation. Very often various adjectives are proposed to avoid a study in depth: 'good', 'healthy', 'cultural' identity versus the 'chauvinist', 'racist', 'aggressive' nationalism. Some other time 'patriotism' is used instead of 'nationalism'. Whereas national identity is a broad and historical entity which naturally presents different phases according to local and international contingency. Sometimes

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<sup>26</sup> Hugh Seton-Watson, *Nations and States*, Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1977, p. 465-466.

it may prove 'useful' or 'peaceful', sometimes the contrary. An identity should not be differentiated in accordance to its 'benefits' but in accordance to its basic principles and modes of operation.

In an article on Greek press *vis a vis* the image of Turkey, I tried to show that in Greece there is a) a general understanding of 'Turkey', which shows on what the 'Greeks' agree on as national consensus, and at the same time b) a set of fluctuating opinions which are influenced by the political atmosphere of the period in question. Both of these manifestations are the products of a national identity (they are expressed as 'views' and naturally they differ from the corresponding 'Turkish views and evaluations'). The first operates within the *sphere of consensual nationalism*, i.e., the manifestation of the minimum national consensus that creates the group called 'Greeks'. The second I called *contingent nationalism*. This attitude is mostly political and changes according to the local and international situation. There may be different opinions within the country about the Other, but these do not challenge the first 'sphere'. The second – the contingent nationalism – may show rapid and/or frequent changes but the first – the consensual nationalism – presents endurance.<sup>27</sup>

Therefore one should be very clear when he/she speaks of 'changes' in Greek-Turkish relations and/or of social attitudes. The crucial question is not the changes in *contingent nationalism*, which may easily retreat to past attitudes, but the changes that occur in the national identity which is secured on a *national consensus*. In this chapter some 'everyday' areas where this 'consensus' is manifested will be investigated with the intention to shed some light on the 'identity' of the 'parties' and especially with respect to the Other.

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### Opinion Polls

Scientifically carried out objective opinion polls on the perceptions of the Greeks and the Turks are more reliable sources to approach the identity of the parties and their attitudes towards the Other. There are very few however. Maybe the most extensive one, carried out at the same time in both countries in 1989, is quite old.<sup>28</sup> It is also very interesting that this poll was never published and therefore all its findings never became known. The reason for this 'secrecy', I suspect, is political. The findings are so discouraging that probably the parties decided not to make public all the findings and show to both sides that the Other has such a negative opinion about 'us'.

According to the few findings that became public we know that, in 1989, only 3% of the Turks and 7% of the Greeks would choose the other country in case they decided to travel abroad as tourists. Turks and Greeks do not trust the Other (much / at all) by percentages of 73 and 81. When asked if the food, the structure of the family, the music and the personality of the parties 'look

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<sup>27</sup> H. Millas, '1998 Yunanistan Basınında Türkiye' (Turkey In the Greek Press of 1998), in *Bilanço 1923-1998*, Tarih Vakfı Yayınları, İstanbul 1999.

<sup>28</sup> The survey in Turkey was conducted by PIAR LTD and in Greece by ICAP (GALLUP) AE during 15/10-5/11 1989. 1400 and 1000 people were questioned respectively, personally, all around the two countries and care was taken so that age, sex, education, size and geographical area of the sample were representative. Some of the findings were published in *Sabah* newspaper in Turkey and *Tachidromos* magazine in Greece in November 1989.

alike' the Turks said 'yes' 15-20 % for the first three and only 10% for the 'personality' and the Greeks 49-54% for the food and music, and 27-20% for the other two. The Turks had a high percentage of 'I do not know', of the order of 49-56 % and the Greeks of 20-28%.

When asked which of the following parameters influence the Greek-Turkish relations in a negative direction i.e., if it the difference in language, in religion, the wars in the past, low educational level, bad mass media, etc., the Turks highlighted wars in the past (49%), bad mass media (48%) and religion difference (40%); and the Greeks wars in the past (68%), bad mass media (62%), low educational level (57%) and religion (52%).<sup>29</sup> In these answers one notices the importance given to 'history' and to 'religion', the two constituents of the national identity.

As for the image and prejudices about the Other, there is not much of a doubt. Only 7% of the Turks and 27% of the Greeks said they would accept their daughter (if they had one) to marry a man from the Other side. Among nine countries (USA, France, Great Britain, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Germany, Albania, Soviet Union) for the Turks, Bulgaria and Greece are the countries they trust the least and for the Greeks this title goes to Turkey. Then they presented a list of 'characteristics' and they asked the parties to choose what is most appropriate for the Other. The Turks saw the Greeks as religious (75%), 'they like to eat and drink' (67%), 'they are simple' (54%), 'they like to have their own house'; and the Greeks perceive the Turks as persons who 'like to eat and drink' (42%), 'they have their own house' (25%) etc. In this question only 8% of the Turks did not answer, whereas 18% of the Greeks refrained from answering.

All these opinions about the Other are expressed in spite of the declared ignorance of first hand information about the Other. When asked, 90% of the Turks and 67% of the Greeks said that they have never met a single person of the Other side (a Greek and a Turk respectively). The Turks and the Greeks who answered the questions saying 'I do not know', on the other hand, are of the order of 15-30% for the Turks and 10-20% for the Greeks. In other words, they did not have personal knowledge about the Other but they had in general a negative opinion against the Other.

The identity which determines observation and opinions (instead of the popular belief that through observation one reaches to opinions) becomes manifest when questions about the 'responsibilities' were asked. The USA policy is seen from both as a policy 'in favor of the Other country' and according to the Turks this favoritism harms Greek-Turkish relations (56% yes, 14% no); the Greeks share the same opinion (62% yes, 15% no). As for the governments, the Turks believe that 'their' government makes all possible efforts to improve the bilateral relations (61%, only 1% for the Greek government), and the Greeks believe it is 'their' government that does its best (73%, and the Turkish one 5%).<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> The Turks in this question had high percentages of 'I do not know'- of the order of 30%. The Greeks were hesitant only by 10-20%. This is the reason of the higher percentages of 'clear opinion' of the Greeks. It is also not clear to whose 'bad mass media', 'religion' and 'low educational level' the parties referred; but one can safely assume that at a very high percentage the parties meant the Other when they mentioned these problematic areas.

<sup>30</sup> Finally, not directly associated with our problematic, two questions show that the Greeks are more optimistic (or the situation was such in 1989). Asked directly if things will improve

These results were presented in 1989 by the manager of Piar Mr. Bülent Tanla in Greek-Turkish Friendship Association in Istanbul, where he was a member too. I was present in that meeting and I remember that the numbers that he presented, especially the ones related to the Turks had caused a kind of a shock. Many raised questions and said that ‘the Turks can not be like that since...’; and they tried to raise counter arguments. They said they know so many people that are not at all prejudiced against the Greeks, that the negative image of the Greeks can not be reconsolidated with the ‘common aspects of the two communities’, the ‘past happy coexistence’ and the like. The Turkish members were confronted with a reality that they could not accept.

Mr. Bülent Tanla tried to explain that the poll had to do with statistical reality and that personal opinions do not mean much in this case. I will add that 1% of the Turks means 650,000 Turks and 1% of the Greeks means 100,000 Greeks! We may have an environment of hundreds of thousand people, but this may conceal from us the other 99%. The general situation of Greeks and Turks may be quite different from our personal experience.

Also the act of ‘knowing’ itself is problematic to begin with. ‘Our’ understanding of prejudice may be very different from what is actually taking place. Prejudiced people usually define prejudice in such a way that they keep themselves at a safe distance from this category. The ‘knowledge’ of one side is seen as ‘prejudice’ by the Other. However, prejudice itself is never seen as such by its bearer; if it is perceived as such, automatically ceases to exist anyhow. Therefore, if prejudice exists, it can exist only unnoticed by ‘us’.

Statistics, therefore, can be a reliable source that gives a ‘general’ picture of the feelings of the people. According to a recent poll carried out in 2000 by EKKE (National Center of Social Studies of Greece) we see that the feeling of the Greeks have not changed substantially. According to this investigation the Greeks expressed their liking for different nations and the Turks come last in this list.<sup>31</sup> The Swedish come first (they are liked by 51%, disliked by 18%), the Serbs follow (by 46% liked, by 27% disliked), in between we see the Germans, the Dutch, the Americans (by 40% are liked, by 36% disliked) and at the end of the row appear the Bulgarians, the Croatians, Albanians (liked by 7%, by 74% disliked), the Macedonians (Fyrom) and at the very end the Turks (by 3% liked, by 89% disliked).<sup>32</sup>

If we accept these figures as accurate, the 3% of the Greeks that ‘like’ the Turks indicates that it is possible to find 300,000 Greeks that ‘like’ the Turks. If summoned in the same place they compose an impressive picture. This is the optimistic view. The other side of the coin is that still remains another portion of 9,700,000 Greeks who do not share the same feelings. And usually

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in their country, the Greeks said ‘yes’ by 56% and ‘no’ by 11%; whereas the Turkish corresponding answers were 25% and 54%. Asked about the bilateral relations the Greeks were again optimistic: 56% said the relations will improve (will worsen only 10%), whereas the Turks said they will worsen by 53% (and will improve only by 14%).

<sup>31</sup> See for example *To Vima* newspaper of 22 June 2000.

<sup>32</sup> These numbers reflect a period when turmoil existed in old Yugoslavia and some ‘feeling’ can be associated to these events. The sympathy for the Serbs and the disliking for the Croats can be partly explained politically. However, the Turks were last in the row even though they were somehow distanced from this Balkan issue. One can guess about the ‘reasons’ of these feelings, but for the moment the numbers show a tendency and not the causes that create the feelings.

people that ignore the numbers and form opinions on their ‘experience’ may easily ‘miss’ the whole picture.

These polls are not enough in order to reach reliable conclusions. They are an indication however. Another poll that was carried between 4-17 December 2003 in various Balkan countries that wished to join the European Union (Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, Albania, Macedonia and Turkey) showed that among these it is Turkey that trusts Greece the least, in spite of the declared policy of Greece to assist Turkey in this effort.<sup>33</sup> To the question ‘how much do you think Greece tries for your entrance to the EU?’, Turkey had the lowest percentage (18%) of trust to Greece. Macedonia and Albania believe that Greece tries in this direction for them at the order of 24% and 39%.

### Schoolbooks and the students

So much have been written about Greek and Turkish schoolbooks that I will try to be very short here. Schoolbooks can be seen as a social product, i.e., the end result of the perceptions of a community. The textbooks in both Greece and Turkey are prepared by agencies of the state. Therefore they can be seen as the ‘official’ view of the state, too. But at the same time they operate as instruments that form the perception of the community. Actually schoolbooks, and education in general, form opinions, ideologies and identities too.

All studies on Greek and Turkish textbooks and on the way the Other is portrayed agreed that they play a negative role. The Other is either presented as an enemy and a ‘negative’ neighbor or, in the best case, the Other is silenced or is presented without any merit.<sup>34</sup> In this respect textbooks do not differ from the general historiography of the two countries. In general they follow the same understanding and purpose: they play a major role in ‘nation building’. In this respect they are very useful tools in revealing what kind of a ‘nation’ the state apparatus wishes to see being constructed as well as in determining the role of the Other in this process.

The other related question is if these textbooks are really influential on forming opinions. The general impression is that the (negative) context of these texts and the general public (negative) opinion about the Other coincide. If the textbooks are responsible for this ‘harmony’ or if there are other dynamics that determine both, is beyond the scope of this present effort. Here

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<sup>33</sup> The study was conducted by Kapa Research for ‘Balkan Monitor’ and some results are published in the Greek newspaper *To Vima* on 3 January 2004.

<sup>34</sup> For a detailed analysis of the Turkish and Greek textbooks with respect to the Other, as well as the related bibliography see: H. Millas, - *Εικόνες Ελλήνων και Τούρκων - σχολικά βιβλία, ιστοριογραφία, λογοτεχνία και εθνικά στερεότυπα*, (Images of Greeks and Turks - textbooks, historiography, literature and national stereotypes), Athens: Alexandria, 2001. Also from H.M: 1) ‘History Textbooks in Greece and Turkey’, London: in *History Workshop*, Spring 1991 (No. 31). 2) ‘The Mythical Past and the Tense Present: Education in Greece and Turkey, in *Culture and Reconciliation in Southeastern Europe, International Conference*, Thessaloniki (June 26-29, 1997). 3) ‘Türk Ders Kitaplarında Yunanlılar: Bütünleştirici bir Yaklaşım’ (Greeks in Turkish Textbooks: The Way for an Integratory Approach), in *Tarih Öğretimi ve Tarihte ‘Öteki’ Sorunu (History Teaching and the ‘Other’ in History)*, Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt, 1998.

it will suffice to say that the opinions of the students – and of the teachers – are not in disagreements with the context of the textbooks.

In a pilot investigation that I carried out in 1993 related to the first grade university students of Turkey I found out that the ‘lack of knowledge’, and the contradiction that the students had with respect to the Greeks could be directly connected to the understanding of the history books that were taught in the secondary education.<sup>35</sup> The students presented a strikingly confused state of mind with respect to the historical heritage of the Other and the role or ‘our’ side. This situation matched with the ‘method’ of the textbooks.

The same ‘confusion’ is noticed in the teachers of secondary education in Greece. According to an extended study carried out by the group of A. Frangoudaki/Th. Dragona, the teachers give surprisingly contradictory answers with respect to the historical role of the ‘Turks’ and especially when the questions are related to Greek national identity issues and/or national heritage. For example, on one hand they refuse any influence of the Other on ‘our heritage’, and when the question is put in another context they say that the historical coexistence with the Turks had only negative effects on the ‘Greek nation’.

These answers of the Turkish students and the Greek teachers not only do they show lack of knowledge and confusion of mind but also lack of self-knowledge. They do not notice that their ‘mistakes’ are susceptible to something more than lack of information. The contradictions appear in areas where identity issues are focused. Either a section of a historical past is silenced or obscured because it is disturbing to ‘our’ perceptions and ‘our’ self-image; or the national stereotypes follow certain myths that satisfy national identity.

Another source that gives us an indication of how students perceive the Other are the 77 compositions written by Turkish first grade high school students in 1997. Their teacher asked them to evaluate the Greek-Turkish relations and the findings – personally delivered to me – are revealing. All the students were for ‘friendship’ with Greece. However, almost all students blamed the Other for the negative relations. They all believed that the ‘historical past’ was mainly responsible for the tension between the two nations. The majority believed that the tension started in 1919 when the Greeks invaded Turkey and a small portion of the students thought that the 12<sup>th</sup> century is the starting period of the clashes when ‘the Turks entered Anatolia’. In all cases however, the students did not mention that the Ottomans had captured and kept the ‘Greeks lands’. This issue was completely silenced. On the contrary the metaphor of ‘a happy life together’ and ‘common food, music etc’ was often repeated. There were very few cases where the students said that both sides responsible for the problematic relations (of 1997).

The common denominator of all the above is that both parties present a nationally determined attitude that can be easily predicted: ‘we are right and better, the Other is wrong and negative/worse’. This ‘preference’ is a typical characteristic of all ‘nations’ and operates in two ways: a) Once the ethnic identity is determined the reaction to the questions related to ‘history’ and to

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<sup>35</sup> See: H. Millas, ‘Türkiye’de Etnosantrik Tarihçiliğin Pratik Sonuçları’ (‘The Practical Consequences of Ethnocentric History Teaching in Turkey’ in *Tarih Öğretimi ve Ders Kitapları (History Teaching and Textbooks)*, Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt, 1995.

the Other can be predicted; or b) when the answers are evaluated the ‘national identity’ of the interviewee can be safely predicted. In other words, there is a high correlation factor between ‘national identity’ and the ‘perception of the Other’.

### The Other in literary texts

The literary texts of the two countries in question are most revealing since they express views that are more representative of the general public than the historiography and the textbooks. The last two express the academic and the ‘official’ governmental (or state) views; whereas the literary texts, the novels for example, address the masses, or at least a wide spectrum of readers and try to establish a communication with them. Here I will summarize some findings referring to the Greek and Turkish novels with respect to the Other.

The appearance of Greek and Turkish novels *in general* tie-up with the search for national identity and with nation building. The first Greek novel however, circulated conventionally in 1834, five years after the establishing of the Greek national state, whereas the first Turkish novel in 1872, three decades prior to the dawn of Turkish nationalist movement of the Young Turks and fifty years before the establishing of the Turkish national state.<sup>36</sup> The first consequence of this incongruity of nationalism and of the novel becomes apparent in the way the ‘Other’ is portrayed in the literary texts of the two respective communities. In the first Greek novels the ‘Turks’ are presented as (meaning they are *perceived* as) a nation with common negative characteristics, as the historical enemy, as a source of problems and as a threat.<sup>37</sup> In the first turcophone novels however, the Greeks do not appear as the ‘Other’. Before national identity becomes supreme within the Ottoman society, the turcophone novel either does not make an issue out of the Greeks or whenever some Greeks appear they are not identified as member of a ‘nation’ but only as individuals or as citizens of the Ottoman state (in case the ‘Greeks’ were Ottoman citizens), sometimes with some ethnic positive or neutral characteristics but definitely not portrayed as ethnically negative stereotypes.

The appearance of the Young Turks marks the end of this school of writers. The ‘Ottomanists’ stopped writing and publishing their works after

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<sup>36</sup> *Leandros* by P. Soutsos and *Taaşuk-ı Tal’at ve Fitnat* by Şemsettin Sami are considered the first Greek and Turkish novels respectively. Unless it is indicated otherwise for all findings on novels see: H. Millas: a) *Türk Romanı ve ‘Öteki’ - Ulusal Kimlikte Yunan İmajı, (The Turkish Novel and the ‘Other’ - The Image of the Greek and National Identity)* Istanbul: Sabancı, 2000, and b) *Εικόνες Ελλήνων και Τούρκων - σχολικά βιβλία, ιστοριογραφία, λογοτεχνία και εθνικά στερεότυπα, (Images of Greeks and Turks - textbooks, historiography, literature and national stereotypes)*, Athens: Alexandria, 2001. In these studies about five hundred novels of about one hundred and fifty Greek and Turkish writers are presented and analyzed.

<sup>37</sup> Only forty years before, the image of the ‘Turk’ in grecophone literature was not negative as can be readily noticed in the politically oriented poems (and other writings) of Rigas Velestinlis and other Greek intellectuals. See h. Millas: *Yunan Ulusunun Doğuşu (The Birth of The Greek Nation)*, Istanbul: İletişim, 1994, pp. 87-122, 257-294). After 1834 literary authors such as I. Pitsipios, Gr. Palaiologos, St. Ksenos, D. Vikelas, A. Papadiamantis portray a negative Turk who is in confrontation with ‘us’. This tendency persists in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, too.

approximately 1912 and a new generation of authors appeared.<sup>38</sup> Nationalism from there on existed not only as an ideology and as a political movement but also as a rhetoric that ran across all texts: textbooks, historiography, literature, newspapers, etc. This national discourse undertook legitimizing all military and/or political actions against the ‘Other’. In the era of nation states, the ‘Other’ in Greek and Turkish texts was almost identical, but as a mirror image: an enemy, a source of various political problems (a threat for ‘our’ freedom), very different from ‘us’ and a negative character (dishonest, violent, etc.).

The political situation and the wars between the two countries (the war of 1897, the Balkan Wars of 1912-1914, the Greek-Turkish clash of 1919-1922) are not enough to explain the negative image of the ‘Other’. The literary texts did not portray the actual environment of the writers but sketched the ‘Other’ in accordance with a nationalist ideology and a constructed past, irrespective of personal experiences. A comparison of the image of the ‘Other’ in the memoirs and in the novels of three Turkish authors are revealing. In their memoirs, where real events are narrated, the Greeks are almost all ‘normal’ and even positive personalities, whereas in the novels, written by the same authors and at the same period, they are all, almost without exceptions, extremely negative.<sup>39</sup> This negative image is in harmony with the images of the ‘Other’ encountered in the textbooks and the historiography mentioned above. One can thus infer that ‘our’ construction of the Other is based more on ‘our ideology’ and on ‘our perceptions’ than on ‘our’ actual experience. Our perceptions form our framework within which we evaluate the Other.

During the periods of better bilateral relations and more relaxed international milieu the negative images of the ‘Other’ are relatively improved, but still preserving the main national/nationalist traits.<sup>40</sup> The ‘Other’ is supposedly better, e.g., he/she is ‘a friend’, he/she ‘likes us’, ‘he/she is honest’. However, a closer inspection reveals that sometimes this positive ‘Other’ has actually lost his ethnic identity, he is the one who is

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<sup>38</sup> Some Turkish novelists who did not exhibit a negative ‘Other’ are Şemsettin Sami, Ahmet Mithat, Halit Ziya, Rezaizade Ekrem. Some well-known nationalist writers who portrayed a negative ‘Other’ are Ömer Seyfettin, Halide Edip, Yakup Kadri, Samim Kocagöz, Tarık Buğra, Peyami Safa, Atilla İlhan.

<sup>39</sup> See: H. Millas: ‘The Image of Greeks in Turkish Literature: Fiction and Memoirs’, in *Oil on Fire?*, Studien zur Internationalen Schulbuchforschung, Schriftenreihe des Georg-Eckert-Instituts, Hanover: Verlag Hansche Buchhandlung, 1996. Considering the totality of their published works, the three writers, Ö. Seyfettin, H. Edip and Yakup Kadri, in their memoirs portrayed 17 very positive Greeks with only 3 negative ones, whereas in their novels they portrayed a total of 69 very negative Greeks with only 3 positive ones.

<sup>40</sup> Contingently, some authors followed different political programs and used a different phraseology but always remaining within the national paradigm. For example, during the reforms of 1908 with which the equality of all national/religious groups within the Ottoman State was proclaimed, Halide Edip presents her only positive Greek character, in *Yeni Turan* (1912), a ‘loyal’ minister. In Greece, G. Viziinos presents his positive (even if some are ‘naively positive’) Turks during the years 1883-1895, in a relatively peaceful period, before the war of 1897 and the Balkan Wars. This kind of changes are promising and show that literature following positive political moves can contribute to a better political atmosphere supporting political initiatives. There are however, a limited number of cases where literary texts are not only against national confrontations and are harmonized with a prevailing positive political environment, but they even initiate an anti-nationalistic discourse, some radically some more hesitantly. The authors of such texts are the vanguards of an effort to transcend the nationalist paradigm. I will not deal with this rather rare case here.

assimilated and has become one of 'us': he thinks, feels and behaves like 'us'. He is a 'naively positive' character as explained above.<sup>41</sup>

This naively positive 'Other' is especially in abundance when the 'Other' appears as a woman. Women play a special role in nationalistic discourse. They do not directly participate in the interethnic fights, they only 'watch men', and therefore they are perceived acting as judges and as a criteria that indicate the righteous side. Their preference counts. They normally fall in love with 'us' and prefer 'our men'. In the novels of the two countries - in real life of course the case is different - among two hundred cases of love affairs between Greeks and Turks, it is always the women of the 'Other' who prefer to unite with 'our men'. Cases to the contrary are - according to my findings - completely absent.<sup>42</sup>

One among the various reasons that may exist for this 'sensitivity' with respect to our/their women may be the fact that traditionally the wars were marked with the enslavement of the women of the 'Other', as war trophies, followed by being the 'wife' of the winner. Symbolically the marriage (or sexual connection) of 'our woman' to the 'Other' may be a sign of a defeat. Whatever the reason is, the role assigned to women in nationalistic rhetoric is directly associated to national identity and reveals this identity more than any other parameter.

In other words, in the case of Greeks and Turks, the image of the 'Other' is related to the so-called national identity and is concurrent with nation building. Actually all the phenomena referred above are examples in this direction. The 'Other' is perceived and portrayed either negatively (an enemy, an invader, a potential danger) or, as a product of wishful thinking, as a 'domesticated Other', as a 'naively positive Other'. The public cohesion was proclaimed necessary *vis a vis* the danger, the 'Other'. One can easily see how nationalistic discourse advances its rhetoric based on xenophobia and on an imagined historical rival. The Greeks see 'expansionist' Turks and the Turks see Greeks who consistently follow the 'Great Idea', i.e. a dream of establishing Byzantium anew. The Greeks feel proud that they had a successful revolution (1821-1829) against the 'Turkish rule' which lasted for hundreds of years (called *Tourkokratia*) and the Turks share the same feeling for beating the Greeks (1919-1922) and establishing their nation state. Both share ill feelings for the dark years of occupation. Thus the 'Other' is a protagonist in national history and in 'our' heroic past.

The role of the 'Other' in national rhetoric is not contingent but intrinsic. B. Anderson defines a nation as a 'political community imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign'.<sup>43</sup> What do however, limited and sovereign mean? By 'limited' it is meant that beyond the national boundaries 'lie other nations'. By 'sovereignty', but also by other sacred principles voiced by all

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<sup>41</sup> This naively positive image of the 'Other' is so disturbing to the 'Other' that passages that contain such heroes are normally censored when these texts are translated into the language of the 'Other'.

<sup>42</sup> Actually the two cases where 'our' women get in sexual relation with the 'Other' man confirm the rule: in both cases the authors have openly acknowledged that the 'Other' was among their recent ancestors. See: H. Millas, 'Les Romains, Les Femmes et Les Relations Gréco-Turques', in Nancy: *Genese/Oluşum*, August 1999 (No. 60-61).

<sup>43</sup> Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities*, Verso, London-New York, 1990, p. 15.

nation states such as 'liberty' and 'independence', is meant the subduing of the imaginable rivals, the enemies, the 'Other', as well as 'our' dominance over 'them'. The 'Other', as the one beyond our living space, is a *sine qua non* of every nation.

Each sovereign nation-state by its nature and due to the above mentioned targets (sovereignty, liberty, etc.) is related to a real or constructed 'Other'. The heroic past of the ancestors and of the nation starts with a history in which 'we' and the 'Other' coexist - but with considerable tension. Nationalism is characterized with an imagined heroic past which has to include the 'Other', some 'Other'. The 'unknown soldier' in each country is related to a soldier of the 'Other', a our soldier is killed by a soldier of the Other. Binary relationship is unavoidable.

Almost all Greek and Turkish novels are formed on the presupposition that there exist readers who can read the texts in the original and who share with the author an understanding of a common past: full of pride, agony and regrets, reinforced with similar historical interpretations, with a *minimum consensus* which is the force that binds the members of the whole nation together. The common feelings that ensure the national identity of a community are the very same sentiments that link the author to its readers.

Almost all Greek novels (after 1834) and all Turkish novels (after 1910) are marked with a group identity, characterized as 'Greek' or 'Turkish'. The 'Other' in these texts is distinct: different from 'us', mostly negative or naively positive, etc. In most cases impressive silence reveals an uneasiness with respect to the 'Other': especially 'our' violent acts against the 'Other' and the rights of the 'Other' which have been violated by 'us' are systematically silenced. Silence coexists with absence of empathy. Also 'we'-in comparison to the 'Other'- are praised, blatantly or indirectly. Historical events are manipulated selectively and interpreted with double standard. All these are accepted as 'normal' by the native readers, or rather, they are not even noticed as tendencies worth mentioning.

Having seen and examined the answers given by the Greek and Turkish participants of the three workshops to the 'first question' and to the 'second question' ('Chapters One', 'Two' and 'Three'), having examined how historiography and national identities operate in various fields, i.e., in nation-building, in everyday discourse expressed as 'opinion' of the masses with respect to the Other or as literary texts where the Other is recreated ('Chapters Four' and Five'). In the next and final chapter, I will try to summarize the findings and reach to some conclusions with respect to the Greeks and to the Turks and their relationship, which is mostly characterized with the image (the perception) that the parties have about the Other and the 'self'.

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## Chapter Six

### Some Conclusions

What we call ‘facts’ is mostly the side of the picture that we prefer to present. The other side may be silenced or presented as secondary. ‘Conclusions’ may prove even more subjective. I have tried so far to present the facts that stroke my attention. The reader can draw his/her own conclusions. Actually there is no doubt that each individual will do exactly that and will judge the Greeks the Turks, their relations, but the writer too.

My own ‘conclusions’, apart from the ones already shown in the above chapters, will be presented here in three different unities. The role of some ‘dynamics’, like ‘national identity’ and of the ‘Other’ will be summarized first. Secondly, the attitudes of the Greeks and the Turks and their relations will be reminded. Thirdly, some ideas that may contribute in transcending the ‘difficulties’ in the Greek-Turkish relations will follow.

#### A. On identity and the Other

A1 - The ‘national identity’, apart from what else it may mean and does, plays a role in the way we perceive our environment and ourselves.<sup>44</sup> That is why the members of the same national group usually present similar reactions. They agree on many issues among themselves and at the same time they disagree on some issues with members of groups of a different national identity.

This does not mean that members of different national identities cannot agree on some and even on many issues. It does not mean that *all* members of a nation agree on all issues, either. However, there should be some major issues on which the consensus among the members of the ‘nation’ should be decisive. This composes the ‘minimum national consensus’ that enables one to talk of a ‘nation’ and of a ‘national identity’.

A2 – In ‘Chapter Five’ above what I called the *sphere of consensual nationalism* was differentiated from *contingent nationalism*. The first is a consensus that defines a nation; the second defines the political positions that may occur within the nation. Both are associated with group identities but the first is more durable resisting to major and rapid changes and the second more volatile following political expediencies. *Consensual nationalism* is the basis on which national dynamics and national myths are built; it is the views and beliefs that constitute the nationhood. Within the nations political discussions and disagreements, on the other hand, usually take place within the *sphere of contingent nationalism*.

This differentiation enables us to interpret the rapid changes within the second and the relative endurance of the first, i.e., of the national identity. This ‘difference’ is expressed in popular speech in various ways. Some make

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<sup>44</sup> Or if the same is phrased in other words, different opinions can be perceived as being the result of different ‘identities’; or, groups that share similar opinions compose unities that are perceived as having ‘something’ in common that is called ‘identity’.

a differentiation of ‘nationalism’ and ‘patriotism’, others of ‘nationalism in the good sense’ and ‘racism’ or ‘chauvinism’, etc. Whereas, it is more constructive to see that national identity is a belief and it may present various political programs. With this differentiation it becomes understandable how and why nations change their political targets (*sphere of contingent nationalism*), at the same time preserving their identity (*sphere of consensual nationalism*). It also becomes understandable how a nation (or a country) may change its political position *vis a vis* another nation, but still preserving its myths and all the related feelings *vis a vis* the Other. These happenings actually take place in different spheres.

A3 – National identity appeared worldwide in relatively recent times, only the last two or three centuries (depending on one’s interpretation of facts), but it was popularized as an ideology that propagated the belief that nations were ‘very old’. This process of ‘make-believe’ is called ‘ethnogenesis’. Irrespective of the great variety of individual cases of ethnogenesis, national identity is associated with national myths about ‘us’ as well as about the Other (‘Chapter Four’). These myths and the image of the Other operate within the *sphere of consensual nationalism*. In this sense the Other obtains a diachronic character too. The Other plays a decisive role in the national myth.

This is why the stereotypes about the Other persist, even though people declare that they do not have any problems with the ‘specific/concrete/real’ Other (‘Chapter Five’). The specific Other does not change the character of the ‘historical/imagined/abstract’ Other, who forms the basis of *consensual nationalism*. These clarifications are indispensable in order to understand what has changed lately in Greek-Turkish relations and the related perceptions and images.

A4 - Some self-evident facts should be reminded anew to prevent misunderstandings. A nation is not composed of identical individuals. Each personality is unique. ‘Common characteristics’ is a sociological abstraction and a statistical entity. The exceptions are numerous. Still there are some similarities – high correlation factors – which enable one to speak of group identities; e.g., of Greeks and of Turks. An indication of such ‘similarities’ is the answers given by the Greeks and the Turks to the ‘questions’ presented in this study above. Not only did each ‘nation’ expose different views, but also one can even predict the ‘nationhood’ by looking only at his/her answers.

A5 – Identity issues operate on an unconscious level. Related examples are presented in the “Introduction” above and this trend is again encountered in the ‘answers’ given by the participants of the workshops. Actually this unconscious aspect of the national identity is the source of many ills. It hides primarily the subjectivity of cognitive operations that are related to ‘national’ issues. This shortcoming becomes more apparent in the contradictions, double standards and silences of most nationalistic discourses.

A6 – Finally, it is obvious that human beings do not have a national identity only; they have many identities. Someone may belong to a group defined by sex, age group, religion, language, profession, geographical area, family position, status, sports club, ideology, hobby, etc. Here priority is given to

‘national identity’ simply because the Greeks and the Turks and their relations are investigated. All these characterizations are ‘national’ in essence. Human beings in our case are chosen to become our focus of interest with their national identity.

### B. On Greeks, Turks and their relations

The above (A1-A6) are general observations that characterize all nations. There are some other situations that are associated more closely specifically with the Greeks and with the Turks. Most of the findings, both the ones originating from the answers to the ‘two questions’ (‘Chapter One’ to ‘Chapter Three’) as well as the ones that are reached through the Greek and the Turkish historiographies (‘Chapter Four’) and other texts, tests and polls were presented above (‘Chapter Five’). Here few supplementary comments related to the Greeks, to the Turks, to their relations and the ‘answers’ that the three workshops produced will follow.

B7 – All findings show that the ‘views’ of the parties (the Greeks and the Turks) are influenced by their identity. The ‘answers’ of each side to specific questions are at a very high percentage predictable; i.e., their evaluations are nationally determined. In almost all cases any text or statement that refers to Greek-Turkish relations is marked with this ‘national identity’. Each side has its own point of view; and these views are in most cases in opposition.

B8 – The parties are conscious of the fact that their views are in opposition. The Greeks and the Turks do not recognize however that their views are subjective and nationally biased. Once the ‘views’ are recognized as ‘objective observations’ neither self-doubt nor, as a consequence, self-knowledge can be attained. The confidence that their opinions secure to their bearers precludes further search.

B9 – In this study two different groups of Greeks and Turks are involved. ‘Chapters Four’ and ‘Five’ deal with these ‘nations’ in general. ‘Chapters One’, ‘Two’ and ‘Three’ refer to the participants of the ‘three workshops’ that are specially selected. These selected groups compose a special section of Greek and Turkish societies. Most of them are members of organizations (NGOs and others) that are in close contact with the Other and they try to develop positive relations with the other side.

All the findings show that the ‘nations’ – i.e., the great majority of the Greeks and the Turks - are far from having transcended their historical prejudices (‘Chapter Four’ and ‘Chapter Five’). Their worries are about a (real or imagined) negative past that prejudices a fearful future. In short, in spite of many different opinions that may exist among individuals on such matters, it is as if in general the Greeks regret that the past five centuries were the way they were and they think it is the Other responsible for this, and the Turks regret that the Other thinks the way he thinks about the past and about ‘him’.

B10 - Also there is no symmetry in the complaints and the prospects of the two sides. For example the Greek identity is associated with a ‘missed’ grandeur (expressed as history) – due to the Other. It is irretrievable, ‘irreversible’, ‘non-reimbursable’. It is a story of mourning and distress. The Turks believe that they have a ‘misinterpreted’ grandeur – the Ottoman past. It can be retrieved through the ‘testimony’ of the Other; and they ask for it. It is a matter of self-image; thus the discourse about ‘friendship’.

B11 – Almost all complaints seem to be associated with a main concern: sovereignty rights. Historical and present grievances as well as future worries are connected directly or by way of insinuation to this *par excellence* ‘national’ issue. Even matters of images and interpretation of historical past can be seen as factors that eventually may create a climate that will endanger ‘our’ national integrity, ‘our’ liberty, etc.

‘Sovereignty’ here means something more than a political status. When viewed as a component of a national identity, any threat that is associated with ‘sovereignty’ is perceived as a situation that jeopardizes many aspects of personal life. As historical experience demonstrated, first, the everyday lives of the citizens are destroyed. People died or were treated badly, chased away from their homes and from their home countries, exploited, etc. Secondly, citizens that lose their ‘sovereignty’ and are not ethnically cleansed are lowered in status: they become ‘minorities’ if not ‘enemies’ within the country. This means losing prospects for equal treatment, i.e., ‘equality’, which is one of the main parameters of a modern democratic state.

Thirdly and probably the most important aspect of a ‘lost’ or a ‘wounded’ sovereignty is the sense of shame that accompanies the loss. National identity is associated primarily with a sense of pride of ‘being’, being a member of a nation that is sovereign. Without this – the sovereignty – the ‘existence’ itself appears to be in question. In other words, the fear of losing ‘sovereignty’ and the associated ‘worries’ presents an existential dimension and is based on past experience, even though this past is mostly constructed in accordance with nationalist myths. The sense of ‘threat’ that is supposed to originate from the Other has a ‘historical’ parameter that is reproduced and kept alive within the nations.

B12 - The situation with the selected participants of the workshops is different. First they accept in principle that what the public calls ‘prejudice’ does really exist in their respective societies. They are at a varying degree critical to their own parties – governments and citizens. The ‘participants’ who answered the questions do not fit the profile of the members of the ‘polls’ and of the ‘authors’ that were presented in ‘Chapter Four’ and ‘Five’.

B13 - Even this ‘enlightened’ minority however, still seems to lack in some fields. In most cases, as shown in ‘Chapters One’, ‘Two’ and especially in ‘Chapter Three’, they silence complaints and they do not voice their (negative) opinions about the Other. Either they lack the courage, or they refrain from ‘spoiling the nice atmosphere’ or they believe the Other is not ready to hear the criticism. They complain, e.g., about the ‘nationalism’ of the Other, but they avoid saying that this is expressed as a direct threat against their sovereignty right.

B14 - Another shortcoming of this group is that they do not know the Other and especially his/hers worries and sensitivities.<sup>45</sup> This is expressed in the difficulty in foreseeing the complaints of the Other as well as a lack of empathy. The Greeks for example do not seem to be aware that the Turkish side is very much distressed from the negative image the 'Christian West' for a few centuries attributed to the Turks and which was eventually appropriated by the Greeks too. The Turks do not suspect that the Greek national identity is built on a certain historical interpretation (a national myth) that is closely connected to a 'Turkish rule' that cannot be readily accepted as a 'happy period of tolerance and coexistence'.

B15 – This group expressed their worries of 'sovereignty rights' too, but in a special way. Instead of expressing themselves directly, they inferred that the Other 'thinks' that there is such an issue. It seems that even though the parties tried to play down the issue – the most sensitive issue in Greek-Turkish relations, i.e., the past and present sovereignty of the 'nations' – the idea was behind their mind.

B16 - Also the parties (the participants) do not seem to be aware that the Other in each country has an imagined historical dimension and that the Other plays a decisive role in forming and preserving the national identity of the parties. In the best case they recognize that the 'press' or the 'schoolbooks' play a negative role in Greek-Turkish relations but they do not seem – in general - to be aware that the 'negative Other' and the so called 'national identity' are somehow historically interconnected. The negative Other is not due to 'mistaken information' but due to a special ideological framework.

### C. On transcending nationalist prejudices

C17 - Transcending national prejudices and developing a 'neutral' attitude *vis a vis* the Other is a complex process that is related to national identity and all the founding myths of each nation. Actually the whole enterprise is usually presented as an effort where, on the one hand, the Other would be stripped off from its negative characteristics, and on the other, 'our' national identity and 'our' related myths would be preserved.

This sounds as a contradiction, an oxymoron. The negative Other is a constituent of national identity. The revision of the historical Other presupposes a revision of 'our' history.

C18 - The political programs of the countries may be still changed relatively easily for the better, as Greece and Turkey did after 1999, without taking a decisive step and revising historiography. In this case however, the national myths and the image of the Other may still be active or 'asleep in the subconscious', ready to function with the first political crisis.

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<sup>45</sup> For details see: H. Millas, *Do's & Don'ts for Better Greek-Turkish Relations*, Papazissis, Athens, 2002.

In the previous chapter, the concepts of *consensual nationalism* and *contingent nationalism* were developed. The decisive step is to secure changes in the first sphere, where the basic national myths and perceptions *vis a vis* the past and the Other are to be revised. However, the two spheres are interrelated. A prolonged period of peaceful coexistence of good neighborhood, i.e., a political decision to exercise a calm and a reconciliatory policy, in the long run will facilitate major changes with respect to the basic nationalistic paradigm in the two countries.

C14 – Until then, and irrespective of the policies of the politicians, the members of the two communities, on personal or on NGO basis, may try to pave the way towards a more permanent rapprochement. As it is done in the three workshops which were the aspiration of this study, bringing to the consciousness of the parties the mechanisms that form the ‘national’ basis and its paraphernalia such as the phobias on national and sovereignty rights, is the first and most important step in order to transcend nationalism.

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# Appendix 1

## Greek-Turkish dialog: What is said, silenced and implied

(Speech of H. Millas in the workshops prior the ‘test’ questions - final version)

I have been asked to speak to you on G-T relations and dialog. I found this topic very attractive. Due to my interests I watched for years the Greek-Turkish dialogs that developed on various levels: among politicians, diplomats, state dignitaries (high officials such as military personnel, mayors, etc.), journalists, businessmen, academics, authors, artists, members of women and youth organizations, members of various professional organizations, but also among simple civilians (tourists and minority members). Being in close relations with both sides I noticed that the parties had developed a special way in conversing and communicating with the other side. My presentation will be about this experience.

Today we are in a very pleasant situation. Only ten to fifteen years ago the Greeks and the Turks would not sit around a table to talk the way we are doing now. Communication was suspended. Even meetings where talking did not take place were not possible. I remember that a Turkish pianist could not find a place in whole Athens to perform and eventually had to settle for a recital in the Turkish embassy. Actually she was boycotted. Then, little by little the parties started to come together, but only to fight. They would attack and accuse the other for a variety of reasons: differences in the Aegean and Cyprus, treatment of the minorities, but also for historical grievances. The Ottoman period was reminded; even the Byzantines and the Seljuqs. The last years, especially, as it is generally said, after the earthquakes shook the two countries, Greeks and Turks come together mostly to drink rakı and ouzo and enjoy the day. They avoid politics and history. To my great surprise I noticed that even self-criticism has started: ‘some things are not so good on our side’.

What I find missing however, is a sincere discussion, especially expressing complaints (I do not miss our old fights!). There is a silence now. I will refer to my background in order to make my point clearer. I was brought up as a member of the Greek minority of Istanbul. I had noticed that my community had developed a special way of communicating with the majority. We never used to say things that were the normal everyday discussion at home. For example, we would not say what could have annoyed the Turkish majority. In the fifties and sixties a Greek of Istanbul never expressed his opinion on the Cyprus issue for example. We would avoid the issue, we would repeat the official Turkish thesis, we would voice ignorance; but we would never say that we believed in the correctness of the Greek point of view, the view that we really believed.

There were many issues that we avoided. In general, history and the interpretation of the past: which side was ‘right’ in 1821, the role of the Turks

in the history of Anatolia, the Property Tax of 1942, the personality of Mustafa Kemal, etc. We had two views: our own and the one that we expressed in public. I noticed this approach among the Turks of Western Thrace, too. I believe that minorities develop this capability of hypocrisy in order to live a more relaxed life.

Hypocrisy itself is not the real problem. It may even prove useful. It helps people survive. On the other hand it creates a world of false perceptions and this may be a problem. The real views of the minority are not heard and understood and more important than that, the majority lives in a world of fallacy, of self-deception. This is the price, on the one hand, of not speaking the truth, and on the other, of not wanting to hear the views of the Other which are not to our liking.

I have the impression that a similar situation is encountered presently when Greeks and Turks meet and converse. They do not speak their mind. They are cautious not to spoil the positive atmosphere. They try to be politically correct and preserve the good climate.

As I said above the traditional way of Greek-Turkish communication was based on attacking the Other. Then the parties become arrogant. They accuse the 'Other' for real or imaginary acts of his. They use a harsh language. They attribute negative characteristics to the 'Other'. They swear and insult. This is the time the Greeks call the Turks barbarians and the Turks the Greeks infidels (*gavur*). When this attitude is selected the 'Other' is considered responsible for all mishaps of 'ours' and 'we' are presented as the completely innocent part. Parties become black and white, good and bad, stereotypes.

Apart from these two methods of 'attacking' and 'silencing' sometimes a third attitude is tried. Messages are given in an indirect way. National views are implied, hinted, inferred or insinuated. This method in a way is the most harmful one because not only does it have the negative effects of direct attacks since it actually voices the same complaints and arguments but it also gives the impression that the parties do not behave in sincerity, they do not speak their minds openly.

Let me give two examples. Instead of directly saying 'if you extend your territorial waters to 12 miles this will be considered *casus belli*', one may choose to say 'do not extend you territorial waters to 12 miles because we are a big and strong country'. Or instead of saying 'the Turks are barbarians', as the archbishop of Athens said in 2003, one may say 'you have no place in the European Union since you are unable to comply with the basic principles of democracy and human rights'. (Actually most of the examples given in my book *Do's and Don'ts for Better G-T Relations* as 'don'ts' are of this category.

Greeks and Turks use these three methods (directly attacking, silencing, insinuating) when they communicate. I think all three are harmful. They do not help improving G-T relations. Mostly they obstruct communication, raise the tension and make things worse. When meetings are held with the declared purpose of improving the bilateral relations the method of 'attacking' is rarely practiced. In such cases of good will 'silencing' and 'implying' are mostly used. People do not say what they really believe (the way I used to do when I was a youngster), they try to be 'politically correct' and avoid subjects that

are considered crucial and sensitive. They talk about issues where there is no problem. They avoid the problematic issues and communicate in peace; actually leaving the problems aside (and unsolved).

The anecdote with Nasreddin Hoca is appropriate at this point. He was searching at a dark night for his key under the light post. His compatriots started searching with him, but all in vain. When they asked him if he was sure that he lost his key at that particular point he said that he had lost it 'down there' at a considerable distance from where they were searching, but he preferred to look for it here, under the lamp since, as he said, 'we have light only here'. Greeks and Turks, in a similar way, converse in areas where 'there is light' and no risk of controversy.

All three 'methods' – directly attacking, silencing, insinuating – are based on the same assumption: we can not cope with the situation. If – parties think – we say openly our thoughts we will start our fight from the beginning! This argument is partly true; indeed there are cases where avoiding crucial issues at the beginning may prove useful. The parties may discuss sensitive problems after having met, socialize and come to know each other better. However, if communication is limited infinitely to drinking ouzo or rakı and talking about our common music and food (not even daring to name the coffee Turkish or Greek) the real problems that reproduce lack of confidence and tension will never really be solved.

A general shortcoming that influences all the problems mentioned above is that all these behavioral tendencies operate on the unconscious level. Rarely do people choose one or the other behavior knowing exactly what they are doing. Normally parties deep inside feel that once their sincere views are expressed there is going to be a problem. So they avoid 'the problem' by silencing and/or choosing the indirect and vague way of communication. This may be the reason why we so often talk about our 'common past' and ignore to discuss our 'present problems'. My presentation – actually all my efforts – is targeting to the same end result: to accomplish self-knowledge. Once we become aware of the way (and the reasons) we avoid direct and sincere communication we will be more efficient in coping with our real problems.

And it is possible that our real problem is our incapability in expressing our real fears, complaints, ideas and beliefs. When we communicate in an open way, when not only do we express our views about the 'Other' but also about our own attitudes, when we try to understand why we sometimes 'attack', 'silence' and/or 'imply' things and never simply talk, we may discover a very interesting aspect of G-T relations. Only then may we be able to re-interpret all our common history and our present.

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Let me give some examples of how we silence some issues.

On 23 January 2002 a public meeting was held in Athens with Greek and Turkish officials to discuss 'The Future of Europe and Turkey'. Among others the Turkish minister Volkan Vural as well as the Turkish ambassador were present. Nine Greeks spoke and none had mentioned the role of the army in Turkey until my turn came. Whereas when Greeks discuss the same issue among themselves they speak mostly – even only – about the role of the army and the obstacles that the army poses on the politicians.

I participated in a meeting where Greek and Turkish authors met (in 2002). Two Turkish novelists, Ahmet Yorulmaz and Ahmet Coral, expressed their friendly feelings towards the Greeks and never mentioned any remorse. However, in their latest novels that circulated in 2003 they presented the Greeks as a nation with never-ending wish to capture Turkish lands and fanatical followers of the irredentist *Megali Idea*.

The question is: why don't they discuss these matters when they meet? Is it politeness? Is it the fear that the parties cannot cope with the matter? And if it is the second, why can we not cope with the problem? Do we believe that the 'Other' is incurable? That he will never change? Can we solve the problems if we have beliefs of this kind? Why do we have beliefs of this kind?

Last week (8 November 2003) I participated in a meeting held in Istanbul on the exchange of populations between Greece and Turkey in 1923. The Greeks and the Turks were at their best: they voiced a brave self-criticism. This approach is new and very encouraging. However, I personally felt that some grievances were not voiced. For example the representative of Ikomos *described* bravely the not-very-encouraging situation of the preservation of the heritage of the 'Other' in Greece and Turkey. And at some point he said 'we should cope with the obstacles'; but he did not say what the obstacles were!

Are the governments the obstacle? Which government? Is it the society as a whole? Is it a small but influential minority? I felt something was silenced.

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Finally I would like to mention briefly some shortcomings that hamper the bilateral relations:

1. We know very little about the other party. (Lack of information about the language, the history, the culture and especially the feelings of the Other).
2. We are not conscious and not ready to accept that parties have different sensitivities (on different or identical issues). Parties are egocentric, believing that their point of view is the only correct one. (The situation of 'habitus', where our world is the only possible world). We do not even doubt that there may be another 'truth'.
3. We develop and eventually believe in false proofs and documentation about negative acts of the Other side. These 'proofs' are never discussed and checked with the Other. Examples are the Turkish myths about the Patriarchate and the *Megali Idea*, and the Greek myths about the Turkish 'expansionism' and 'backwardness'.
4. The use of 'national' vocabulary and terminology when parties refer to the Other (generalizations, anachronisms, stereotypy etc).<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> My book *Do's and Don't's for Better Greek-Turkish Relations*, Athens: Papazissis, 2002 (also in Greek and in Turkish) is written basically to present this 'national' vocabulary and terminology.

## Appendix 2

### 'First question'

'First question' to Greeks: What do you think the negative qualities of the Turks are? / What do you not like about the Turks?

a. Complaints against the Turkish 'state' (the government, the politicians, the army and other dignitaries such as religious circles, etc.)

a1

- The role of the Turkish military in politics (5 times)
- Political & military intervention at all levels of life (3 times)
- The Turkish army is imperialistic

a2

- The state regime, the influence of 'derin devlet' (deep state) (4 times)
- Oppressive state – unequal treatment of people (4 times)
- The influence of 'devlet' (state) on Turkish consciousness (2 times)
- The way Turkey deals with the Kurdish issue (2 times)
- The bad politicians
- State influencing policy against Greece
- Delays in solving problems such as Cyprus, School of Halki etc

a3

- Lack of democracy and/or human rights (3 times)
- Lack of freedom of expression
- Negative state-citizen relationship
- Suppression of journalists
- Intolerance of the national secular identity against religious groups and minorities

a4

- Ethnocentric education (2 times)
- Situation of women is not good

b. Complaints against the Turks (their character, behavior, tendencies etc.)

b1

- Chauvinism and obsession with nationalism (and/or Atatürk) (6 times)
- Nationalism (3 times)
- Nationalism, superiority complex, aggressiveness
- Arrogance declaring Turkey is a big country (3 times)

- Obsession with / submission to political figures, not critical attitude (2 times)
- Devotion to 'father figure' Kemalism
- Confusing internationalism with Kemalism
- The feeling of being ex (big) empire
- They want to feel superior during dialogs
- Islamic fundamentalism

#### b2

- Acceptance of 'derin devlet' by the average Turk (2 times)
- They do not have respect for human rights/democracy (3 times)
- Importance given to hierarchy in work and in family (2 times)
- Strict social stratification
- Not so open (on matters of gender, family, religion) (2 times)
- Conservatism, delays in adjustment to new developments (2 times)
- Do little to change public life
- They are conformists
- Lack of solidarity with the poor /weak

#### b3

- General insecurity about the Other
- Low self-esteem
- Not admitting their Sèvres/Megali Idea paranoia with regards to Greeks
- Fears coming from the past: conspiracy of the West, syndrome of Sèvres Treaty
- Attachment to old hatred
- Lack of understanding for the culture of the Other
- They talk too much about 'common culture/legacy' – dolma etc.
- Epidemic (superfluous) friendship with Greeks
- Ignorance of common history (?).

#### b4

- They do not express their mind openly / too polite (4 times)
- Politeness that may conceal real intentions/feelings (2 times)
- They are cunning, not clever
- Turks get carried away (influenced/persuaded) easily

### c. Various

#### c1

- Lack of knowledge in professional collaboration – all proceed on a personal basis
- Unwillingness to cooperate economically (to invest in Greece or elsewhere)
- There is poverty.
- There are dirty public places.
- Chaos in the streets
- Turks are too sentimental
- The way I am treated as a foreigner
- The way I am treated as a second-class citizen
- Body language – the way they touch and stare at me

- They are disorganized

c2

- I do not like their accent!
- Istanbul is very humid!

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‘First question’ to Turks: What do you think the negative qualities of the Greeks are? / What do you not like about the Greeks?

a. Complaints against the Greek ‘state’ (the government, the politicians, the other dignitaries such as religious circles, etc.)

a1

- Greek government policies
- Greeks back up separatist movements: visits in South-Eastern provinces during the earthquakes, being close to PKK
- Greek governments’ policy with respect to the Turkish minority in Western Thrace
- The policy of tension/enmity that provokes the masses
- Greek politicians disturb public and cultural bilateral relations
- Greek government and some politicians exaggerate Cyprus issue

a2

- Behavior in consulates/boarders *vis a vis* the Turks
- Red tape obstacles, visa etc (2 times)
- Greek bureaucracy is slow

a3

- Left political groups are religiously dependent
- Negative image of Ts in media and textbooks (2 times)
- State-individual relationship

b. Complaints against the Greeks (their character, behavior, tendencies etc.)

b1

- Greeks are nationalists (6 times)
- Gs are arrogant
- Gs have fanaticism against Turks
- Gs are too preoccupied with Turks
- Gs (both left and right) believe in conspiracy against them (conspiracy complex)
- Gs are too critical

- Gs exaggerate political issues

b2

- Gs are proud of their historical past/background /Ancient Greece (4 times)
- Gs disregard our common past
- Gs write Ottoman-Greek history nationalistically
- Not seem to feel one community with us
- Gs appropriate common traditions as their own (coffee, white cheese/pheta)
- Gs have ideological history

b3

- Gs think Turks are aggressors occupying their lands
- Gs see us as bad and barbarians
- Gs have stereotypes: They ask if they can drink alcoholic drinks when in Turkey
- Gs believe everything they read in media against Turkey
- Some Gs still think Ts smoke hashish and narghile
- Gs do not trust us
- I feel disliked in Greece
- Gs have hate towards the Turks
- Gs did not invite Turks (not even as tourists) while inviting all the world (for a meeting?)
- Why are not the Greeks on top of the list of friends of Turkey?
- Insincere relationship

b4

- Gs present lack of humility (humbleness) / they are snobbish (2 times)
- Gs think they are Europeans (2 times)
- Gs are sure they are right (and are misinformed) (2 times)
- Gs are self-satisfied
- Gs have a loud way of communication / bashful (3 times)
- Gs do not listen to the Other, difficult to communicate with Gs
- Gs are superficial
- Gs use demagogy as they discuss
- 'They complain, complain, complain'

b5

- Gs are hot tempered (2 times)
- Gs are noisy (2 times)
- Gs are 'ukala' (pedant)
- Gs are untrustworthy
- Gs lack consideration
- Gs are (too) religious
- Gs are not punctual
- Gs are honest but harsh

c. Various

c1

- I meet Gs for the first time and I did not dislike anyone/anything (3 times)

- I have no complaints
- For me the Other is not necessarily the Greek
- I wish peace between Gs and Ts

c2

- Gs do not cook well!
- Gs always win in basketball games!

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## Appendix 3

### 'Second question'

'Second question' to the Greeks: What do you think the Turks think as your negative qualities / what do you think the Turks do not like about you?

a. Issues of sovereign rights, irredentism, 'historical rights', history and allies of Greece

- Gs have claims on Turkish lands
- Gs have a claim since they have been in Anatolia before the Turks
- Gs have the Megali Idea in mind (4 times)
- Gs say the Aegean is Greek (2 times)
- Gs want Cyprus and Enosis
- Turks have in mind 1919-1922
  
- Gs are arrogant about their history (2)
- Greeks misinterpreted history
- Gs emphasize their cultural background
- Gs are ungrateful to the Ottoman period (and are clever diplomats)
- Gs do not enforce a common history
- Gs are without real historical continuity with the classical past but clever enough to exploit the situation and attract sympathy from the West
  
- Even though Gs are the 'same' with Turks, Gs have convinced Europe they are Europeans
- Gs are the spoiled children of Europe / and part of western alliance (4 times)
- Gs exaggerate Cyprus issue and connect it to the EU issues (2 times)

b. Direct enmity and negative acts

- Gs show hostility against the Turkish people (4 times)
- Gs are against friendship / hate Turks (2 times)
- Gs show arrogance / cheap Europeanism (4 times)
- Gs create political obstacles to Turkey on the EU issues (2 times)
- Gs do not want Ts in the EU – causing economic problems to Turkey (3 times)
- Gs impose western model on Turkey
- Gs are not kind when Ts are in Greece
  
- Greeks do not 'respect' their (Turks') power
- Gs attack Turks as inferiors

### c. Other negative aspects of Greeks

- Greeks are nationalists / chauvinists (4 times)
- Gs are nationalists and arrogant (2 times)
- Gs are arrogant – rude, culturally aggressive (6 times)
- Gs are arrogant (5 times)
- Greeks are tricky/ manipulators (4 times)
- Gs think they are Europeans (3 times)
- Gs are patronizing
  
- Gs speak too much (3 times)
- Gs speak loudly; interrupt when they converse (2 times)
- Gs are emotional and talk too much
- Greeks (Gs) are ready for a row (kavgacı) (3 times)
- Gs show lack of cooperation and open mind (3 times)
- Gs are interested in their personal interests and not in the community
  
- Extensive oppression of journalists/freedoms
- Gs have egocentric education
  
- Gs have too much trust in religious leaders
- Greeks are attached to religion and traditions
  
- Gs are narrow minded (2 times)
- Gs are thieves
- Greeks are lazy

### c. Various

- Athens is ugly
- Gs give priorities to worldly pleasures
- Greeks drink too much coffee
- Speak too much on cell telephone
- 'Difficult to say'

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‘Second question’ to the Turks: What do you think the Greeks think as your negative qualities / what do you think the Greeks do not like about you?

a. Issues of sovereign rights, irredentism, ‘historical rights’, history and the sense of military threat

- Gs do not like the Ottoman past
- Gs believe that Ts oppressed them for hundreds of years (and the Turks are not even aware of this)
- Ts occupied and destroyed the Greek homeland (2 times)
- Ts destroyed Greek civilization
- Ts caused Gs to leave Anatolia and Turks should not have Istanbul
- Gs believe they have a right to have a part of our land
- Gs ask what Ts are doing on Greek lands (and the Gs wait for an opportunity)
- Ts claim some of Greek cultural items (‘heritage’?) that are on Turkish land
  
- Ts are a militaristic force (invaders) (6 times)
- Turkey composes a threat against Greece / is imperialist (4 times)
- Ts are harmful and aggressive (arrogant) (2 times)
- Ts are destabilizing force
- Ts are dominative
- Ts have threatening gestures
- Ts create problems in Cyprus
- Ts have a sense of greatness
- Ts admire their army (2 times)
- Ts spend much money for arms (2 times)

b. Direct enmity and negative acts

- Ts consider Gs dishonest
- Ts do not trust Gs (2 times)
- Ts do not like Gs
- Ts ask too much from the Greeks
- Ts cause human trafficking from Turkey

c. Other negative aspects of Turks

- Turks are nationalists (2 times)
- Ts are nationalists, conservative society (2 times)
- Ts take too much pride in their history
- Turks have too many flags
- Gs do not like the mentality the Turks have about the state

- Ts are not open to debate/discussion (2 times)
- Ts are overconfident
- Ts believe they are right; Ts have no self-doubts
- Ts are always on the 'defensive'
  
- Ts are unskilled / ignorant (4 times)
- Ts are not transparent enough / are hypocritical (4 times)
- Ts compose a primitive society / Asiatic / are barbarians (4 times)
- Ts are arrogant
- Ts are not modernized
- Ts are too religious
- Turks are not democratic / are oppressive
- Ts are corrupt
- Ts are silent (they do not speak up)
- Ts are noisy
- Ts are lazy

### c. Various

- Ts and Gs look alike; therefore they need 'differences' to prove their distinct identity – structural obstacle
- These Gs (the participants) have no complaints since they are specially chosen
- Turks have moustaches

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## Appendix 4

### A 'Third question'

'Third question' to the Greeks: What do you see as 'negative' attitude in your side *vis a vis* the Turks?

#### POLITICAL SHORTCOMINGS / MISTAKES – 2 'confessions'

- We (the Greeks) have extreme territorial claims / imperial dreams articulating national identity
- We as autochthon nation think we know what is good and bad (*not very clear what it means*)

#### PREJUDICES – 10 'confessions'

- We (the Greeks) have prejudices (due to educational system and family tradition) (2 times)
- We have a complex of superiority (we look down upon the Other) (3 times)
- We do not know the Other and we do not want to know him either
- We do not trust the Turks
- We as 'Europeans' think we are the best
- We do not respect the culture of the Other
- I may be deceiving myself (*it is not clear on what issues he/she is deceived, but most probably on the image of the Other*)

#### BAD BEHAVIOUR - 14 'confessions'

- We have (*excess*) nationalism / racism (3 times)
- We are arrogant / rude (3 times)
- We (*try to?*) dominate conversation in public
- We fear to be misunderstood (*probably meaning, we do not speak openly*)
- We fear of hurting the national feelings of the Other (*does this mean, 'therefore we do not say what we think?'*)
- We silence issues sometimes
- We do not exert effort to make the Other understand
- We do not have tolerance
- The Greek Church interferes in politics
- We believe the Other can change history and future (?)

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‘Third question’ to the Turks: What do you see as ‘negative’ attitude in your side *vis a vis* the Greeks?

POLITICAL SHORTCOMINGS / MISTAKES – 3 ‘confession’

- We (the Turks) do not recognize minority rights / are repressing Greek minority (3 times)

PREJUDICES – 3 ‘confessions’

- We (the Turks) have prejudices
- We perceive the Other as threat
- We feed hate through textbooks

BAD BEHAVIOUR - 12 ‘confessions’

- We (the Turks) use military and political power
- We have national arrogance
- We have aggressiveness (*the last three items in short may mean ‘political aggressiveness’*)
- We have not enough empathy
- We do not know the issues of history that are important for the Greeks
- We have not enough consideration
- We have not enough magnanimity
- We ignore Others problems (*the last four items in short state ‘lack of empathy’*)
- I do not express myself clearly – see the culture of the Other as impolite
- I use different codes when I communicate (*the last six items may simply mean ‘bad communication with the Other due to our shortcomings’*)
- We are short sighted
- We talk of justice rather than live and let live

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