

**Heirs to Byzantium: Multidirectional Narrative and Identity
Amongst the Istanbul-Greek Migrant Community in Greece**

Huw Halstead

MA (by research)

University of York

Department of History

September 2012

Abstract

Social memory has often been treated as a competitive arena in which particular memories connected to particular identities vie for official recognition, the winners suppressing the losers. Against this competitive model, literary scholar Michael Rothberg has argued for a multidirectional approach to the study of memory, which seeks to examine the productive interaction between diverse historical narratives. This thesis tests the literary multidirectional model through the historical study of the Istanbul-Greek migrants to Greece. The Istanbul Greeks were a remnant of pre-national Ottoman pluralism, a Christian minority within Turkey forced to emigrate during the twentieth century due to nationalistic persecution and discrimination. Through the migrants' oral testimonies, this thesis demonstrates that a multidirectional approach to identity and memory better reflects how the Istanbul Greeks cope with the pressures of migration through a malleable sense of self, and by intricately linking and manipulating a variety of historical discourses in diverse social contexts. Whilst social memories can be employed competitively to establish group exclusivity, they can also be deployed to reach across social divides, and open up group memberships. Far from belonging to one nation, one group, one memory, the migrants survive multifaceted lives through recourse to multidirectional narratives. Memory is not a battlefield, but an unbounded discursive space in which individuals and groups narrate their histories to make experiences meaningful and socially useful.

Contents

Preface	i
Acknowledgments	iii
Author's Declaration	vi
Introduction	1
<i>Multidirectional memory</i>	1
<i>Historical background and literature review</i>	5
<i>The interviewees</i>	25
<i>Methodology – oral history and subjectivity</i>	26
Chapter One: Kinetic Identity	29
<i>Greeks or Romans?</i>	30
<i>Official self – citizenship and identity</i>	38
<i>Orthodox Christians</i>	42
<i>How happy is he who says, 'I am a Turk'</i>	43
<i>Ottoman Greek</i>	48
<i>'A child of the island' – localising identity</i>	49
<i>A kinetic identity</i>	51
Chapter Two: Harmony and Strife in Intercommunal Relationships.....	56
<i>The strife narrative</i>	57
<i>The harmony narrative</i>	63
<i>Narrative and history</i>	71
<i>Narrative and identity</i>	77
<i>Narrative in the present</i>	78
<i>Competing collective memories?</i>	89
Chapter Three: Multidirectional Narratives	94
<i>Married negotiation</i>	94
<i>Hidden Christians and the good Turk</i>	99
<i>Maoism and political communal relationships</i>	103
<i>Narrative appropriation and juxtaposition</i>	115
<i>Solidarity with the expelled – intercommunal negotiation</i>	125
<i>Multidirectional narratives</i>	135
Chapter Four: Culture's In-between – Inclusion and Exclusion	137
<i>A touch of spice – cuisine, gender, and identity</i>	138
<i>Workmanship and the economy</i>	150
<i>Cultural inclusion</i>	158
<i>In-between cultures</i>	163
Conclusions	164
Epilogue - Multidirectional Memory and Greco-Turkish Relations	173
Definitions	174
Bibliography	175
Appendix 1	203

List of Figures

Fig. 1: Tea at the Constantinopolitan Union, photograph by author 141

Preface

He was born in the early '50s in the City of the Light of the East, which once had been for some a gateway of bliss. He wanted to revisit it after twenty long years of voluntary migration ... He longed for the return but a deeper feeling from his fear postponed his meeting with familiar places, images, smells, and voices ...

He had grown up in the same city, the same neighbourhood, in the same apartment at the turn of the century, almost without ever leaving ... He had the misfortune to live the final glimpses of a multi-ethnic, multi-confessional community in a former imperial capital, which changed with nightmarish speed in the second half of the shortest century. He lived the irrational madness of rising fanaticism between left and right, [between] majority and minority ...

Sometimes he reflects that the best years of his life were his teenage ones ... when the summers were spent carefree swimming, reading, wandering and flirting in the warmth of friends on the island. The only trouble was the migration [to the island] – [with] the packages [of] quilts, bedding, the fridge, the oven ... summer clothes ... even the radio moved with the ship, and you must not break or lose anything ...

When the big relocation happened ... everything was more simple, only a huge suitcase [of] clothes and twenty-four hours stuck to the plastic seat wet with sweat on the coach line Istanbul - Athens, non-stop. He landed for a new life in Vathis Square.¹

The extract is taken from an autobiographical account written by Savvas Tsilenus, an Istanbul-born Greek-speaker currently living in the Greek capital Athens. Tsilenus and his fellow Istanbul Greeks were a remnant of a once thriving Greek community in Turkey, a vestige of pre-national pluralism dismantled during the course of the twentieth century. Tsilenus' story hovers fluidly between past and present as he attempts to negotiate between fearful regret and fond nostalgia. He opens with his nostalgic longing to return to the city of his birth, from which he has been a voluntary exile – he was not expelled, and is not a refugee. Yet his

¹ Adapted from S. Tsilenus, 'The Migration', *I Dexameni: Journal of Literature and Art of Istanbul, Imbros, and Tenedos*, (Athens, 1999), pp. 96-102.

repatriation was induced by the ‘irrational madness’ of nationalistic persecution, as the homogenising tendencies of the nation-state strangled minority life in Istanbul.

His memories are conflicting: a fear of nightmarish fanaticism jockeying for position alongside idyllic recollections of multiethnic harmony and carefree summer days. He contrasts the annual migration to the summer vacation island – complex and overburdened – with his migration to Greece – surreal in its simplicity and speed. The interplay of these two narratives throws the trauma of forced migration into sharp relief – a whole life lived and diligently transported to-and-fro from city to island, abandoned in one twenty-four hour span with only what can be carried in a suitcase. The pleasant warmth of companionship on the island is contrasted with the unpleasant sticky humidity of the coach journey; the finality of the journey emphasised by its non-stop route. In his account memories from diverse spatial and temporal origins interact to produce an evocative rendering of forced migration.

Acknowledgments

I am above all indebted to my informants, who patiently responded to my questions, welcomed me into their homes, provided me with literature, introduced me to other interviewees, and served me endless cups of tea. The guarantee of anonymity prevents me from thanking them by name. Without their help and good humour, there would not have been a project at all.

My fieldwork in Greece would have been impossible were it not for the hospitality and guidance of Efthimis Ainalis, Pitsa Ainali, Manthos Besios, Jack Davis, Angelos Gkotsinas, Valasia Isaakidou, Kostas Kotsakis, Nancy Krahtopoulou, Alexandra Livarda, Tasos Livardas, Apostolis Papafotiou, Dimitra Papafotiou, Sevi Triantaphyllou, Tasoula Tzelepi, Duska Urem-Kotsou, Nikos Valasiadis, Rena Veropoulidou, Fani Zafeiri, and Thanasis Zafeiris. I am particularly indebted to my self-appointed research assistant in Thessaloniki, Sofia Livarda, without whom the fieldwork might never have gotten off the ground; and to Giorgos Isaakidis, for likewise taking me under his wing in Athens.

In the preparation of this thesis, I have greatly benefited from the advice and expertise of John Bennet, Richard Bessel, Amy Bogaard, Geoffrey Cubitt, Simon Ditchfield, Thalia Dragonas, Joanna de Groot, Sam Hardy, Renée Hirschon, Andrew Stead, Corrine Vibert, and Michael Wallace.

For help with the Greek language, I would like to thank the School of Modern Greek Language at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.

I am extremely thankful to the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) for funding this degree, and to the University of York for the faith they have shown in me in accepting me for further study.

My friends and colleagues in the Humanities Research Centre ensured that writing this thesis was never a solitary and always an entertaining process.

I am eternally grateful to my parents for their support – financial, practical, and emotional – and for first introducing me to Modern Greece.

I would like to dedicate this work to the memory of Apostolis Papafotiou.

Efuge to aidoni tis agoras

Author's Declaration

This thesis is the original work of the author. All research was carried out by the author. Translations from Greek were conducted by the author.

Introduction

Lying geographically and sometimes culturally betwixt two antagonistic nation-states, the lives of the Polites (Istanbul Greeks)² were complicated both before and after their non-stop migration. Fluidly moving in, out, and between supposedly fixed categories, they are sometimes Greeks, sometimes Romans, sometimes Byzantines. They are amongst the last Greek-speakers to have lived amongst Greece's great Other – the Turks – and therefore are in possession of experiences that, for better and for worse, give solidity and variation to intangible nationalistic simplifications. In Greece, the heirs to Byzantium encountered a land in many ways as alien and distant to them as Istanbul is to the mainland Greeks. Through their oral narratives of these complex lives, I explore the productive and flexible nature of identity and social memory.

Multidirectional memory

Michael Rothberg – discussing the construction and evolution of Holocaust memory – attacks what he sees as the prevalent model for understanding social memory: 'competitive memory'. According to his analysis, it has long been assumed that different social memories are the exclusive possessions of discernable groups. It is taken as given that, in advancing one's own social identity and memory, it is necessary to exclude others and repress their memories. Collective narratives

² Please refer to the definitions at the end of the text.

informed by these memories are assumed to be locked in a ‘zero-sum game’, competing for limited mnemonic space in a contest with clear winners and losers.³ He takes as his point of departure claims that America’s remembrance of the Jewish Holocaust steals mnemonic space in American discourse from an atrocity much closer to home: ‘the black holocaust’.⁴ Barry Schwartz, dealing with the memory of Abraham Lincoln in America, similarly criticises a ‘battlefield image of society’ in which memory is a repressive weapon of the dominant class.⁵ He warns against making the past ‘hostage to the political conditions of the present’, criticising the ‘monotonous’ claim that all past events become ‘insidious efforts to deepen the oppression of the powerless’.⁶

Indeed, social memory has often been interpreted through a model in which competing social narratives vie for official recognition, the winner suppressing the loser. Thus Alistair Thomson states that ‘memory is a battlefield’ in which we fight ‘to make a particular memory of our experiences, and to repress alternative memories’.⁷ Similarly, Michael Schudson refers to a struggle ‘to claim the territory of memory’ as a ‘resource for legitimacy’; a struggle in which we are constrained by alternative narratives.⁸ The official, supposedly dominant memory is often conceptualised as purely mythical in content and nefarious in motive. Thus Çaglar

³ M. Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization*, (Stanford, 2009), p. 3.

⁴ Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, p. 1.

⁵ B. Schwartz, *Abraham Lincoln and the Forge of National Memory*, (Chicago; London, 2000), p. 17.

⁶ Schwartz, *Forge of National Memory*, p. 16.

⁷ A. Thomson, ‘The Anzac Legend: Exploring National Myth and Memory in Australia’, in R. Samuel and P. Thompson (eds.), *The Myths We Live By*, (London; New York, 1990), p. 73.

⁸ M. Schudson, ‘The Past in the Present Versus the Present in the Past’, in J. Olick, V. Vinitzky-Seroussi and D. Levy (eds.), *The Collective Memory Reader*, (Oxford, 2011), p. 287, p. 290.

Keyder refers to Turkey's nationalist narrative as an 'exercise in pure artifice'.⁹ Similarly, Michel Foucault opposes 'popular memory' to official history; the circulation of the former is disrupted by the latter, which seeks to harness people's dynamism by controlling their memory.¹⁰

Against a competitive model, Rothberg argues for a 'multidirectional' approach to social memory and narrative. He stresses that social memories interact within a 'malleable discursive space' in which they do not simply compete but are 'subject to ongoing negotiation, cross-referencing, and borrowing'.¹¹ This discursive malleability is enabling, not restrictive; interacting memories do not block and repress one another so much as contribute to each other's articulation and evolution. Similarly, Schwartz sees memory as not just a power resource but part of 'culture's meaning-making apparatus' which reflects and re-shapes social reality by connecting past events to each other and to the present.¹² Competitive political approaches deal only with the causes and consequences of social memory, not with *how* it operates as a 'mediator of meaning'; considering the latter reveals how memory 'makes experience ... meaningful', and can be invoked 'unwittingly rather than deliberately, solemnly rather than cynically'.¹³ Both Rothberg and Schwartz accept that social memories can be deployed competitively in aid of domination, exclusion, and violence, yet both consider this competition to be only one symptom

⁹ Ç. Keyder, 'The Consequences of the Exchange of Populations for Turkey', in R. Hirschon (ed.), *Crossing the Aegean: an Appraisal of the 1923 Compulsory Population Exchange Between Greece and Turkey*, (Oxford, 2008), p. 48.

¹⁰ M. Foucault, 'Film in Popular Memory: An Interview with Michel Foucault', in J. Olick, V. Vinitzky-Seroussi and D. Levy (eds.), *The Collective Memory Reader*, (Oxford, 2011), p. 252.

¹¹ Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, p. 3, p. 5.

¹² Schwartz, *Forge of National Memory*, pp. 17-18.

¹³ Schwartz, *Forge of National Memory*, p. 17-20.

of more complex social processes.¹⁴ In this thesis, I will look to test such a multidirectional model of social memory through the historical study of the Istanbul-Greek migrants.¹⁵

I will begin with an historical and literary background and methodology. Chapter one then explores the various different identity categories deployed by the migrants, and demonstrates how they are able to navigate fluidly between these categories as they construct their sense of identity in different contexts. Chapter two examines narratives of intercommunal relationships in Istanbul, demonstrating how comparable lives can produce divergent narratives: one concerning itself with the pleasures of the ‘multi-ethnic, multi-confessional community’, the other dealing with the ‘nightmarish ... irrational madness’ that precipitated migration.¹⁶ These accounts situate their narrators within particular imagined groups and histories, and thereby deploy a variety of meanings and ambitions in pragmatic social contexts. Whilst some such narratives may bear closer resemblance to nationalist historiography, I will question the utility of opposing dominant myth to lived reality.

Chapter three considers contexts in which narratives of communal relationships are manipulated, negotiated, and appropriated, supporting Rothberg’s model by drawing attention to memory’s potential to establish social solidarity and expand imagined communities. Whilst historical narratives can be one-sided and competitive, they can also be multifaceted phenomena, which negotiate and combine radically different

¹⁴ Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, p. 12; Schwartz, *Forge of National Memory*, p. 14, p. 17.

¹⁵ Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, pp. 1-12.

¹⁶ Tsilenus, ‘The Migration’.

images, as in Tsilenus' tale. Finally, chapter four examines how stories of cuisine and work interact with accounts of migration and struggle, to explore more explicitly how different narratives within an individual's life history are woven together to create a fabric of meaning for the narrator. Cuisine and workmanship also allow us to explore the influence of gender on oral testimonies and, whilst gendered experience does influence narrative content, I will show that the narrative gender divide is not impenetrable. My aim is to move the study of social memory away from purely top-down and competitive approaches, and towards a nuanced model of dynamic everyday mnemonic activity as experienced by migrants making present meaning out of past lives.

Historical background and literature review

Modern Greece is a confusing country to write about. Seemingly engaged in a polygamous relationship with both West and East, and without easily identifiable borders until the nineteenth century, Greece as an historical phenomenon is almost indefinable. Benjamin Broome thus sees Greece as 'a seesaw in perpetual motion', whilst David Holden likens it to the flight of a butterfly, which 'only truly exists as a permanent oscillation between opposites'.¹⁷ For some three thousand years prior to the Greek War of Independence people thought of themselves as Greeks despite the lack of a definable territory called Greece.¹⁸

¹⁷ B. Broome, *Exploring the Greek Mosaic: a Guide to Intercultural Communication in Greece*, (Maine, 1996), p.26; D. Holden, *Greece Without Columns: the Making of the Modern Greeks*, (London, 1972), p.21.

¹⁸ Broome, *Exploring the Greek Mosaic*, p.23.

Ancient Greece, Byzantium and the Ottoman Empire

Ancient Greece was a sprawling affair, a collection of city-states as likely to be fighting each other as co-operating; a cultural more than political area.¹⁹ The Greek diaspora – begun as early as the Archaic period, and taken to new levels by the campaigns of Alexander the Great – spread the language and culture of these disparate city-states across a vast area to the East. With the rise of the Eastern Roman or Byzantine Empire, Hellenism took a further substantial lurch to the East. A new capital on the Bosphorus took over as the centre of Hellenic culture from Athens, and the Byzantine rulers came to view the European peninsula that houses Modern Greece as an impoverished province.²⁰ During this period many Greek-speakers came to refer to themselves as ‘Romans’. It was also during the Byzantine era that an erstwhile pagan culture began to become identified with the Christian religion.²¹

In 1453, Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine Empire, fell to Ottoman sultan Mehmed the Conqueror. Thus began the period remembered by Greek historiography as four-hundred years of Hellenic slavery at the hands of the Ottomans.²² Yet despite the capture of Hellenism’s jewel, Greek culture survived in the Ottoman East. Religious communities within Ottoman society were organised

¹⁹ Broome, *Exploring the Greek Mosaic*, p.23, p.27.

²⁰ Broome, *Exploring the Greek Mosaic*, p.27; W. Heurtley, H. Darby, C. Crawley and C. Woodhouse, *A Short History of Greece: From Early Times to 1964*, (Cambridge, 1967), pp. 35-36; R. Just, ‘Triumph of the Ethnos’, in E. Tonkin, M. McDonald and M. Chapman (eds.), *History and Ethnicity*, (London; New York, 1989), p.74, p.78.

²¹ Broome, *Exploring the Greek Mosaic*, p. 27.

²² Just, ‘Triumph of the Ethnos’, p. 74.

into different *millets*. The Muslim *millet*²³ was superior, yet the other religious *millets* were given substantial theological and cultural independence in exchange for imperial obedience. In Constantinople, Greek-speakers held amongst the loftiest positions in administration, whilst others were highly prosperous merchants. By the mid-sixteenth-century, many Muslims were complaining of favouritism towards the Greeks. Furthermore, as the Greek-speaking Patriarchate was made head of the Christian *millet*, the Ottoman Empire brought non-Greek speaking Christians into direct contact with Hellenic culture, swelling the ‘culturally-Greek’ community, and increasing the association between Hellenism and Christianity.²⁴

It would be unwise to romanticise Hellenic existence during the Ottoman period. Indeed, Christian anti-Ottoman uprisings were features of the era, and the non-Muslim *millets* were burdened with various discriminatory practices from monetary taxation to the notorious conscription of young Christian boys into the Janissaries. Nonetheless, sections of the Hellenic population prospered under the Ottomans, communal disturbances were frequently Christian-Christian as well as Christian-Muslim, and the Ottoman Empire’s solidity was in part founded upon an Ottoman solidarity amongst its heterogeneous population.²⁵

²³ A *millet* in practice, though not officially, see U. Özkirimli and S. Sofos, *Tormented by History: Nationalism in Greece and Turkey*, (London, 2008), p. 44.

²⁴ P. Fermor, *Roumeli: Travels in Northern Greece*, (London, 1966), p. 100; Heurtley *et al*, *A Short History of Greece*, pp. 79-81; Just, ‘Triumph of the Ethnos’, p. 74, p. 78; Özkirimli and Sofos, *Tormented by History*, pp. 44-45, pp. 52-53.

²⁵ Heurtley *et al*, *A Short History of Greece*, pp. 79-83; M. Greene, *A Shared World: Christians and Muslims in the Early Modern Mediterranean*, (Princeton, 2000), p. 209.

Greek independence

The year 1821 marked a turning point in Hellenic history, as it began the process by which a country called ‘Greece’ would emerge. The Greek War of Independence was fought by Western-inspired intellectuals – fighting to revive the glory of Ancient Greece – but also by rank-and-file inhabitants of the Greek peninsula, who identified themselves as Christians more than Hellenes, and were motivated by practical desires for freedom and land. The revolutionaries were aided by volunteer Philhellenes, but it was not until official foreign intervention by the British, French, and Russians at the Battle of Navarino that the tide turned decisively against the Sultan’s forces. By 1832, Greek independence had been recognised, and the Kingdom of Greece was established.²⁶

Greece became, in the words of three social anthropologists, an ‘experimental laboratory for modern nationalism’.²⁷ Of the two major factions involved in the war, it was the Westernised admirers of Ancient Greece who would dominate the post-war nation-building process. They faced a dilemma: how could the heterogeneous population of mainland Greece, hitherto united in revolution as Christian subjects against Muslim rulers, become the heirs to the Acropolis? The solution, in Roger Just’s words, was to stress ‘those [common] cultural elements upon which later claims to ethnic identity could be based’.²⁸ A key cultural element to be stressed was

²⁶ Heurtley *et al*, *A Short History of Greece*, pp. 90-97; Just, ‘Triumph of the Ethnos’, p. 83.

²⁷ M. Chapman, M. McDonald, and E. Tonkin, ‘Introduction’, in E. Tonkin, M. McDonald and M. Chapman (eds.), *History and Ethnicity*, (London; New York, 1989), p. 13.

²⁸ Just, ‘Triumph of the Ethnos’, p. 77.

language, through the creation of a new national language which attempted to demonstrate linguistic continuity through the ages. Meanwhile, historians such as Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos toiled to demonstrate unbroken continuity from ancient to modern, in which Greece became ‘a mystical and a-temporal entity ... bypassing the actual people’.²⁹ Otherness – such as Ottoman and Slavic place names – was purged in the quest for homogeneity.³⁰

This nation-building was a contested process – Peter Mackridge, for instance, charts the conflicts between competing language systems reflecting divergent ideas of Greek identity.³¹ Nor was the ancient Hellenic legacy the lone voice in early Greek national identity – Ion Dragoumis and others argued for an inclusive identity that did not threaten heterogeneous co-existence.³² Ultimately, however, Greece’s nation-builders succeeded in turning the peninsula’s Orthodox Christian *millet* into a national community of cultural Greeks. Yet only around 750,000 people lived in the new nation, whilst some two million cultural Greeks continued to exist outside its frontiers.³³ So began the force that would define much of Modern Greek history: the ‘Great Idea’.³⁴

²⁹ Özkirimli and Sofos, *Tormented by History*, p. 84 [their words].

³⁰ Just, ‘Triumph of the Ethnos’, p. 84; P. Mackridge, *Language and National Identity in Greece, 1766-1976*, (Oxford, 2009), pp. 1-2, pp.11-17, pp. 22-23; Özkirimli and Sofos, *Tormented by History*, pp. 83-85.

³¹ Mackridge, *Language and National Identity*, p. 18.

³² Özkirimli and Sofos, *Tormented by History*, pp. 20-21.

³³ Just, ‘Triumph of the Ethnos’, p. 79.

³⁴ Mackridge, *Language and National Identity*, pp. 11-17.

Greek irredentism and the Asia Minor Catastrophe

The 'Great Idea' is a term used in Greek historiography to refer to an irredentist mission to capture territories housing 'unredeemed' Greeks. Greece made territorial gains during the nineteenth century, but it was not until the Balkan Wars of the twentieth century that Greek territory expanded notably, taking in most of Macedonia, southern Epirus, and a handful of islands, including Crete. Greece's irredentist policy then reached its zenith, and promptly its nadir, in the aftermath of the First World War.

After the war, the Treaty of Sèvres was concluded between the victorious Allies and the defeated Ottoman Empire, which ceded Ottoman territory in Eastern Thrace and on the Aegean coast of Anatolia to Greece. In 1919, the Greek army began to occupy these areas, and also to push further into Anatolia, beyond their international mandate. Despite early territorial gains, by 1922 the campaign had stalled and an emergent Turkish nationalist movement led by Mustafa Kemal routed the Greek army, forcing a full-scale retreat. As the Greek army pulled out, the Turkish army carried out reprisal attacks on the Christian population of Turkey, in retaliation for similar attacks carried out by the Greek army in their initial offensive. Consequently, there was a mass exodus of Christians from Turkey, fleeing ahead of the Turkish

army to nearby islands, the Greek mainland, and elsewhere. Irredentism was in chaos, and many of the unredeemed Greeks in flight.³⁵

Following this decisive Turkish victory, Greece, Turkey, and the international community drew up a peace treaty to replace the defunct Sèvres agreement, and to resolve the demographic questions arising from the exodus of refugees. Under the influence of prevalent ‘self-determination’ ideals, and pragmatic concerns for peace and stability in the region, The Convention on the Exchange of Populations was signed in January 1923. This convention envisaged a compulsory exchange of populations between the two countries; in some cases this simply made permanent a situation that had already occurred, but it also obliged many for whom the war had had little effect to emigrate. The defining characteristic for the exchange was religion: Turkish nationals with Greek Orthodox religion were obliged to leave (or not return to) Turkey, and Muslims with Greek nationality were to leave Greece. In July of 1923 the Treaty of Lausanne was signed, by which the territorial questions were settled (Greece lost all the territory it had gained), and the minority exchange provisions were enacted. This was intended to resolve the post-war demographic and territorial chaos.³⁶

The refugees created by the 1923 population exchange have been studied widely, with particular focus on the 1919-1922 war, the flight of the Orthodox Christians,

³⁵ R. Hirschon, “‘Unmixing Peoples’ in the Aegean Region’, in R. Hirschon (ed.), *Crossing the Aegean: an Appraisal of the 1923 Compulsory Population Exchange Between Greece and Turkey*, (Oxford, 2008), pp. 4-6.

³⁶ B. Clark, *Twice a Stranger: How Mass Expulsion Forged Modern Greece and Turkey*, (London, 2006), pp. 9-13, pp. 17-19, pp. 22-25, p. 29, pp. 42-44; Hirschon, “‘Unmixing Peoples’”, pp. 6-9.

and the population exchange itself.³⁷ In 1989, however, Renée Hirschon sparked an interest in the lives of the Greek refugees in diaspora, when she published an anthropological study based on fieldwork in Athens in the 1970s.³⁸ Hirschon explored the refugees' difficult first half-century, in which they struggled to adapt to life in Greece, and with the extreme economic hardship that resulted from their chaotic flight.³⁹ Despite having the same religion and (mostly) the same language as the native Greeks, the refugees struggled to integrate with the native population.⁴⁰ Many of the incomers viewed the mainland Greek culture as inferior to their own; whilst many native Greeks derided the refugees as 'seed of the Turks'.⁴¹ Against this backdrop, the refugees created and maintained a subtly distinct identity, based on their memories of life in Turkey, that was transmitted to the generations born in Greece, so that, when Hirschon arrived in Athens, the younger generation still lived in refugee quarters, and self-defined as refugees.⁴²

Following Hirschon's landmark study, great interest has been shown in appraising the diasporic experiences of the refugees, exploring issues of memory and identity. Most notably, in a volume edited by Hirschon, aspects including architectural expression, popular music, and fiction in the formulation of refugee identity have

³⁷ For instance, M. Dobkin, *Smyrna 1922: the Destruction of a City*, (London, 1972); J. Freely, *Children of Achilles: the Greeks in Asia Minor Since the Days of Troy*, (London, 2010), pp. 203-223; M. Llewellyn-Smith, *Ionian Vision: Greece in Asia Minor, 1919-22*, (London, 1973); G. Milton, *Paradise Lost: Smyrna 1922 – the Destruction of Islam's City of Tolerance*, (London, 2008).

³⁸ R. Hirschon, *Heirs of the Greek Catastrophe: the Social Life of Asia Minor Refugees in Piraeus*, (Oxford, 2008), p. 2.

³⁹ Hirschon, *Heirs of the Greek Catastrophe*, pp. 3-11.

⁴⁰ Hirschon, *Heirs of the Greek Catastrophe*, pp. 3-11.

⁴¹ Hirschon, *Heirs of the Greek Catastrophe*, p. 3-11, p. 21, p. 24, p. 29, pp. 30-32, p. 34, p. 246.

⁴² Hirschon, *Heirs of the Greek Catastrophe*, p. 4, p. 17, pp. 75-76.

been considered.⁴³ Other studies – such as that by Alice James and Barbara Smith on the usage of photographs to strengthen refugee identity, and Bruce Clark’s recent *Twice a Stranger*, exploring the refugees’ double marginalisation – constitute a rich literature on the 1922 refugees.⁴⁴

Exempted minorities

At the insistence of the Greek delegation at the negotiations, the Greek Orthodox population of Istanbul was exempted from the population exchange, and allowed to remain in Turkey.⁴⁵ To counterbalance this exempted minority, the Muslims of Western Thrace were permitted to remain in Greece. The Lausanne Treaty provided for the protection of these minority groups’ rights.⁴⁶ As a result, around 100,000 Greek Orthodox Christians remained in Istanbul when the city passed to the control of the Turkish Republic.⁴⁷ Of these, around two-thirds were former citizens of the Ottoman Empire (below ‘Rum’), and as such were awarded Turkish citizenship; the

⁴³ See R. Hirschon (ed.), *Crossing the Aegean: an Appraisal of the 1923 Compulsory Population Exchange Between Greece and Turkey*, (Oxford, 2008), esp. Part III, pp. 163-260.

⁴⁴ Clark, *Twice a Stranger*; A. James, ‘Memories of Anatolia: Generating Greek Refugee Identity’, *Balkanologie*, (2001); A. James and B. Smith, ‘The Mirror of Their Past: Greek Refugee Photographs and Memories of Anatolia’, *Visual Anthropology Review*, (2000/2001).

⁴⁵ Istanbul was under Allied occupation during the Greco-Turkish war, and therefore largely spared the *de facto* exchange of the military conflict.

⁴⁶ B. Oran, ‘The Story of Those Who Stayed: Lessons from Articles 1 and 2 of the 1923 Convention’, in R. Hirschon (ed.), *Crossing the Aegean: an Appraisal of the 1923 Compulsory Population Exchange Between Greece and Turkey*, (Oxford, 2008), p. 101.

⁴⁷ A. Alexandris, *The Greek Minority of Istanbul and Greek Turkish Relations 1918-1974*, (Athens, 1983), pp. 84-97, p. 103; Clark, *Twice a Stranger*, pp. 61-64; Hirschon, “‘Unmixing Peoples’”, p. 8; Oran, ‘Story of Those Who Stayed’, pp. 99-101.

remaining third were Greek nationals (bellow ‘Hellenes’)⁴⁸ and were allowed to stay, but remained Greek citizens.⁴⁹

The minority was given a degree of cultural autonomy; as under the Ottoman regime, they were allowed to attend their own churches and minority schools, and, to varying degrees, run community organisations (e.g. athletic clubs, newspapers). The Ecumenical Patriarchate – the pre-eminent church in the Eastern Orthodox faith – was allowed to remain in Istanbul, providing it denounced its political roles, and operated in spiritual capacities only.⁵⁰ The degree of autonomy afforded to the Rum, and the degree of interference from the Turkish state in their communal affairs, varied over time, but they never enjoyed full autonomy or equality (they were not permitted to serve in the civil service, for instance).⁵¹

To varying degrees, they were integrated into Turkish society: many attended Turkish universities, served in the Turkish army, and worked alongside Turks in their professional lives. They were heavily involved in trade, with many owning shops and factories, frequented by Turks as well as non-Muslims. Others played alongside Turks in athletic clubs, with the best players even playing for the Turkish national football team. They were permitted to vote, and a handful served as deputies in the government. Inter-communal marriages were rare, although for many

⁴⁸ Because their families hailed from the former Ottoman lands now in the Greek state.

⁴⁹ A. Alexandris, ‘Religion or Ethnicity: the Identity Issue of the Minorities in Greece and Turkey’, in R. Hirschon (ed.), *Crossing the Aegean: an Appraisal of the 1923 Compulsory Population Exchange Between Greece and Turkey*, (Oxford, 2008), p. 118; Alexandris, *The Greek Minority of Istanbul*, p. 281.

⁵⁰ Alexandris, ‘Religion or Ethnicity’, p. 121; Oran, ‘Story of Those Who Stayed’, p. 99, pp. 107-108.

⁵¹ Alexandris, ‘Religion or Ethnicity’, pp. 118-120; Oran, ‘Story of Those Who Stayed’, p. 103, pp. 106-107; Özkirimli and Sofos, *Tormented by History*, p. 165.

intercommunal gatherings were fairly common. Teachers in the minority schools were both Greek and Turkish, although from the mid-1960s all were obliged to have a Turkish assistant head-teacher appointed by the Turkish government. Most Polites were bilingual, although the vast majority had Greek as their mother-tongue. In common with Turkish residents, many Polites spent their summers on the Princes' Islands⁵² or further north along the Bosphorus, wintering in the city centre.⁵³

Despite their historically long-standing integration into Ottoman society, the Greeks fell victim to both institutional and popular persecution in the Turkish state, mostly in line with diplomatic relations between Greece and Turkey. In the aftermath of the 1919-1922 war, with relations between Greece and Turkey still sour, the minorities' rights were often violated. The period 1930 to 1939 saw rapprochement between the two countries, and a consequent general improvement in the minority's conditions. Nonetheless, the Second World War – during which Turkey remained officially neutral until the closing stages – heralded a bad period for the Polites. They were subjected to the *varlık* (wealth) tax, which disproportionately targeted non-Muslims with harsh and sometimes un-payable duties, and resulted in the deportation of non-payers to forced labour camps. Also associated with the war was the conscription of young men into forced labour battalions. At this time, Greece itself was in a state of chaos, following first the German occupation, and secondly the Greek Civil War,

⁵² A chain of islands off the coast of Istanbul.

⁵³ Alexandris, *The Greek Minority of Istanbul*, p. 250, p. 286, p. 297; Ecumenical Federation of Constantinopolitans, *Report on Human and Minority Rights of the Greek-Orthodox Community of Istanbul*, (Athens, 2010), p. 5; I. Örs, 'Beyond the Greek and Turkish Dichotomy: the Rum Polites of Istanbul and Athens', *South European Society and Politics*, (2006), p. 80, p. 90; V. Souvatzoglou and Y. Kalfopoulos, *Athletic Activity of the Rum of Istanbul*, (Istanbul, 1979), p. 189 and *passim*.

leaving it in no position to defend meaningfully the Istanbul Greeks. Following further post-war rapprochement, relations between the countries took a major hit in 1955 when Greek-Cypriot paramilitary group EOKA began a struggle to end British rule in Cyprus, and unify with Greece, to which Turkey was strongly opposed.⁵⁴

On the night of the 6th and early morning of the 7th of September 1955, the non-Muslims of Istanbul fell victim to a pogrom – the *Septembriana* or ‘events of September’. Many scholars have interpreted the pogrom as intimately connected to Cyprus, although Turkish academic Dilek Güven suggests that it is better interpreted as a primarily internal affair linked to a wider homogenisation programme.⁵⁵ Ostensibly in retaliation for the detonation of a bomb at the purported birthplace of Mustafa Kemal in Thessaloniki, a mob attacked non-Muslim shops and homes in Istanbul, causing widespread damage and injury, even deaths. Although the riot was portrayed by the authorities as a spontaneous popular reaction, many commentators – Greek, Turkish, and foreign – agree that the attack was organised, or at least encouraged, by the Turkish administration.⁵⁶ The proclamation of an independent Cyprus (1959/1960), brought slightly improved Greco-Turkish relations, but from

⁵⁴ Alexandris, *The Greek Minority of Istanbul*, p. 177, p. 206, pp. 215-219, p. 234; Ecumenical Federation of Constantinopolitans, *Report on Human and Minority Rights*, p. 4; Oran, ‘Story of Those Who Stayed’, p. 102-103.

⁵⁵ F. Benlisoy, ‘Anti-Greek Riots of September 1955 in Constantinople (Istanbul)’, *Encyclopedia of the Hellenic World, Constantinople*, <http://www.ehw.gr/l.aspx?id=11464> [accessed November 1 2011]; D. Güven, ‘The “Deep” State, the Septembriana and Democracy in Modern Turkey’, *Proceedings of the International Conference: 6-7/9/1955 An Act of Annihilation of the Greek Community of Istanbul*, (2008); G. Katsanos, ‘6/7 September 1955: Immediate and Modern Perceptions of the Pogrom in Turkish Society’, *Proceedings of the International Conference: 6-7/9/1955 An Act of Annihilation of the Greek Community of Istanbul*, (2008), p. 36.

⁵⁶ Alexandris, ‘Religion or Ethnicity’, p. 119; M. Campbell and P. Sherrard, *Modern Greece*, (London, 1968), p. 257; Güven, ‘The “Deep” State’, pp. 9-15; Oran, ‘Story of Those Who Stayed’, p. 113; A. de Zayas, ‘The Istanbul Pogrom of 6–7 September 1955 in the Light of International Law,’ *Genocide Studies and Prevention*, (2007), pp. 137-138.

1963 onwards, as intercommunal fighting broke out in Cyprus between Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots, the minorities were again at the centre of a diplomatic fight. Accordingly, in 1964, after the deaths of several Turkish-Cypriots, Turkey expelled the Hellene Greeks from Istanbul, under the pretext that they had been funding Greek-Cypriot paramilitaries. This resulted in many Rum leaving as well, as they had intermarried with Hellenes.⁵⁷

In 1967, there was a military coup in Greece, which left the country with a military dictatorship. In 1974, this right-wing *junta*, in conjunction with EOKA-B, organised a coup against Cyprus' democratically elected president, in an attempt to force union with Greece. In response, Turkey invaded Cyprus in July, invoking their role as guarantor of the Cypriot constitution. As a result, Greco-Turkish relations worsened further, with consequent detrimental effects for the minority in Istanbul.⁵⁸ In addition to official harassment of institutions such as the Patriarchate and the minority newspapers, the Polites were subject to discrimination from sections of the Muslim Turkish population, especially during the Cyprus affair, which manifested itself in anti-minority graffiti, persecution in the streets, threats to personal security, and other incidents besides. This climate is encapsulated in the popular slogan, 'patriot, speak Turkish!' – often used to challenge Greek-speakers in the streets.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Ecumenical Federation of Constantinopolitans, *Report on Human and Minority Rights*, p. 5; A. Mills, 'Narratives in City Landscapes: Cultural Identity in Istanbul', *The Geographical Review*, (2005), p. 447.

⁵⁸ Alexandris, *The Greek Minority of Istanbul*, p. 253, p. 280; Oran, 'Story of Those Who Stayed', pp. 102-104.

⁵⁹ Güven, 'The "Deep" State', p. 9; Örs, 'Beyond the Greek and Turkish Dichotomy', pp. 82-83.

Over the period 1922 to 1974, the minority population of Istanbul dwindled, roughly in line with the positive and negative periods outlined above. In 1922 there were around 100,000 Greek Orthodox in Istanbul, in 1955 around 86,000, in 1975 less than 10,000, and by the end of the century, only around 2,500 remained all year round.⁶⁰ Only the Hellenes were expelled, and the Rum, protected by their Turkish citizenship from arbitrary expulsion, left of their own volition. Most of these migrants settled in Greece.

Unlike the refugees from the Asia Minor Catastrophe, the two communities exempted from the population exchange have been relatively unexplored, especially in English. Interest has been shown in the treatment of the minorities by their host states *in situ*. Turkish historian Baskin Oran and Istanbul-Greek historian Alexis Alexandris compare the treatment of the Muslims of Thrace and the Christians of Istanbul, agreeing that the Polites had genuine and serious grievances with Turkish policies. However, they disagree about whether or not Turkey denied the community its right to express its identity. Oran argues that, unlike the policy of the Greek state towards the Thracian Muslims, the Turkish state did not attempt to deny the minority its *Rum* identity. Conversely, Alexandris suggests that the Rum minority was actively prevented from asserting its *Greek* identity, which he sees as a violation of the minority's rights. The point of disagreement is whether the minority has the right

⁶⁰ Alexandris, 'Religion or Ethnicity', p. 119; Alexandris, *The Greek Minority of Istanbul*, p. 291; Oran, 'Story of Those Who Stayed', p. 101.

to assert its identity as Rum or Greek, and this reveals the complexity of the Polites' identity, and their national status.⁶¹

Another major focus has been on the pogrom of September 1955. Istanbul Greek Dimitris Kaloumenos' photographic *The Crucifixion of Christianity* documents the scale and nature of the destruction, and criticises barbaric Turkish culture.⁶² Speros Vryonis compares the pogrom to the Kristallnacht in Nazi Germany, whilst others label the pogrom a genocide.⁶³ Non-Greek human rights historian and lawyer Alfred de Zayas concurs, arguing that in international law Turkey should be held accountable for genocide.⁶⁴ In 2008, scholars from Greece and Turkey convened to discuss aspects of the pogrom ranging from British involvement to its perception in Turkish society, and published their findings in three languages.⁶⁵

Although some scholarship deals with the lives of those who remained in Istanbul, and some migrant literature with the Istanbul-Greek organisations in Greece, much less interest has been shown in the post-migration lives of the Polites.⁶⁶ A notable

⁶¹ Alexandris, 'Religion or Ethnicity', p. 118-119; Oran, 'Story of Those Who Stayed', p. 31.

⁶² D. Kaloumenos, *The Crucifixion of Christianity*, (Athens, 2001), especially p. 21.

⁶³ See V. Kiratzopoulos, *Unregistered Genocide: Constantinople September 1955*, (Athens, 2006); S. Vryonis, 'September 6, 1955: Krystallnacht [sic] in Constantinople', *Greek America*, (September/October, 2007); S. Vryonis, *The Mechanism of Catastrophe: the Turkish Pogrom of September 6-7, 1955, and the Destruction of the Greek Community in Istanbul*, (New York, 2005).

⁶⁴ de Zayas, 'The Istanbul Pogrom', p. 137, p.139, p. 146.

⁶⁵ Ecumenical Federation of Constantinopolitans, *Proceedings of the International Conference: 6-7/9/1955 An Act of Annihilation of the Greek Community of Istanbul*, (2008).

⁶⁶ On the history of Athens' oldest Constantinopolitan society, see Constantinopolitan Society, *1928-2008 80 Years of Service*, (Athens, 2008); on the status of those who remained in Istanbul, see for instance: Ecumenical Federation of Constantinopolitans, *Recent Developments on the Minority and Human Rights of the Greek Minority of Istanbul Based on the Report of Mr. Thomas Hammarberg (1/10/2009) Human Rights Commissioner-Council of Europe*, (Athens, 2011); on the memory of the pogrom amongst those remaining in Istanbul, see A. Theodorides, 'The Conception of the Septembriana by the Rum of Istanbul and the Construction of Their Memory', *Proceedings of the*

exception is the work of Turkish anthropologist Ilay Romain Örs, whose doctoral thesis examined the identity of migrants living in Athens. In an article based on her findings, Örs notes that, as with the 1922 refugees, the Polites distinguish themselves from native Greeks through a sense of cultural superiority.⁶⁷ Örs argues that they transcend the Greek-Turkish dichotomy, by rooting their sense of belonging not in Greek or Turkish ethnicity, but in a cosmopolitan identity of being from Istanbul.⁶⁸ Their cosmopolitan imagined community can include Muslims and exclude native Greeks, and so undermines nationalist conceptions of otherness.⁶⁹ Örs' interpretation challenges the assumption that the Polites possess an unequivocally Greek identity, and offers an alternative perspective from some Greek nationalist accounts focussing on alterity.⁷⁰

The migrants in Greece

The principal destination for Istanbul migrants was Athens, followed by Thessaloniki. Whilst they did not arrive *en masse* in the haphazard manner of the Asia Minor refugees, migration to Greece remained a difficult and costly process. Many lost much of their material and monetary wealth, as their assets were frozen, and they were unable to transport all of their belongings. The early years were often arduous, as they struggled to find work, and establish themselves in their new

International Conference: 6-7/9/1955 An Act of Annihilation of the Greek Community of Istanbul, (2008), pp. 43-46.

⁶⁷ Örs, 'Beyond the Greek and Turkish Dichotomy', pp. 88-89, p. 90.

⁶⁸ Örs, 'Beyond the Greek and Turkish Dichotomy', p. 81, p. 85, pp. 88-90.

⁶⁹ Örs, 'Beyond the Greek and Turkish Dichotomy', p. 88.

⁷⁰ Örs, 'Beyond the Greek and Turkish Dichotomy', p. 83.

country. It is testament to their character that so many had become so successful by the time I met them in 2011-2012.

Chief amongst their early struggles was the issue of citizenship. The Greek state is notoriously reticent at issuing citizenships to foreign-born people.⁷¹ Amongst foreign-born migrants, a distinction is normally made between *homogeneis* – those of Greek descent – and *allogeneis* – of non-Greek descent, the latter category being particularly unlikely to be awarded citizenship. *Homogeneis* implies a blood descent, although in practice it is often equated with possessing Greek ‘national consciousness’ – i.e. culture and religion. The Istanbul Greeks – especially in light of irredentist nationalistic rhetoric that made them ‘unredeemed Greeks’ – would be excused for assuming that they fell into this category. In practice, however, for years and even decades, most were unable to obtain Greek citizenship. The most plausible explanation for this impasse lies in the Greek government policy of not issuing citizenship to Turkish-born Greeks, so as to preserve a Greek minority and vested interest in Turkey.⁷²

Meanwhile, the migrants operated in Greece on residence and work permits. These permits had to be periodically renewed, at first every few months, then less frequently. Operating without citizenship brought a variety of problems to the migrants: there were issues with purchasing property, voting, serving in public

⁷¹ R. Hirschon, ‘Identity and the Greek State: Some Conceptual Issues and Paradoxes’, in R. Clogg (ed.), *The Greek Diaspora in the Twentieth Century*, (London, 1999), p. 169.

⁷² D. Christopoulos, ‘Country Report: Greece’, *EUDO Citizenship Observatory*, (Florence, 2009), pp. 1-2, pp. 10-11, pp. 15-16 (for a detailed discussion on the flexible meaning of *homogeneis*).

capacities, and a few even feared expulsion. Some lost their Turkish citizenship (either at their own request, or on the initiative of the Turkish authorities) and became stateless persons. Yet perhaps the greatest issue was for those who had left Turkey without completing their military service. Without Greek passports, these individuals could not return to visit Istanbul; had they done so on their Turkish passports, they would have been liable to be detained immediately to undergo national service. Ultimately, largely due to pressure from Constantinopolitan organisations, most who wanted to obtain Greek citizenship were able to do so, especially in the early 1980s.

Modern Greece has a population of just under ten million. The overwhelming majority of these are Greeks, although this began to change in the late twentieth century as immigration increased. Orthodox Christianity is dominant, boasting over ninety per cent of the population.⁷³ Yet in Greece there is no strict separation between private and public, and therefore between the sacred and the secular; religion enjoys popular manifestation, an unselfconscious diffuse religiosity in everyday activities.⁷⁴ Despite a veneer of homogeneity, the culture of the refugees injected heterogeneity into Greece, evidenced in street names, refugee societies, and distinct folk traditions of groups like the Pontics.⁷⁵

⁷³ R. Hirschon, 'Dismantling the Millet: Religion and National Identity in Contemporary Greece', in A. Aktar, U. Özkirimli, and N. Kizilyürek (eds.), *Nationalism in the Troubled Triangle: Greece, Turkey, Cyprus*, (2008), p. 68.

⁷⁴ Hirschon, 'Dismantling the Millet', pp. 61-75.

⁷⁵ Pontics are refugees from the Black Sea region of Turkey. M. Mazower, *Salonica City of Ghosts: Christians, Muslims, and Jews 1430-1950*, (London, 2005), pp. 1-12, pp. 16-17; R. Gropas and A. Triandafyllidou, 'Migration in Greece at a Glance', *Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy*, (Athens, 2005), p. 7.

The Polites are also overwhelmingly Greek Orthodox. Whilst their culture has definite similarities with native Greek culture, years of cosmopolitan interaction has also given it distinct features; indeed, they are fiercely proud of being from Istanbul, and boast a strong attachment to their culture. Whilst living as a minority in Istanbul, many Polites looked upon Greece as a homeland; in migration to Greece, many had this image shattered. In a partial replication of the 1922 situation, a section of the native population viewed them as Turks; the 1922-era insult ‘seed of the Turks’ resurfaced. Migrants recalled that their status as *homogeneis* came into question. ‘Did you have churches?’ ‘Did you learn Greek?’ ‘Were you baptised?’ Although this situation was more severe for those arriving in the 1950s and 1960s, isolated incidents persist even to the present day. Meanwhile, many migrants saw the natives as ‘yokels’. Seen as Greeks by the Turkish state and Turks by many in Greece, the migrants underwent a dual denial of identity, which contributed to their construction and maintenance of a distinct Constantinopolitan culture and identity (although this model is far from universally applicable, and there is a huge variation in both experience and narration).⁷⁶

In common with the refugees transported across the Aegean in the population exchange, the Istanbul migrants founded various community groups, which are particularly numerous in Athens. The oldest is the Constantinopolitan Society in Athens, founded in 1928 by Asia Minor refugees, and now a hub for Istanbul migrants. There is also a society specifically for those expelled in 1964, and the

⁷⁶ Örs, ‘Beyond the Greek and Turkish Dichotomy’, p. 80, pp. 84-89.

Ecumenical Federation of Constantinopolitans, which attempts to unite the disparate clubs in Greece and beyond. In Thessaloniki there is only one such society: the Constantinopolitan Union of Northern Greece. These organisations operate as social clubs, but also as historical societies and pressure groups. By no means all migrants participate; nonetheless, the larger societies are well-attended, and boast unrivalled archival material on the Greeks of Istanbul (and the best cup of tea in Greece).⁷⁷

Greco-Turkish relations since 1974

Since 1974, Greco-Turkish relations have continued to fluctuate between dangerous antagonism and tentative reconciliation. The Cyprus question simmers continually, although major diplomatic flashpoints have mostly occurred in the Aegean. These disputes primarily centre around territorial waters and airspace, and the status of numerous small islands. In 1996, for instance, the countries came close to military conflict over the sovereignty of two uninhabited islets near the Dodecanese. Partly due to alarm at the speed of escalation in such crises, steps have been made towards rapprochement. The most significant is the so-called ‘earthquake diplomacy’. In August of 1999, a devastating earthquake hit north-western Turkey, triggering a humanitarian crisis. There was a huge outpouring of support from Greece – governmental and popular – resulting in a large amount of aid being sent to Turkey. In September of the same year, Athens was hit by an earthquake itself, and the outpouring of aid was reciprocated. This rapprochement was shortly followed up by

⁷⁷ Author, field notes.

Greece withdrawing its opposition to Turkey's bid for EU membership, and is also sometimes played out in the popular domain by the exchange of votes in the Eurovision Song Contest. Greco-Turkish relations remain problematic, especially over the Aegean, but they have not been involved in large-scale military confrontation since 1974.⁷⁸

The interviewees

I interviewed thirty-eight members of the Istanbul Greek community, two native Greeks married into the community, and one Turkish Istanbul resident (see appendix 1).⁷⁹ These interviews were carried out during two fieldwork periods, the first in Thessaloniki and the second in Athens. Many informants were acquired through the exceptionally helpful Constantinopolitan organisations; others via mutual Greek friends; and still more by approaching individuals in restaurants and shops with names evoking Istanbul. I ensured that my informants covered the age, class and gender range, as well as having a variety of migration dates and destinations.⁸⁰ This was to allow me to analyse, for example, the mnemonic effect of experiencing

⁷⁸ G. Bertrand, 'Greek-Turkish Relations: from Cold War to Rapprochement', *Observatory of European Foreign Policy: EU-Turkish Relations Dossier*, (2003), pp. 1-3; S. Kinzer, 'Earthquakes Help Warm Greek-Turkish Relations', *The New York Times*, September 13 1999; N. Kadritzke, 'Forgetting a Remembered History: Greece's Earthquake Diplomacy', *Le Monde Diplomatique*, June 2002; P. Jordan, 'The Truth About Politics at the Eurovision Song Contest', *ESC Insight*, <http://www.escinsight.com/2010/11/18/the-truth-about-the-politics-of-eurovision> [accessed 11th January, 2012]; Örs, 'Beyond the Greek and Turkish dichotomy', p. 90.

⁷⁹ All interviewees are pseudonymised.

⁸⁰ A study analysing the evolution of narratives over a period of years may yield interesting results; for instance, one informant's daughter informed me that her father had recently begun to speak Turkish again, after years of refusing to do so, shedding interesting light on trauma and nostalgia. For an example of such a study, see A. Thomson, *Anzac Memories: Living with the Legend*, (Oxford, 1995).

events at the critical formative age of early adolescence, or the significance of living longer in Istanbul as the minority community shrank.⁸¹ I did not, however, find that these factors had a major impact on oral narratives, and so do not develop these avenues (with the exception of gender in chapter four). I pursue in detail those informants whose interviews – due to their nuance, texture, and situational interactions with others – offer the greatest potential for exploring multidirectional memory.

Methodology – oral history and subjectivity

Paul Thompson remarks that oral history provides a ‘fairer trial’ for groups ignored by the official record.⁸² Nevertheless, oral historians are not simply interested in uncovering the ‘facts’ of a ‘truer’ or neglected past. Thompson also stresses the importance of subjectivity: what someone believes is as much a fact as what actually happened.⁸³ Alessandro Portelli concurs, pointing out that ‘factual’ errors in oral accounts can lead the historian to a previously hidden truth, particularly about an individual or a group’s social values.⁸⁴ It is in search of this subjective truth that I have employed oral history techniques. For this reason, I favour the methodological approach of Alessandro Portelli. Thompson sees the oral historian’s proper place to be in the background, where they should largely avoid leading questions, or

⁸¹ J. Pennebaker and B. Banasik, ‘On the Creation and Maintenance of Collective Memories: History as Social Psychology’, in J. Pennebaker, D. Paez and B. Rimé (eds.), *Collective Memory of Political Events: Social Psychological Perspectives*, (Mahwah, 1997), p. 13.

⁸² P. Thompson, *The Voice of the Past*, (Oxford, 1978), p. 7, p. 9.

⁸³ Thompson, *Voice of the Past*, p. 160.

⁸⁴ A. Portelli, *The Battle of Valle Giulia: Oral History and the Art of Dialogue*, (Madison; London, 1997), pp. 20-21, pp. 48-50.

contradicting the interviewee; oral history is not, he argues, a conversation. In his method, there is an attempt to distil the interview, separating informant and interviewer, and discarding the latter to generate the oral text.⁸⁵ Certainly, I retain a place for such an approach; my first question is broad and open – ‘tell me about your life’ – providing the interviewee with the opportunity to construct their narrative as much as possible on their own terms. Portelli, attacking what he terms the ‘myth of non-interference,’ critiques this approach; an oral historian is, in fact, present specifically with the purpose of having a conversation. The interview process, in Portelli’s estimation, is a ‘mutual discovery’ between the practitioner and the informant, by which history is co-operatively reconstructed.⁸⁶

Thompson himself acknowledges that different questions elicit different narratives, and that the interviewer’s ‘social presence’ affects the interview even if no opinions are offered.⁸⁷ Indeed, many of my informants had made assumptions about the nature of my interests before we met; either based upon previous interviews they had given, conversations with my earlier informants, or even my background.⁸⁸ Given the interviewer’s unavoidable influence on the production of the text, Portelli stresses that it is unwise to efface the historian from the transcript.⁸⁹ Moreover, the

⁸⁵ Thompson, *Voice of the Past*, pp. 228-239.

⁸⁶ Portelli, *Battle of Valle Giulia*, pp. 11-12, pp. 24-25; A. Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History*, (Albany, 1991), p. 31, pp. 54-55.

⁸⁷ Thompson, *Voice of the Past*, pp. 139-140, p. 157.

⁸⁸ For instance, at one Constantinopolitan organisation I was announced as ‘a young man who is writing a thesis on the *Septembriana*,’ even though I had not mentioned the pogrom, but merely indicated that I was interested in Polites’ memories. Contrastingly, my informant Sotiris ignored the pogrom, on the basis that ‘it’s a well known history ... you’ll already know if you’re studying this period.’ In both cases, my social presence has affected the context without any active interference on my part. Sotiris, interview by author, Athens, 08/02/12.

⁸⁹ Portelli, *Battle of Valle Giulia*, p. 13.

social presence of the interviewer is part of oral history's analytical potential. People do not communicate, he tells us, without forming an opinion of the person to whom they are speaking; an interviewer who denies their informant the opportunity to make this judgment is unlikely to delve much beyond the 'broadest and safest' narrative.⁹⁰ When I met one of my interviewees, I asked him when and where he was born. 'Where were *you* born?' he retorted; 'first we will learn about you, then you can ask about me.' The interview is a reciprocal process: if the interviewee is denied their role in the mutual discovery, they are likely to be uncomfortable answering your questions from a personal perspective. Portelli terms the oral history interview a 'synthetic product of social science'.⁹¹ This is no bad thing, as the subjectivity produced by this synthesis is our object of study, but we would be unwise to disregard the elements contributing to its synthetic production.

⁹⁰ Portelli, *Battle of Valle Giulia*, p. 11-12; see also Thomson, 'The Anzac Legend', p. 81.

⁹¹ Portelli, *Battle of Valle Giulia*, p. 4.

Chapter One: Kinetic Identity

‘How am I supposed to feel?’ Andreas asks, at the end of our discussion. ‘As a Turk? Or as a Greek?’⁹²

We can sympathise with Andreas’ plea for clarity. Born in Turkey, Andreas grew up with Greek as his mother-tongue, with ‘Rum Orthodox’ written on his Turkish papers, whilst he now lives in Greece, with Greek citizenship. Terms like Greek, Rum, and Turk are notoriously loaded, yet also lack fixity; they can ‘accept any form or combination of content’.⁹³ The terms Greek and Rum, sometimes interchangeable, sometimes oppositional, have experienced radically fluctuating fortunes throughout the ages. If the Ancient Greeks were Hellenes, and the Byzantines Rum, the Modern Greeks in 1821, in Mackridge’s words, ‘were born again as Hellenes, having realized, as it seemed to them, who they were.’⁹⁴ Yet many unredeemed Greeks continued to apply the word Rum, Greek often being synonymous with the European peninsula. To confuse matters further, usage of the term Rum also persisted on local and informal levels amongst the native Greeks, even, to an extent, into the present day.

Patrick Leigh Fermor’s discussion of this ‘Helleno-Romaic Dilemma’ remains the bravest attempt to tackle the confusion. Fermor states that ‘inside every Greek dwell

⁹² Andreas and Sofia, interview by author, Thessaloniki, 11/02/12.

⁹³ D. Theodossopoulos, ‘Introduction: the “Turks” in the Imagination of the “Greeks”’, *South European Society and Politics*, (2006), p. 18.

⁹⁴ Mackridge, *Language and National Identity*, p. 55.

two figures in opposition’ – the Hellene and the Rum – which ‘contradict and complete each other’.⁹⁵ Neither exists alone: they operate only in tension with each other.⁹⁶ He outlines sixty-four parallel characteristics that distinguish the Hellenic figure from the Rum. The Rum is concrete, whilst the Hellene is abstract; the former worships the Byzantine Empire and the dome of Hagia Sophia in Istanbul, whilst the latter adores Ancient Greece and the Parthenon; they share the practice of ‘settling the world’s problems over endless cups of Turkish coffee’.⁹⁷ Fermor’s deliberately tongue-in-cheek account is nonetheless the most helpful point of departure for our discussion: it is precisely by manipulating the Helleno-Romaic dilemma – by altering the emphasis given to Hellenism’s two oppositional figures – that my informants construct a contextually useful sense of self.

Greeks or Romans?

Greek identity

Some of my informants were at pains to be considered strictly as Greek. Gerasimos, throughout our interview, persistently refers to the Polites as Greeks; asked how he conceived of his identity, he replied ‘Greek, without any qualification’. The fact that his male predecessors were Greek citizens may contribute to his unequivocal expression of Greek identity. Yet perhaps more significantly, his self-designation mirrors and provides credence to his broader life history narrative. As he describes

⁹⁵ Fermor, *Roumeli*, p. 106.

⁹⁶ Fermor, *Roumeli*, p. 113.

⁹⁷ Fermor, *Roumeli*, p. 107, p.110, p. 113.

it, he was persecuted in Istanbul because he was Greek, and then welcomed in Greece as a Greek (see intercommunal relations, below). Gerasimos makes no real attempt to access the Romaic side of the dilemma, and sees Rum as being purely a broader term for Greek: he wants only to be fully integrated into a Greek community, and distinguished totally from Turkish society.⁹⁸

Thekla, born in Istanbul to Cappadocian parents, described herself as: ‘a Greek of Cappadocia ... but I never hesitate to say I’m Greek. In my life I have never thought of my identity as anything but Greek.’ Whilst she may occasionally refer to herself as a ‘Rum of Istanbul’, she was disparaging of those Polites who say, ‘I’m not Greek, I’m Rum’, using the Rum identity to ‘cut the Hellenism of Istanbul from its roots.’ Thekla avoids the word Rum as it carries an implication that she and her community are somehow separate from Greece and the roots of Hellenism.⁹⁹

Dimitris Theodossopoulos explains that the inherent flexibility of the Greek identity undermines claims to fixity and continuity, opening up the potential for its permeability.¹⁰⁰ It is precisely this permeability that these informants are resisting in their insistence upon a Greek identity; distinctions like ‘Rum’ are avoided as they imply ambiguity, disunity, and intra-Hellenic distinction. As Michael Herzfeld observes, ‘in statist ideologies, diversity is a threat, because it signifies change and

⁹⁸ Gerasimos, interview by author, Athens, 06/02/12.

⁹⁹ Thekla, interview by author, Athens/York, 21/08/12.

¹⁰⁰ Theodossopoulos, ‘Introduction: the “Turks” in the Imagination of the “Greeks”’, p. 3, p. 18.

especially fragmentation'.¹⁰¹ In the context of our interviews, when specifically challenged on their identity, these informants strive to convey the message of Hellenic unity.

Rum – more than simply Greek

Many of my informants, however, felt that they were more than just Greek. Evangelos was born in the 1950s, and left Istanbul in 1964. I asked Evangelos what ethnicity he considered himself to have. He replied:

Ethnicity or citizenship? Ethnicity: clear Greek. For accuracy, we also have to separate the Rum. The Rum of Istanbul was a Greek but he was something separate. He didn't think of his identity as Greek with the meaning of Greece ... the Rum of Istanbul was something beyond Greece.

Evangelos is keen to separate his Rum identity from strict association with Greece. Being Rum in his formulation is still to be Greek, but to be a different kind of Greek from a native Greek.¹⁰² Evangelos' sister, Tasoula, made the same point even more clearly:

What does Rum mean? Greek, it means. Except it distinguishes that you are the community from Byzantium, from Istanbul. For that reason I am proud that I am a Constantinopolitan – because I am not simply Greek.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ M. Herzfeld, *Anthropology Through the Looking-glass: Critical Ethnography in the Margins of Europe*, (Cambridge, 1987), p. 29.

¹⁰² Evangelos, interview by author, Thessaloniki, 01/12/11.

¹⁰³ Tasoula, interview by author, Thessaloniki, 27/11/11.

To be Rum, for many, means to be more than ‘simply Greek’, to be something different from the Greeks who inhabit the modern nation-state – the ‘*Elladites*’ as many Polites call them. Just as Fermor identified in his Helleno-Romaic dilemma, to be Rum for my informants also implies a distinct imagined past – Byzantium, as opposed to Ancient Greece.

The heirs to Byzantium

Many informants incorporated themselves into this ‘community from Byzantium’. The Byzantines – of whom the Polites become the natural heirs – are considered to be highly cultured and cosmopolitan urbanites. The Polites’ fellow Istanbulites – Armenians, Jews, and Muslim Turks – are often included in this superior Constantinopolitan culture (although a distinction is often made between educated urban Turks and illiterate rural Turks). Often excluded, however, are the native Greeks: rural, uncouth, and ignorant. As Sotiris put it, ‘they would even have fowl on their balconies. Unthinkable things for someone who has grown up in a city’.¹⁰⁴ The Byzantine rulers used to look upon mainland Greece in a comparable manner; in this sense, the Polites also inherit their forebears’ attitudes, a long-lived collective memory.¹⁰⁵

Byzantium – as a big city, and seat of a vast, cosmopolitan empire – is taken to embody all the cultural traits which distinguish the Polites as a community. The

¹⁰⁴ Sotiris, interview.

¹⁰⁵ Holden, *Greece Without Columns*, p.22; Örs, ‘Beyond the Greek and Turkish Dichotomy’, pp. 81-82, p. 86, pp. 88-89, p. 91.

purpose of adopting this history varies from individual to individual. For some, it goes no further than indicating cultural distinctions: Thekla, for instance, considered her community to be ‘the remnants of Byzantium’, despite her adherence to a strictly Greek identity.¹⁰⁶ Others see the cosmopolitan empire as synonymous with multiculturalism and tolerance; indeed, for Örs, the crucial aspect of this identity is that it transcends national boundaries, incorporating various ethnic groups in a pluralistic cosmopolitan Istanbul.¹⁰⁷ It can also be cited as a distinct branch of Hellenism, or even as the authentic Greek history (see below). Yet for others besides, it is something with nothing to do with Hellenism at all.

Baptised as Greeks – rejection of Greek identity

Vangelis is exceptionally disillusioned with his post-migration life: he feels like a ‘foreigner’ in Greece, and bitterly regrets his decision to leave Istanbul. This leads him to reject Greek identity, symbolised in his comments about Athens’ Acropolis: ‘it’s a global monument. Whatever you feel for the Acropolis, I feel too, but not like I made it myself.’ By distancing himself from the principal symbol of Ancient Greece, Vangelis detaches himself from the Greek state’s imagined past.¹⁰⁸ He goes further, attempting to cut the Rum of Byzantium away from Hellenism altogether, just as Thekla feared. When I met him, he said to me: ‘you want to know how

¹⁰⁶ Thekla, interview.

¹⁰⁷ Örs, ‘Beyond the Greek and Turkish Dichotomy’, pp. 81-92.

¹⁰⁸ This alienation from the Acropolis is also noted in Örs, ‘Beyond the Greek and Turkish Dichotomy’, p.85.

Greeks lived - not Greeks, Rum, right? There are no Greeks in Constantinople - they baptised us as Greeks, we don't have any connection with them.'

In Vangelis' reckoning, the Greeks were the Ancient Greeks, and they 'finished two-thousand years ago.' The true Rum identity was as the Roman of the Byzantine Empire, and then as the Christian Ottomans of the Ottoman Empire: 'I adore Byzantium ... [that which properly is called the Eastern Roman Empire].¹⁰⁹ I am a Roman. The Rum is correct. I'm not Greek, I'm a Rum, I'm a Rum, Roman.'

Vangelis' disillusionment with his life in Greece is so strong that he wishes to disconnect himself entirely from Hellenism, which he sees as a corruption of true Rum identity. Just as some Polites take the Helleno-Romaic dilemma to one extreme by denying the Romaic element, so Vangelis goes to the other extreme, rejecting Greek identity and withdrawing into a Byzantine Rum self-perception.¹¹⁰

Kinetic Rum identity

In our interviews, however, most Polites found the greatest utility in the flexibility of the Rum identity. The adoption of Byzantium as an alternative imagined past – as a Rum 'golden age' – has a kinetic purpose: it allows the Polites to distinguish themselves from both the Turks and *Elladites*, whilst remaining Greek. Byzantium was an awkward discord in early Greek-nation building: it undermined the notion of

¹⁰⁹ Paraphrased from a much longer sentence.

¹¹⁰ Vangelis, interview by author, Athens, 03/02/12.

uninterrupted Greek presence on the western peninsula from ancient to modern times, and took the history of Hellenism into an uncomfortable oriental territory which compromised the notion of the Greeks as ancestors of Western civilisation.¹¹¹ A solution was eventually found by re-casting the Byzantine era as the moment when pagan Ancient Greeks were converted to Christianity; this left the nation-builders free to subordinate Byzantium to the Ancient Greek golden age.¹¹² Byzantium has even less place in Turkish nationalism, dismissed as an uncivilised period associated with Greeks, and rescued by the Ottoman invasion.¹¹³

The legacy of Byzantium is thus ripe for appropriation. It is sidelined by the Greek nation-state, and therefore permits the Polites to distinguish themselves from native Greeks and their history. Yet despite its subordination, it remains one of the greatest ever seats of Hellenic power and culture – right on the (former) doorstep of the Polites. It therefore provides them with an imagined past that is Hellenic but distinct from Greece; at once Greek, and something more than simply Greek. This adoption of Byzantium may not stem purely from the Polites' desire to be distinct from the native Greeks, but also from a reaction to their subordination in Greek nationalist history. A Greek writer, explaining to Fermor why the word 'Rum' can have negative connotations, concluded that it signifies 'our dirty linen' – a remnant of the Eastern aspects of the Helleno-Romaic dilemma that Greek historiography strove to

¹¹¹ M. Herzfeld, *Anthropology Through the Looking-glass*, pp. 20-21.

¹¹² P. Mackridge, 'The Heritages of the Modern Greeks', *British Academy Review*, (2012), p. 34; Özkirimli and Sofos, *Tormented by History*, pp. 100-101. There is nonetheless popular interest in Byzantium, although again mainly as the era of conversion to Christianity, see Campbell and Sherrard, *Modern Greece*, pp. 208-213.

¹¹³ H. Millas, "'Greeks' in Turkish Textbooks – the Way For an Integratory Approach', paper presented at *History Education and Textbooks*, Bosphorus University, (Istanbul, 8-10 June 1995), unpublished hard copy, p. 6.

purge in acquiescing to Western cultural criteria.¹¹⁴ To an extent, the Polites are an awkward reminder of Eastern Hellenism, an obstacle to the Modern Greeks' assigned role as the 'reverent, primordial' ancestors of Europe.¹¹⁵ The rejection of Byzantium by the Turks completes its suitability for the Polites, as it allows them to claim an Eastern past that still remains distinct from Turkish history.

The utility of this alternative Hellenic history is that it is perfectly flexible, as illustrated in the following anecdote. Fotini – who migrated to Greece with young Istanbul-born children – reported that her son was chastised as 'seed of the Turks' by his classmates in Greece. Fotini went to the teacher to complain about this behaviour, explaining to her 'look, we are more Greek than the Greeks here!' In the context of defending her son against accusations of being a Turk, Fotini's identity is not just Greek, but in fact 'Greeker' than the native Greeks. Moments later, I asked her to define her identity:

Rum. [Pause] Not Greek, Rum. There's a difference ... We had many influences, because Istanbul is a cosmopolitan place. It wasn't a village, we didn't have animals ... that's why we call it The City, with a big 'C' ... Byzantium.¹¹⁶

In the space of just a few minutes, Fotini's identity has changed from Greeker than the Greeks, to not Greek. In this manner, her kinetic identity has allowed her to deal with the challenges of migration, by first *including* herself in a pan-Hellenic community (when on the defensive about her identity and legitimacy in Greece), and

¹¹⁴ Fermor, *Roumeli*, p. 100; Herzfeld, *Anthropology Through the Looking-glass*, pp. 20-21, pp. 28-29, pp. 35-36.

¹¹⁵ Herzfeld, *Anthropology Through the Looking-glass*, p. 25.

¹¹⁶ Fotini and Natasha, interview by author, Thessaloniki, 21/11/11.

then *distinguishing* herself as a special branch of cosmopolitan Byzantine Hellenism when she wants to differentiate herself from the local monocultural Greek villagers.

Örs describes how the Polites possess a ‘wider cultural sense of “belonging” ... specifically centred on the urban cosmopolitan experience of being from Istanbul.’¹¹⁷

As she identifies, this can distinguish the Polites from the native Greeks, in certain contexts even excluding native Greeks at the expense of including non-Greek Istanbulites.¹¹⁸ However, central to the utility of this identity is that in other contexts they can also *include* native Greeks in their wider sense of a Greek identity whilst *excluding* others, such as non-Greek Istanbulites. Byzantium is an ideal past with which to imagine Istanbul-Greek identity: one that can share in Hellenism, whilst challenging the centrality of Ancient Greece, and positing Byzantium (and therefore Istanbul) as the true homeland of Hellenism. A kinetic Rum identity allows the heirs of Byzantium to be as Greek as necessary, or as distinct as necessary, depending on context; manipulating the Helleno-Romaic dilemma to suit social situations. Words like Rum and Greek – with all their historical ambiguity and contingency – suit this kinesis as they resist fixity.

Official self – citizenship and identity

The migrants’ complicated citizenship dealings – outlined above – provided another opportunity to think through identity. Whilst many informants’ decisions concerning

¹¹⁷ Örs, ‘Beyond the Greek and Turkish Dichotomy’, p. 81.

¹¹⁸ Örs, ‘Beyond the Greek and Turkish Dichotomy’, p. 86, p. 88.

citizenship were pragmatic – relating to rights in the two countries – for others there was an ideological dimension to the acquisition or disposal of different citizenships. For Ioanna, among others, losing her Turkish citizenship was a symbolic act. She personally made the application, ‘because [we wanted to] erase everything that was Turkish ... we didn’t want to have links.’ Ioanna thus attempted to exorcise the painful Turkish element in her history, and distinguish her identity categorically from her former Turkish tormentors.¹¹⁹

Meanwhile, other informants have now begun to make applications to take back their Turkish citizenship. At the Constantinopolitan Union, I overheard a conversation between two men, one of whom had recently decided to re-acquire his Turkish citizenship, a fact that the other man was struggling to comprehend. As I arrived *in medias res*, the other man left, leaving Panagiotis to explain himself to me:

When I say I want to take back the Turkish citizenship, I want to take it as a *Rum*. When I tell this to Greeks they look at me suspiciously; they think, “ah, he wants to take it to be a Turkish citizen again.” No. I want to do so to be a free citizen, a free Rum, in my city. Rum, right?¹²⁰

I met Panagiotis a few days later in his house. In the intervening period, he had learnt from the Turkish embassy that his application, first made in 1993, had been accepted in 2002, and they were waiting to hear whether or not he was still alive (!). Panagiotis therefore intended to collect his Turkish citizenship the following day. He

¹¹⁹ Ioanna, interview by author, Thessaloniki, 23/11/11.

¹²⁰ Author, field notes, 21/11/11.

elaborated on his decision:

Some people ask, “why do you want to be a Turkish subject?” I say, “no, I’m not doing it in that way. I’m taking it [because] I am a free citizen.” Greece, that is my country, but I have another country ... I have two homelands.

A resident of Greece since 1963, Panagiotis considers Thessaloniki to be his home, and does not reject the Greek aspect of his identity. Nonetheless, he expresses a profound and regretful nostalgia for Istanbul, stating that, ‘for all those years [that I have been in Greece] my heart is in Istanbul.’ Panagiotis uses his official identity to establish a flexible sense of self. When in Greece, he has Greek citizenship, and is Greek: indeed, he called himself ‘very Greek’ as compared to other Greek-speaking migrants. When he goes to Istanbul, however, with a Turkish citizenship, he becomes a free Rum citizen. Panagiotis referred to himself as ‘twice a refugee: once when I left from there to come here, and once now that I want to go back there from here.’ His possession of dual-citizenship symbolises and legitimates his dual-ownership of two homelands, and his metaphorical switching of identity as he travels between them – in this he finds some relief from his feeling of being twice a refugee.¹²¹

Ivan – a former resident of Chalki¹²² – expressed a similar feeling about citizenship:

Every time I go to Turkey, and I go almost once a year, I go as a tourist, with a Greek passport. I might not think of myself as a Turk, but ... as strange as it sounds, I love my island ... That’s why I want the Turkish passport again.

¹²¹ Panagiotis, interview by author, Thessaloniki, 24/11/11.

¹²² The second largest of the Princes’ Islands.

Much like Panagiotis, once Ivan re-possesses Turkish citizenship, he will travel to Istanbul on a Turkish passport, leaving his Greek one behind. This symbolic act establishes his legitimate presence on his island, as a native not a tourist. Ivan does not see himself as a Turk, but nor does he see himself as a Greek (see below): his dual citizenship represents his identity as an islander free of strict nationalist allegiance to either country.¹²³

Vangelis has also decided to take back his Turkish citizenship. As he explained: ‘ten years ago ... [when I learned] what the Greek reality was, I said, “I’ll take back the Turkish citizenship!”’ For Vangelis, re-claiming Turkish citizenship is explicitly connected with disillusionment in the ‘Greek reality,’ a symbolic rejection of native Greek identity and mark of nostalgia for Istanbul. His feeling that Istanbulite society was superior to Greek society received final confirmation after his acquisition of citizenship:

Over here, I’m waiting to take a pension ... [from] the Greeks ... When my Turkish citizenship came, automatically, I got a Turkish pension. Without me doing anything, within a week, the pension came.¹²⁴

Hirschon is right to identify that personal identity is separate from state identity, and that due to its legal status it ‘cannot easily be negotiated’.¹²⁵ Nevertheless, for some, ‘thinking with citizenship’ allows them to reconcile their past and present, find

¹²³ Ivan, interview by author, Thessaloniki, 30/11/11.

¹²⁴ Vangelis, interview.

¹²⁵ Hirschon, ‘Identity and the Greek State’, p. 163.

expression for their frustrations, regrets, and hopes, and actually inject further flexibility into their identity.

Orthodox Christians

In Istanbul, Orthodox Christianity was undeniably a central component of Polites' identity. This was how they were officially categorised, and the most obvious way they could distinguish themselves from the Muslim majority. Most Polites attended church frequently, many every Sunday. Beyond its theological role, the church was also a meeting place. My informants were in no doubt that the Orthodox Church helped to maintain their communal identity whilst living in Turkey. The importance of religion is nicely captured in the commonly expressed tales of rescuing religious icons from Turkish authorities during migration.

Questioned about their church attendance in Greece, however, the vast majority stated that they no longer attended regularly. There is a practical dimension to this: the church was no longer the only place that the Polites could meet other Orthodox Christians, and furthermore in Greece regular church attendance is not necessarily a prerequisite for piety. Nevertheless, it may also be that in migration from a Muslim to an overwhelmingly Orthodox Christian country, the importance of religion as a marker of unique identity decreased; as Thanasis put it: 'there was no reason to go to church here. After so many years, I don't think of my identity as Christian'.¹²⁶ My

¹²⁶ Thanasis, interview by author, Athens, 06/02/12.

informants certainly did not cease to believe in a Christian god, and still identify themselves as Orthodox Christians; yet as they forged a new identity in Greece, they found less need to assert their religious affiliation. For many, superior cosmopolitan culture took religion's place as unique signifier of identity, and indeed many linked their declining church attendance to the inferior quality of religious piety in Greece.

Ivan, for instance, felt that religion was not taken seriously:

In churches [in Greece] you go however you feel like, both in terms of mentality and clothing ... [In Istanbul it] was much nicer because they retained things more traditional. Here, it's "Christ is risen, let's go!"¹²⁷

Simply being an Orthodox Christian was no longer an efficient means of self-distinction in Greece, and so declined in importance in some Polites' self-understanding. Nevertheless, for others, it became incorporated into a broader narrative of cultural superiority, making the Polites more authentically Christian than the native Greeks, and religion thus maintained a role in distinct identity formation.

How happy is he who says, 'I am a Turk'

Every morning, students in Turkish schools – including minority schools – recited the national pledge of allegiance as follows:

I'm a Turk, I'm righteous, I'm hard working,

¹²⁷ Ivan, interview.

My principle is to protect my minors, is to respect my elders,
 Is to love my country and my nation much more than my own self ...
 Happy is the one who calls himself a Turk¹²⁸

My informants recalled this oath, and most were still able to recite it by heart; yet very few would label themselves ‘Turk’, which is largely synonymous with ‘Muslim’.¹²⁹ Nevertheless, the potential utility of professing a Turkish element to identity in very specific contexts is not totally lost to Polites.

Pull ‘the Other’ one – Turkish identity as humour

I was discussing ethnicity and identity with Kyriakos – a migrant as a young man – who explained that, despite his love for Greece, he was a Rum, and therefore different from a native Greek. His son, however, born in Greece to two Polites, considers himself to be pure Greek. Kyriakos, chuckling, told me: ‘sometimes we have very strong, intense discussions with my eldest son, who says that he is Greek and that [he is descended] from Pericles!’ Pericles was a prominent political figure in fifth-century BC Athens, and has become a symbol of the ancient city’s golden era. Faced with this staunch assertion of direct Hellenic descent from Ancient Greece, Kyriakos teased his son about a potential Turkish element to his lineage: ‘I

¹²⁸ H. Millas, ‘The Rum of Istanbul as Citizens and as a Minority’, *Eptalofos*, December 1996; wording of the pledge is taken (abridged) from F. Meseçi-Giorgetti, ‘Discourse of the Student’s Pledge in Turkey’, (paper presented at *European Conference on Educational Research*, Freie Universität Berlin, September 14 2011, <http://www.eera-ecer.de/index.php?id=421&Action=showContributionDetail&conferenceUid=5&contributionUid=18778&cHash=49a57dfd676d2b14168d29a6806cffe7>) [accessed August 1 2012].

¹²⁹ Hirschon, ‘Identity and the Greek State’, p. 171.

say to him, “your blood might be Turkish ... how can I know from my father[’s side]. He could be Turkish!”

Here Kyriakos uses a potential Turkish aspect to his identity – hidden Turkish blood perhaps lurking in his family genealogy – to frighten his son, who takes pride in a purely Greek identity. Kyriakos would certainly not consider himself to be Turkish, but he is prepared to mobilise his history in Turkish lands to allow him to access a Turkish identity in this context for humorous effect.¹³⁰ A similar event took place over dinner at Mikhael’s house. Present were Mikhael, his wife Alexandra, and a native Greek friend of mine from the Peloponnese (here called Akhilleas). Mikhael was listening to Turkish music, and Akhilleas asked him, ‘what language is this? Turkish? Arabic?’ Mikhael responded bluntly, ‘yes, Turkish.’ There was a pause, before Akhilleas asked Mikhael if he understood the lyrics. ‘What do you think?’ Mikhael responded, in a matter-of-fact tone, ‘seeing as I am from Turkey.’ At this point Alexandra drifted into the conversation, and, grinning and pointing to Mikhael, said to Akhilleas, ‘yes, he’s a Turk, him! He’s a Turk!’ Akhilleas looked a little crestfallen; ‘you’re joking?’ he implored. ‘That’s what they [native Greeks, presumably] called us,’ Alexandra retorted. Akhilleas turned to me and, in English, said, ‘I feel uncomfortable now!’¹³¹

¹³⁰ Kyriakos, interview by author, Athens, 03/02/12.

¹³¹ Author, field notes, 01/02/12.

Hirschon draws attention to the potential ‘playful inconsistency’ of Greek identity; it is just such a playful inconsistency that we see in these examples.¹³² In certain contexts, Polites can actually ‘become’ Greece’s ethnic ‘other’ to tease native Greeks (successfully, apparently).¹³³ Alexandra also uses the joke to sarcastically mock how they were discriminated against by sections of the native Greek population. Whilst on the defensive about their position in Greek society Polites might become Grecker than the Greeks, but on rare occasions they can also go on the offensive, calling the bluff of the native Greeks and (jokingly and temporarily) becoming Turks.

Percentage Turk

One of my informants went slightly further than this in accessing a Turkish identity. Fotis was born in 1950, and grew up in Pera.¹³⁴ Having left in 1976, largely because his wife had left, but also due to the worsening climate, he returned in 1980, and frequents Istanbul several times a year. He espoused a strongly anti-nationalistic line in his narrative, saying that he hasn’t ‘got any anti-Turkish feeling’; this is because the Polites ‘didn’t grow up at all like Greeks, they grew up as Rum.’ Later, he explained exactly what it means to be Rum:

Let’s say, a man is 100% ... [each Rum has] a percentage, depending on the person, of Turk inside him. It’s not a bad thing. Because they have five per cent, two, three,

¹³² Hirschon, ‘Identity and the Greek State’, p. 176.

¹³³ Akhilleas is certainly no Turkophobe; he, too, is playing a ‘character’ – the Greek nationalist – for humorous purposes.

¹³⁴ A district of Istanbul with historically significant Greek population.

one, twenty, because they still have habits, Turkish habits ... An *Elladitis* hasn't got it at all. That's the difference. We have a bit of a different culture.

I asked him if this meant that he was not a Greek:

Look, I've never said I was a Turk. Apart from in rare circumstances, when I find myself abroad, even now, and someone is speaking Turkish, I speak to them too, they ask me, what are you? I say, "a Turk." It's not, however, bad, to say, "I'm a Turk". I don't have any problem to say, "I'm a Greek, I'm a Turk." Because I am, I have a percentage in me which is a Turk. As much as you want to say that you don't, they all do.

Fotis is certainly not claiming to be Turkish – indeed, he later tells a story about how it upset him that bank workers used to think he was Turkish because his signature was in Turkish characters. Nonetheless, he is able to mobilise an element of Turkish identity in his pursuit of a pluralistic, multicultural identity. In his statement that he is happy to call himself both Greek and Turkish, Fotis rails against the logic of the nation-state, which posits these two groups as mutually exclusive and antagonistic categories. His percentage Turkish model symbolises the cosmopolitan aspect of Constantinopolitan identity which the monocultural native Greeks lack. In stating that he has no problem to call himself a Turk, there is also a sense of defiance against those native Greeks who did just that; as above, Fotis calls their bluff.¹³⁵

In (fairly rare) circumstances, the *Polites* can access Turkish identity for dramatic effect, further evidence of the ability of identity to morph to suit different situations.

¹³⁵ Fotis, interview by author, Athens, 01/02/12.

Ottoman Greek

Speaking to Güven, an Istanbul-Greek lamented the collapse of pluralism under the nation-state as follows: ‘in reality I am neither Rum nor Turk, I am an Ottoman, but they did not leave us a piece of land where we could live out this culture’.¹³⁶

Byzantium represents such a suitable imagined past for Polites as it was dominated by Greek-speakers; the Ottoman Empire, largely ignored by Greek historiography, is less suitable, due to Greek subjugation to Muslim rule.¹³⁷ Nonetheless, the Ottoman era shares some of the pluralistic, cosmopolitan characteristics that Polites often seek to evoke in Byzantium, and for this reason Fotis makes an altogether bolder attempt to inherit the legacy of the Ottoman Empire. He does so through the medium of family history:

My mother’s side were Ottomans, with fez and things. An Ottoman may be a Jew and speak Arabic but it’s not an issue for him. Because he is an Ottoman ... [when the Greek cruiser Georgios] Averof arrived [after the end of the First World War] it passed through the Bosphorus, all the Greeks came out, with flags, all the Rum of Istanbul ... [His Ottoman grandfather] closed the windows, he didn’t want to see such a thing, because he had an Ottoman identity. The other grandfather [on the father’s side], exactly the opposite, he put Greek flags in his shop, a photo of [Greek Prime Minister Eleftherios] Venizelos, crazy stuff. I have the culture of both.

In this story, whilst one of Fotis’ grandfathers enthusiastically welcomes the Greek ships as liberators, the Ottoman grandfather is repelled by the show of national allegiance. Fotis also deployed Ottoman identity to express intercommunal harmony in Istanbul, especially with regards to intercommunal assistance during the 1955

¹³⁶ Güven, ‘The “Deep” State’, p. 14.

¹³⁷ Mackridge, ‘Heritages of the Modern Greeks’, pp. 36-37; Özkirimli and Sofos, *Tormented by History*, p. 100.

pogrom:

That came from the Ottoman Empire, that co-existence, to have one next to the other with his freedom. Without submitting one to the other, neither the Rum to the Armenian, nor the Turk to the Jew, in the Ottoman Empire it was something very common.

He lamented the death of this Ottoman tolerance in the modern world:

The nation state, when Turkey was made in 1923, it didn't want it. They wanted everyone to become a Turk, like Greece everyone to become Greeks ... The nation states have one culture, one language, one flag, one, one, one. The Ottoman Empire was exactly the opposite, many countries, many languages, many people, many, many, many.

Fotis uses genealogy to lay claim to both Ottoman and Greek inherited identity, the former associated with a pre-nationalistic multicultural tolerance and giving him an escape route from Greek nationalism, the latter preserving his access to Hellenic identity. As an Ottoman Greek, Fotis is permitted to be both multicultural and anti-nationalistic, and proud to have Greek origins.¹³⁸

'A child of the island' – localising identity

I asked islander Ivan what ethnicity he considered himself to have. He replied:

Ivan: Now? On my [identity] cards: Greek.

Halstead: And in your mind?

Ivan: In my spirit? [laughs] Not Greek. We have got to the point today,

¹³⁸ Fotis, interview.

unfortunately, that we are embarrassed to say that we are Greeks ... We grew up with Greek spirit, Greek culture over there, here of course they received us as Turks.

When living in Turkey, Ivan possessed a Greek spirit and culture. After his experiences of migration and rejection in Greece, however, he has reached the point where he considers his identity as 'not Greek'; he has actually become less Greek in his migration to Greece. Nor does Ivan show a strong tendency to identify with a Byzantine or Rum identity. Although he does occasionally express pride at Constantinopolitan culture, he more frequently lavishes praise on the simple island life; where others spoke of spices and haute cuisine, Ivan exalted fresh fish and vegetables. In light of his alienation in Greece, it is as an islander than Ivan reconstructs his identity. Discussing his memories of young life, Ivan stated:

When you live in Istanbul it is different, when you live on the island it is different. We put on our swimming costume in May and removed it in October, we did not take it off. We lived mostly in the sea ... first we learnt to swim, then to walk ... first we drank sea water, then milk.

Ivan, in his own words, feels 'like a resident of the island, and nothing more.' This localised Chalkidonian identity allows him to rise above – or slip beneath – ethnic distinctions, and detaches him from any imagined community which might draw him into some historical or contemporary conflict. An island identity thus creates a safe haven for his idyllic memories free of communal strife.¹³⁹

¹³⁹ Ivan, interview.

A kinetic identity

American sociologists Ron Eyerman and Jeffrey Alexander helped develop a theory of what they call ‘cultural trauma’. Cultural trauma refers to the ‘dramatic loss of identity’ that a group undergoes during a collective crisis, and the subsequent emergence of new identities.¹⁴⁰ In their model, the normal operation of collective identity is one of stability. Cultural trauma occurs when this stability comes under threat, and in turn changes the group’s ‘identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways’.¹⁴¹ After the ‘trauma drama’, the new, revised collective identity is routinised through public discourse in a ‘calming down’ period, resuming its normal, stable function.¹⁴² Their model contains much subtlety, especially in their consideration of cultural trauma as a way of broadening social incorporation.¹⁴³ Nevertheless, I have picked on their model here as it contains key assumptions about identity that I would like to qualify: namely that identity operates at its best when it is stable, that old identities are lost and replaced with new identities in ‘fundamental and irrevocable ways’, and that revision and adaptation of collective identity occur specifically in distinct moments of social crisis.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁰ R. Eyerman, ‘The Past in the Present: Culture and the Transmission of Memory’, *Acta Sociologica*, (2004), p. 160.

¹⁴¹ J. Alexander, ‘Toward a Theory of Cultural Trauma’, in J. Alexander, R. Eyerman, B. Giesen, N. Smelser and P. Sztompka (eds.), *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*, (Berkeley; London, 2004), p. 1.

¹⁴² Alexander, ‘Toward a Cultural Theory of Trauma’, p. 22; Eyerman, ‘The Past in the Present’, pp. 160-162.

¹⁴³ Alexander, ‘Toward a Cultural Theory of Trauma’, p. 1.

¹⁴⁴ Alexander, ‘Toward a Cultural Theory of Trauma’, pp. 1-24; Eyerman, ‘The Past in the Present’, pp. 159-169.

Liz Stanley, critiquing the genre of biography, rejects the concept that there is ‘a coherent ... and unitary self’.¹⁴⁵ Mackridge, in the context of Greek identity, similarly refers to an individual’s ‘cluster of identities’, explaining that the manner in which the components of this cluster interact varies between individuals.¹⁴⁶ The result is a malleable identity, with which ‘one can feel oneself to be situated in between the normally recognised categories.’¹⁴⁷ The concept of identity clusters is a useful one: whilst a few informants, in the specific life history context, attempted to sustain a coherent identity to advance a certain message, most of our informants did not understand their identity through strict allegiance to a unitary self, but rather by fluidly migrating between a range of partially overlapping categories. Construction of self extends beyond the individual, and requires making connections to others; manipulating the relationship between the various elements within an identity cluster permits one to gain access to different imagined groupings.¹⁴⁸ One therefore does not possess identity – one negotiates it.¹⁴⁹

Moreover, it is precisely this malleability which makes identity socially potent and resilient. Homi Bhabha holds that identity’s ‘illusion of totality’ and inherent ‘ambivalence’ can be ‘strategically ... socially deployed’.¹⁵⁰ Selma Leydesdorff, Luisa Passerini, and Paul Thompson concur, referring to the ‘special creative space’

¹⁴⁵ L. Stanley, *The Auto/biographical I: the Theory and Practice of Feminist Auto/biography*, (Manchester; New York, 1992), p. 8.

¹⁴⁶ Mackridge, ‘Language and National Identity’, p. 9.

¹⁴⁷ Mackridge, ‘Language and National Identity’, p. 9.

¹⁴⁸ Chapman *et al*, ‘Introduction’, p. 17; B. Schwartz, *Abraham Lincoln in the Post-Heroic Era: History and Memory in Late Twentieth Century America*, (Chicago, 2009), p. 11; Stanley, *The Auto/biographical I*, p. 14.

¹⁴⁹ H. Bhabha interviewed by P. Thompson, ‘Between Identities’, in R. Benmayor and A. Skotnes (eds.), *Migration and Identity*, (New Brunswick; London, 2005), p. 193.

¹⁵⁰ Bhabha, ‘Between Identities’, p. 192.

carved out by ambiguous identity.¹⁵¹ Indeed, in dealing with the social trauma of forced migration, the inherent ambivalence in identity is productive for the Polites: for instance allowing Fotini to be distinct from native Greeks in one context, and assimilated in another; or as exploited by Kyriakos in the adoption of a jocular Turkish identity. A coherent and fixed identity suits only one context: yet life is made up of many constantly changing contexts, and so must be identity.

Identity negotiation does not occur only in dramatic and indelible revisions. Theodossopoulos explains that ‘categories are challenged only, or as much as is required, to allow new sets of meaning to dwell in their available hollowness’.¹⁵² Identity categories are revised only as much as is necessary to expose their ambiguity, and colonise the empty space with new yet interrelated meanings. Fotis’ appropriation of an Ottoman Greek identity is instructive. He revises and combines the categories of Greek and Ottoman – taking advantage of their ambiguous hollowness and partially overlapping history – no further than necessary to foster a new meaning: that is, an inclusive multicultural version of Hellenic identity. He does not fundamentally or unrecognisably transform either category, as the very purpose of the exercise was to create a new meaning whilst remaining within familiar and comfortable territory.

Interpreting Quentin Skinner’s argument on the evolution of political ideologies, James Tully writes that change must be rooted in tradition to garner legitimacy and

¹⁵¹ S. Leydesdorff, L. Passerini and P. Thompson, ‘Introduction’, in S. Leydesdorff, L. Passerini and P. Thompson (eds.), *Gender and Memory*, (Oxford, 2005), p. 7.

¹⁵² Theodossopoulos, ‘Introduction: the “Turks” in the Imagination of the “Greeks”’, p. 23.

acceptance; to change one component of an ideology, others must be kept constant.¹⁵³ The same holds for the malleable operation of identity clusters: change is more productive when it takes place in smaller, slower, recognisable ways, as it allows the self to adapt to social situations without necessitating an ‘identity crisis’ (or trauma drama). When the inhabitants of the mainland Greek peninsula underwent the profound trauma of revolution against the Ottoman Empire, they did not discard an old Romaic identity and replace it wholesale with a new Greek identity; rather they remained betwixt both categories, acquiring a Hellenic self only as they were able to hold the other part – the Romaic Christian self – constant whilst they did so. Likewise, when adapting to the trauma of migration, the Polites did not undergo rapid and permanent changes to their identity, but instead took advantage of stretching the ambiguous spaces in identity clusters to alleviate the effects of trauma. Kinetic identity is a subtle process, constant minor adjustments to the circulation of identity clusters, rather than transplantation of the old cluster with a new one.

Nor does identity negotiation take place solely during moments of profound social crisis. Rather, the re-alignment of collective identity clusters is taking place constantly – identity, in Stuart Hall’s terms, being ‘points of temporary attachment’.¹⁵⁴ The construction and deployment of collective identities is not merely a linear process in which identity changes take place vertically over long time-spans; it also involves horizontal movement in social space. So, for instance,

¹⁵³ J. Tully, ‘The Pen is a Mighty Sword: Quentin Skinner’s Analysis of Politics’, in J. Tully (ed.), *Meaning and Context: Quentin Skinner and his Critics*, (Cambridge, 1988), pp. 9-19; see also Schwartz, *Forge of National Memory*, pp. 298-303.

¹⁵⁴ S. Hall, ‘Introduction: Who Needs “Identity”?’’, in S. Hall and P. du Gay (eds.), *Questions of Cultural Identity*, (London, 2003), p. 6.

we find Polites who shuffle their malleable identity between the Greek and Romaic elements as they travel from Greece to Istanbul, symbolised in their literal change of passport. Likewise, Fotis and Kyriakos can be Greek (when assimilating), Rum or Ottoman (when distinguishing), and Turkish (when performing). The Polites do not possess a single identity: their collective identities are constantly on the move, shifting in context and between individuals. This is not to suggest that people do not claim fixed identity, nor to deny that they can be confused or haunted by self-definition. Rather, it is to acknowledge how much more problematic it would be if we had a fixed, unitary identity incapable of contextual mobility and compromise. Muriel Schein, instead of wondering *what* an ethnic group is, asks the question: *when* is an ethnic group?¹⁵⁵ In acknowledging the contextual fluidity of identity, we too must consider not just what makes an imagined group, but when a group is made.

‘A true description of me cannot ... be a coherent, consistent description ... only what I think I am – no, not even that, it is only what I *now* think I am’.¹⁵⁶ *Chao Buwei*

¹⁵⁵ M. Schein, ‘When Is an Ethnic Group? Ecology and Class Structure in Northern Greece’, *Ethnology*, (1975), p. 83.

¹⁵⁶ Chao Buwei, quoted in E. Croll, ‘Gendered Moments and Inscripted Memories: Girlhood in Twentieth-century Chinese Autobiography’, in S. Leydesdorff, L. Passerini and P. Thompson (eds.), *Gender and Memory*, (Oxford, 2005), p. 129, my emphasis.

Chapter Two: Harmony and Strife in Intercommunal Relationships

In the aftermath of the First World War, Mark Mazower tells us, the rise of nationalism, nation-states, and self-determination led to the creation ‘of the minority as the contemporary political problem.’¹⁵⁷ Where once great empires had relied upon ‘dynastic loyalty’ to rule over culturally and religiously pluralistic peoples, now nation-states strived for national homogeneity as their source of legitimacy and security.¹⁵⁸ Within this framework, ethnic minorities became a burden to be assimilated, exterminated, or exported to their own ‘self-determined’ nation-state. The process was starkly and traumatically explored in Istanbul, whose cosmopolitan society – which had already cost the city its status as capital – became a prime target for homogenisation.¹⁵⁹ A remnant of a long-standing pluralism rapidly and haphazardly dismantled in the twentieth century, the Polites experienced complex and convoluted communal lives, and in this chapter we will analyse how they narrate this complexity.

I will outline the two most commonly offered narratives about life in Istanbul: the ‘strife narrative’ and the ‘harmony narrative’. In doing so, I do not mean to create two discrete narrative categories, but rather demarcate two points on a narrative spectrum from which to launch an initial comparison. The examples here have been

¹⁵⁷ M. Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe’s Twentieth Century*, (London, 1998), p. 40.

¹⁵⁸ Mazower, *Dark Continent*, p. 40.

¹⁵⁹ B. Komins, ‘Depopulated Cosmopolitanism: the Cultures of Integration, Concealment, and Evacuation in Istanbul’, *Comparative Literature Studies*, (2002), p. 367.

selected as they constitute clear attempts to advance one narrative trend over the other, especially in the ‘spontaneous’ life history portion of the interview.

The strife narrative

Mikhael is a very active member of a Constantinopolitan organization in Athens. Born in the 1940s, he grew up in the centre of Istanbul. His house was not attacked during the pogrom, but he lost friends to expulsion and migration during the Cyprus affair. He left Istanbul in the 1970s for the reason that he could no longer envisage a secure life for his community. His narrative started with an explanation of the wealth tax during World War Two:

I was born in a difficult period, because it was the war, and Turkey had put a law, *varlık*. Although my father was a newspaper seller ... they put a big tax on him, and because he was not able to pay it, they came to our house and did a seizure, various furniture amongst which was my little bed, at that time I was a child in bed.

Mikhael’s life narrative thus starts with difficulty and discrimination. Turkey is immediately cast as the villain, putting a disproportionately large tax on a father with a modest employment, and violating childhood innocence by seizing the ‘little bed.’ Mikhael then made passing mention of an improved period, before offering a narrative of the pogrom:

When the war finished, the politics of Turkey towards the minority changed, and we went through a better period. That continued until 1954 when the Cyprus matter began. Always when the Turks had some political problem with Greece, they took it out on the Greek minority of Istanbul. So we come to the events of 1955 ... We went

to Pera and I saw that damage ... clothes, butter, oil, fridges, everything thrown down, shoes, whatever you can imagine, in places as high as my socks ... My father [who had lots of Turkish customers] - nobody warned him that that would happen. That happened to everyone. None of the Turks informed them [to be] careful, [because] something will happen. Except for the last minute ... they said, “leave [work] a bit earlier.” And so he left earlier ... Because our house was very close to the Greek embassy, the Turkish police had blocked the road, and they didn’t allow the demonstrators to enter our house, but because it was on the corner we could see all of that crowd ... There was lots of damages ... In neighbourhoods with more Turks there was also rapes, girls, women ... Those are the events of ‘55.

Örs observed that amongst her informants ‘even the most judgmental accounts’ of intercommunal relations offered by Polites included ‘a theme of “good Turks”’ as, for instance, in stories of Turkish neighbours protecting Polites from the mob in 1955.¹⁶⁰ Yet although Mikhael made reference to last minute ‘good Turk’ behaviour, he was generally disappointed in the lack of intercommunal assistance in 1955. In this version of the pogrom, there are two clearly opposed entities – Turkish perpetrators, and Greek victims, with no real distinctions in between. Proceeding, an improved period was mentioned again, but not explored in detail, before Mikhael continued on to the expulsions that arose from the Cyprus affair:

After that, again there were close relations between Greece and Turkey, and so the situation fixed again a bit for four or five years, until we arrive at 1963, when the expulsions of Greek citizens began ... I was a conscript in deep Anatolia at that time, and when I returned I saw that many Greek citizen friends of mine had left ... They left because when one from a couple who had Greek citizenship left his wife or husband [had to leave] too along with their children. So, with one getting up to leave, four or five people left. So happened the big persecution of 1964 ...

¹⁶⁰ Örs, ‘Beyond the Greek and Turkish Dichotomy’, p. 83.

The narrative then mentions that the years following 1964 were difficult for minorities, before arriving at the decision to leave, and abruptly closing with arrival in Athens:

Those events forced me in 1971 ... to decide to leave, because it was clear that there was no life for our minority anymore. And in '71 we came to Athens where we are settled from then.¹⁶¹

Portelli speaks of the 'velocity' of an oral history interview; that is, the amount of time dedicated to an event's narration against the event's relative duration. Manipulation of narrative velocity can alter the effect of an account, apportioning importance, or distracting attention, through emphasis and omission.¹⁶² The velocity of Mikhael's interview – in which specific discriminatory events and epochs are considered in detail, and periods of relative calm (despite covering an equal or greater amount of time) passed over briefly – focusses attention upon the persecutions that Mikhael suffered in Istanbul. By stopping with migration to Greece, and reducing subsequent life to 'settled from then', focus is further directed towards persecutions in Istanbul, and away from life in Greece after migration.

The account is largely formal and political in content, and follows a chronological pattern anchored to key historical events, with personal landmarks emerging only

¹⁶¹ This account omits an incident prominent in his wife Alexandra's narrative, in which Turkish secret police, in a case of mistaken identity, ransacked the family home after the birth of Mikhael's son, leaving Alexandra so distressed that she was unable to breastfeed her child. This omission can be accounted for in three ways. 1) Mikhael was not actually present. 2) Mikhael prefers to focus on trauma experienced collectively by his community rather than personally. 3) The incident robbed Alexandra of the opportunity to fulfil the feminine role of breast-feeding her child, and this gendered dimension may explain why it is the most emotive element of her account, yet passed over in Mikhael's. Alexandra, interview by author, Sheffield, 26/06/11.

¹⁶² Portelli, *Luigi Trastulli*, p. 49.

through proximity to an historical development, and almost no spontaneous recollection of positive memories. Mikhael's narrative is neatly organised, with each discriminatory waypoint bracketed by an introductory sentence (e.g. 'so we come to the events of 1955') and a conclusive remark (e.g. 'those are the events of '55') – like headings in a book. These events unfold naturally as 'we come to' them – the narrative is thus made to look logical and organic. Mikhael creates a narrative which is memorable, repeatable, and convincing; which connects individual events into a wider historical pattern of discrimination; and which makes life in Istanbul merely the sum of discriminatory events.

Mikhael shows awareness of better periods, and during more specific questioning delves more into personal and positive images, but has no intention of discussing these in any detail; they are simply interludes on the journey of discrimination. Moreover, in other, less formal contexts Mikhael exhibits fondness for Turkish popular culture. He consumes Turkish music and television, and in a Turkish restaurant, enjoyed conversing with the waiters in Turkish. When having coffee with other Polites, he frequently slips Turkish phrases into the exchange, a habit that strongly establishes group identity in an exclusive manner, excluding the attendant native Greeks and foreign ethnographer. Offering a certain narrative in one context does not block contrary images from emerging in others. Nonetheless, in our interview, he had a tendency to return to negative stories of persecution in Istanbul, and the listener is left with this clear emphasis.¹⁶³

¹⁶³ Mikhael, interview by author, Athens, 29/01/12.

Gerasimos' account is comparable. He was born in the late-1940s, and grew up in central Istanbul. As a young child, he had traumatic personal experience of the pogrom: his father had a narrow escape after being beaten up by a mob, and returned to the family house 'covered in blood', where the family spent the rest of the night listening to the rioters shouting and bombarding the house with stones. In 1964, Gerasimos migrated to Greece with his family, after his father was forcibly expelled. The months in between his father's deportation and the migration of the rest of the family were particularly difficult, as the family tried to settle their affairs as best possible, and had their Athens-bound luggage subjected to an overzealous customs search. At the beginning of our interview, before any questions were posed, Gerasimos launched into a predominantly historical account, focussing more on treaties, statistics, and key dates than personal experience. When he was encouraged to talk about personal experiences, Gerasimos stressed the perpetual fear of minority life, stating that 'all the memories we have from then are traumatic', and that the era 'resembled the Middle Ages.' When challenged, this was offset by some concessions about happy childhood memories, but for Gerasimos 'ninety per-cent [of my memories] are tied up with fear.' Life in Istanbul is constructed as a dark age, a climate of perpetual fear which has infected all his memories, leaving few traces of positive experiences.¹⁶⁴

Marios and Theodoros' accounts share this narrative velocity. Born in the 1940s and 1950s respectively, neither man's house was touched during the pogrom, but

¹⁶⁴ Gerasimos, interview.

Marios' father's shop was ransacked. They left in the 1960s and 1970s respectively, and both are highly engaged with Constantinopolitan clubs in Greece. Theodoros covers the same principal persecutory events as Mikhael, and stresses a 'continuous fear' that at any moment anti-minority sentiment might provoke trouble. Like Mikhael, when questioned more specifically, he reveals glimpses of positive intercommunal relations, and of Turkish neighbours protecting Polites, but he stresses that such elements were exceptions to a general pattern of discrimination.¹⁶⁵ In Marios's account, as in Mikhael's, the trouble began from 'the day I was born' when, in 1941, men of military age were conscripted into labour battalions. Marios moves through the 'very heavy' tax of 1944, briefly mentions an improved period in the early-1950s, then discusses the pogrom and associated discrimination, the 1964 expulsions, and, ultimately, his migration to Greece. When I asked him specifically about daily life outside the major discriminatory events, he conceded that alongside a predominantly Greek friendship circle, 'there were Turkish friends, I can't say [otherwise].' Nonetheless, he too returns to an overall impression of a difficult minority life, stating that their community 'was a very closed community' which didn't generally have strong relations with Turks.¹⁶⁶

These strife narratives emphasise persecution in a chronological historical account that deals with personal moments only when they relate to discriminatory phases. The narrative velocity – dealing in detail with each self-contained persecution segment, and skipping over life in between – creates an impression of a cumulative

¹⁶⁵ Theodoros, interview by author, Athens, 07/02/12.

¹⁶⁶ Marios, interview by author, Athens, 29/01/12.

climate of fear and persecution, in which moments of calm and happiness are exceptions to a rule of discrimination. This narrative involves a choice of emphasis: details of everyday life which complicate this image could be obtained by questioning, but these do not find their way into the spontaneous narrative, and there was throughout a tendency to return to fear and strife.

The harmony narrative

Ivan was born in the mid-1950s on Chalki, after the pogrom. Having been removed from the Greek-language minority school due to his Russian-Orthodox family background, Ivan, unusually for an Orthodox Christian, attended Turkish state school, and therefore grew up speaking almost only Turkish. Unlike many Polites, he does not cite discriminatory pressure as his reason for leaving, instead explaining that when he left at age nineteen it was ‘as a child searching horizons [i.e. seeking new experiences].’ In our discussion, Ivan’s account of intercommunal relations is exceptionally idyllic:

Halstead: How was life growing up in Istanbul?

Ivan: About Istanbul I cannot say very much, about the island, childhood years were very beautiful ... Our island had four or maybe five ethnicities, but as children we didn’t make the distinction he’s a Jew, he’s an Armenian, he’s a Turk, we played all together ...

Halstead: And as a child how did you see the other ethnicities?

Ivan: How were we with the other children? We didn’t have the mentality to ... play a war Turks-Greeks. We didn’t have that. We were all one there ...

Halstead: Did you ever have any problems as a non-Muslim?

Ivan: No, because luckily it was an island, ninety per cent of the residents knew each other. I know whose child you are, who your mother is. We all knew each other. We didn’t have any problems. No problems. I personally didn’t have any problem, and I

lived there almost nineteen years.

Ivan's account does not dwell on persecutions of minorities, and his life history lacks the neat chronological progression through discriminatory waypoints seen in the strife narratives. He stresses togetherness amongst the island's residents, who were 'all one' regardless of ethnicity. Throughout the interview, he continually takes the opportunity to stress intercommunal harmony, in an inverse manner to the stress placed on continual fear above. He does briefly mention, when prompted, memories of implied tension, such as the bars over the windows of the local church, or the sudden migration of Greek-speaking neighbours. Indeed, in comments such as, 'we didn't have the mentality to ... play a war Turks-Greeks' he shows an awareness of the potential existence of strife. These memories, however, remain as isolated anecdotes, and have not been incorporated into a broader historical pattern. When Ivan does spontaneously mention discrimination on the island it is when he twice brings up his own persecution at the hands of the Greek minority school:

I finished Turkish primary school, because I'm called Ivan. The Greeks wanted [people] to be called Papadopoulos, Karamitsos, Karagiorgiadis [i.e. Greek names], and one thousand others. Because we weren't called this they took us out of the Greek school.¹⁶⁷

Discriminated for his non-Greek name in the same manner that many Polites were discriminated for their non-Turkish names, and sheltered from the worst of the intercommunal tension on the island of Chalki, Ivan's idyllic narrative of intercommunal harmony marks a sharp contrast with the discrimination narratives.

¹⁶⁷ Ivan, interview.

His account is localised, and constructed primarily in a personal tone, without any attempt to connect his experiences to wider developments on the mainland. Indeed, as Ivan tells us, on the island news from the mainland arrived slowly and piecemeal, so they were often not aware how isolated incidents tied into broader intercommunal developments in the centre of Istanbul.

We could ascribe this to differences in lived experience. It is, however, not just Turkish-speaking islanders like Ivan who offer comparatively harmonious narratives. Petros was born in the mid-1940s, and lived in Pera until 1964, when he and his family migrated to Greece. Unlike Ivan, Petros was in an area in central Istanbul close to major rioting and destruction, and personally witnessed the preparatory stages. On the night itself, Petros' house was protected by a neighbour, a Turkish army officer, who stood at the corner of the neighbourhood in his uniform and prevented the crowd from entering. In Greece, Petros has been heavily involved in the Constantinopolitan Union of Northern Greece. His life history narrative shows a strong, consistent and unsolicited tendency to emphasise Greek-Turkish friendship.

When asked to describe life in Istanbul, Petros responded:

Look, life was normal. We didn't have any problem, neither with our neighbours, nor with the Turks. We were fine with our Turkish neighbours. We respected them and they respected us. We went to their celebrations and vice-versa. Our houses were open to everyone. In the neighbourhood where I was born and I grew up, one key opened all the outer-doors to the houses. Such was the confidence we had amongst ourselves. We didn't have any problem. Neither before, nor after, the *Septembriana*. Now, I will tell you, some out of those people [Turkish neighbours] ... protected the Greek houses ... during the *Septembriana*. We didn't have any problem. I grew up there, I was born there. My friends, Turkish children, and Greeks, we didn't have any problem, we played together, we kept company, we

grew up together. Our childhood years, in school, and after, when we grew up, work. That's all ... A peaceful, moderate, typical life, I lived. That's all.

Petros' 'peaceful, moderate, typical life' history follows a rhythm of emphases that conjures up a picture of harmonious and uneventful intercommunal life. Like Ivan, his repeated insistence that 'we didn't have any problem', which is offered spontaneously without any prompt from the interviewer, takes the place of continuous fear and persecution. He stresses intercommunal and inter-confessional respect, symbolized in the 'open' houses, which contrasts with the closed community described by Marios.¹⁶⁸ Petros mentions the pogrom, but only so as to emphasise that Turkish friends protected the Polites. Petros is well aware of strife, has ample lived experience of persecution, but significantly chooses not to emphasise it in his life history; he makes only passing mention of strife, just as those above made only passing mention of tranquillity.

Petros' only indication of the passage of time is when he says, 'our childhood years, in school, and after, when we grew up, work.' The linear narrative velocity – with its leaps over tranquillity and pauses over strife – is gone, and Petros' account almost lacks a velocity; it is timeless, and as such establishes harmony as a perpetual norm that exists outside historical patterns and events. He was later asked to describe more specifically what happened during the *Septembriana*. Here too his emphasis differs: he is reluctant to reduce the pogrom to a specifically anti-Greek phenomenon, stating that it was 'tragic ... not just for Hellenism, but for non-Turks [generally]'

¹⁶⁸ This open/closed model for categorising social relations is explored in Hirschon, *Heirs of the Greek Catastrophe*, pp. 13-14.

including Armenians and Jews, and shows less interest in connecting the pogrom to wider historical events, explaining that he is not well acquainted with the political background. Whilst he is aware of the suffering associated with the events, he exhibits no intention to use the pogrom as a narrative device in a cumulative process of discrimination aimed purposefully at all Greeks by all Turks; for him, it is an exception to a rule of harmony.

Petros' account of his first post-migration return to Istanbul, made alongside an Istanbul-Turkish friend acquired post-migration, persists with the same message:

It was emotional ... I went and found [my friend] and we went together to my neighbourhood. As soon as I arrived I started to cry. It was very emotional, after so many years, all the images passed [through my mind], with our friends, where we played, in the neighbourhood, ball, hide and seek, children, Turks, Rum, together, mixed, we didn't distinguish. All that passed through my mind, and I cried with sobs.

Returning to Pera, Petros remembers not the pogrom scene, but images of intercommunal friendship and tolerance. It is also clearly significant to him that this first return was made in the company of a Turkish friend.¹⁶⁹

Petros is not the only city-dweller to offer a harmonious narrative. Herakles, for instance, also lived centrally from his birth in 1947 until his father was expelled in 1964 as a Greek citizen. Despite being, like Gerasimos, a victim of expulsion, Herakles described his life in Istanbul as, 'superb. Very, very nice ... we didn't have

¹⁶⁹ Petros, interview by author, Thessaloniki, 26/11/11.

any problem; we lived very openly.’ Asked to elaborate on his relations with the Turks, Herakles described them as ‘exceptional[ly good].’¹⁷⁰

In these accounts, the life history narrative is manipulated so as to stress harmony and normality in life in Istanbul. The chronological velocity from the strife narratives is absent, replaced by a timeless narrative that deals in generally applicable impressions of harmony, as opposed to specific discriminatory moments and patterns.

In hyperboles you lose – emphasising harmony by attacking strife

Vangelis also leaves his audience with a strong impression of intercommunal harmony, but does so not just by discussing intercommunal friendship, but by actively attacking the strife narrative. Vangelis was born in Istanbul in the 1930s, and migrated to Greece as a grown-man in 1980 because, ‘I got bored of watching who was leaving. At least in Athens, I would see who’s coming.’ Vangelis makes it clear that as an adult he was well-integrated into Turkish society, working and getting involved in sports alongside Turks for a long period.

¹⁷⁰ Herakles, interview by author, Thessaloniki, 11/02/12.

In common with many informants, before I posed any questions, Vangelis began to talk about the 1955 pogrom, but his account was very different from the strife narrative. He began:

On the 6th that which happened, happened. I was on the road. They smashed up shops. They burnt churches. I saw that from far away. Ok, it wasn't nice things at all. But let's not say that twenty-two people were killed, that they raped, I don't know how many girls. They didn't rape girls, they didn't rape ... It wasn't ninety, sixty, rapes. Things will have happened. But not hyperboles. In hyperboles you lose.

Vangelis is here attacking what he assumes will be the dominant narrative I have read in publications and heard from other Polites, which he takes to be an exaggerated version of reality. He states that only one person was killed during the riots, and later on suggests that some Polites have shifted natural deaths from other periods (including as late as 1970) to the pogrom for hyperbolic effect.¹⁷¹ Elsewhere, he is critical of Polites who spend their time constantly memorialising the pogrom, and books dwelling on the events. Having voluntarily raised the issue of the pogrom, so as to play down its importance, Vangelis goes on largely to ignore the other discriminatory waypoints, albeit occasionally mentioning them in the same manner that Petros does: so as to note that he had good experiences even during supposed periods of persecution. Whilst others above tackle the strife narrative implicitly by ignoring it, Vangelis challenges it by explicitly attacking it, and questioning the validity of some of its central components.¹⁷²

¹⁷¹ I will not judge the factual accuracy of this statement; with Portelli, I am more concerned with the truth of the telling than the telling of the truth. See Portelli, *Battle of Valle Giulia*, pp. 48-50.

¹⁷² Vangelis, interview.

Constructing contrasting narratives

As discussed above, an informant's narrative is liable to be influenced by that with which they assume the interviewer is concerned; so a linear historical account of strife, and exceptional moments over daily life, may be offered as they are assumed to be the natural focus for a historian, whilst conversely they might be ignored if deemed obvious.¹⁷³ Nevertheless, the tendency to return to certain emphases during more specific questioning suggests this is not a full explanation. It would equally be unwise to ignore the effect of lived experiences on the production of narrative. Clearly, the fact that Gerasimos had particular traumatic experiences in Istanbul, and that Ivan largely avoided this trauma on his island, contributes not only to the lived data they have available with which to construct a life history, but also influences their motivations for advancing a certain version of communal life. As Gerasimos stated, *à propos* the pogrom, when you experience such things at a childhood age, 'you don't forget them easily.'

Nevertheless, we have also observed that individuals with broadly comparable lived experiences can construct divergent narratives. We might have speculated that, by comparison with Petros, the extra decade of adult life Mikhael experienced in Istanbul was decisive in orientating him towards strife; yet Vangelis too remained in Istanbul for much of his adult life. Likewise, we could have attributed Gerasimos' emphasis to his experience of expulsion, were it not that Herakles was expelled at

¹⁷³ Cf. footnote 88 on page 27.

the same time at the same age. Moreover, all our informants were able – to some degree – to demonstrate personal experience of the key components from the contrasting narrative, showing that intercommunal life histories are not simply reflections of lived experience, but narrative constructions involving emphasis and omission. Whilst life experiences doubtless influence how an individual narrates his life, there is no straight line linking experience to narrative: narratives of harmony and strife are contextually constructed, and are linked with representations of the past, group identity formation, and practical present objectives.¹⁷⁴

Narrative and history

Neither narrative framework is unique to the Polites; antagonistic strife and harmonious co-existence have been widely observed by scholars of Greece in various contexts. In interpreting their experiences of intercommunal relationships, my informants partially rely on appropriating established narrative archetypes already collectively prevalent in Greek discourse.

Four-hundred years of slavery – collective memory of strife

The Greek state's historiographical narrative of Greco-Turkish intercommunal relations is one of perpetual antagonism, in which civilised Greeks are portrayed as the victims of barbarous Turks. The nationalist treatment of Greco-Turkish co-

¹⁷⁴ Gerasimos, interview.

habitation is epitomised in the representation of the Ottoman period; ‘as every Greek schoolchild knows,’ in Just’s words, the Fall of Constantinople heralded ‘Greece’s four hundred years of slavery.’¹⁷⁵ This narrative serves to explain away Greco-Turkish co-existence, which would undermine Greek national homogeneity. It is no coincidence – in the context of Modern Greece’s role as Western ancestor – that this narrative conveniently slots into broader Western fear of the Turkish Other. The strife narrative thus automatically appeals to pan-Hellenic group cohesion, and to Western support and sympathy. Simultaneously, it makes events culturally and historically intelligible, reducing the need for any friction caused by wrangling over culpability or cause; events simply unfolded as they did due to the historically-established Turkish penchant for barbarism and provocation.¹⁷⁶

New intercommunal flashpoints can be assimilated to this narrative: as for instance the invasion of Cyprus. Prior to the invasion, a Greek-backed right-wing coup had deposed democratically elected Cypriot President Makarios. The coup had been bloody, was accompanied by much right-left political strife within the Greek-Cypriot community, and was used by Turkey as its justification for invasion. The invasion was largely interpreted within the strife narrative: a barbarous Turkish assault directed at passive Greek victims. The coup – unwelcome reminder of

¹⁷⁵ Just, ‘Triumph of the Ethnos’, p. 74.

¹⁷⁶ J. Edwards, ‘Smoke and Mirrors: Greek Self and Turkish Other’, <http://inter-disciplinary.net/ati/diversity/multiculturalism/mcb1/edwards%20paper.pdf> [accessed September 1 2012]; T. Gallant, *Brief Histories: Modern Greece*, (London, 2001), p. 8; Herzfeld, *Anthropology Through the Looking-glass*, pp. 20-21, pp. 28-29, pp. 35-36; R. Hirschon, ‘History’s Long Shadow: the Lausanne Treaty and Contemporary Greco-Turkish Relations’, in O. Anastasakis, K. Nicolaidis and K. Oktem (eds.), *The Long Shadow of Europe: Greeks and Turks in the Era of Post-nationalism*, (Leiden; Boston, 2009), p. 73, p. 85, p. 88; P. Loizos, ‘Intercommunal Killing in Cyprus’, *Man*, (1988), pp. 639-645.

intracommunal political strife, and Greek mainland interference in Cypriot independence – was largely forgotten in this framework. The resulting narrative thus appeals to pan-Hellenic unity, by distracting from intra-Hellenic tensions, and subsuming the invasion into a Greek historical pattern. Subsuming the deaths, missing persons, and injuries within this culturally-intelligible historical pattern also helps to offset social trauma; as Peter Loizos has shown, many of the Greek-Cypriot coup fatalities were shifted to the invasion, death being more culturally-digestible for the bereaved within the established context of Turkish barbarism.¹⁷⁷ A strife framework thus highlighted Greek-Cypriot wounds at the hands of the Turks, ensured Greek group cohesion against the Turkish threat, and fed claims for restitution and condemnation of the Turks.¹⁷⁸

The Polites' experiences of persecution are often assimilated to this framework. In *The Crucifixion of Christianity*, Kaloumenos refers to the Turks as 'one of the few peoples in the world that have failed to shake off their barbarity' and a 'people who hate.'¹⁷⁹ Similarly, the Constantinopolitan Union of Northern Greece's pamphlet memorialising the fortieth anniversary of the pogrom extends the (unquestionably) traumatic experiences of the pogrom to a damning assessment of life in general in Istanbul, commenting that, 'all of the age that we lived through [in Turkey], must be

¹⁷⁷ P. Loizos, *The Heart Grown Bitter*, (Cambridge; London, 1981), p. 84, p. 89.

¹⁷⁸ J. Bowman, 'Seeing What's Missing in Memories of Cyprus', *Peace Review: A Journal of Social Justice*, (2006), pp. 119-124; Loizos, 'Intercommunal Killing', pp. 639-645; Y. Papadakis, 'Greek Cypriot Narratives of History and Collective Identity: Nationalism as a Contested Process', *American Ethnologist*, (1998), pp. 151-153; S. Spyrou, 'Constructing "the Turk" as an Enemy: the Complexity of Stereotypes in Children's Everyday Worlds', *South European Society and Politics*, (2006), pp. 97-101.

¹⁷⁹ Kaloumenos, *Crucifixion of Christianity*, p. 21.

characterised as the age of shame for the modern civilised world.’¹⁸⁰ In Athens, the Constantinopolitan Society produced a pamphlet chronicling systematic persecutions of the minority from 1923 to 2009, and the Ecumenical Federation of Constantinopolitans in Athens has produced many similar documents.¹⁸¹ A pamphlet produced by the Institute for Historical Study in Athens entitled *The Uprooting* categorises the persecution of the Polites (alongside the invasion of Cyprus) as the ‘fourth phase’ of systematic Turkish expulsion of Greeks from their homelands.¹⁸² All these publications join the strife narrators in focussing on political developments and historical facts and figures; references to daily life are mostly absent, as is any expression of tranquil intercommunal relations. The history of the Polites in Istanbul in the twentieth century becomes a dark age replete with perpetual fear, marching along an inexorable pattern of persecution that culminates in expulsion.

We didn't have any problems – collective memory of harmony

Yet the strife narrators are not alone in showing recourse to recurrent narrative archetypes. We have already met Greek diplomat and veteran of the Macedonian struggle Ion Dragoumis above. During the lengthy nation-building process that marked the rise of Greece and decline of the Ottoman Empire, Dragoumis was one of the most vocal of a group of intellectuals who hoped to construct a Greek national

¹⁸⁰ Constantinopolitan Union of Northern Greece, *Memorial of the Constantinopolitan Union: 40 Years 6-7 September Memorial Day*, (Thessaloniki, 1995), p. 3.

¹⁸¹ Constantinopolitan Society, *The Violations of the Human Rights of the Greek Minority in Turkey: Atrocities and Persecutions 1923-2009*, (Athens, 2009); see for instance: Ecumenical Federation of Constantinopolitans, *History and Status of the Human Rights of the Greek Orthodox Minority of Turkey*, (Athens, 2010).

¹⁸² Institute of Historical Study, *The Uprooting: the Expansionist Politics of Turkey and the Persecutions of Greeks by the Turks in the 20th Century*, (Athens, 1985).

identity that did not jeopardise the heterogeneous co-existence of the Ottoman Empire. Towards the end of his life, as the Greek nation-state and homogeneous national identity took hold, he came to mourn a pan-Ottoman multicultural community, lambasting the native Greeks as *Elladites*. Such a narrative of harmonious multicultural co-existence is still a pervasive and tenacious, if lesser known, feature of Greco-Turkish historical narratives.¹⁸³

The harmony narrative extracts antagonism from the history of Greek-Turkish intercommunal relations almost wholesale. Choosing largely to discard linear historical progression, it constructs a timeless narrative of perpetual harmony, expressed in a personal mode that focusses on localised interpersonal relationships as opposed to national/supranational political developments. There is no need for time to progress in a linear fashion in this account, as nothing ever changes; life is not an exceptional story of strife, but an unremarkable image of peace. As strife ignores benign daily life, so harmony passes over particular troubles in silence, intercommunal displays of solidarity replacing antagonism and barbarity. Harmony narrators hark back to a pre-national pluralism, and attempt to turn back the clock on the rise of nationalism, nation-states, and ethnicities. Resurrecting, in other words, Dragoumis' lost Ottoman world.

Renée Hirschon noticed a similar narrative amongst the Asia Minor refugees in the 1970s. Despite their hugely traumatic experiences, a common trope in their life

¹⁸³ Özkirimli and Sofos, *Tormented by History*, pp. 20-21, pp. 115-116.

narratives was that ‘we got on well with the Turks.’ The refugees blamed politics for creating the catastrophic flight, and highlighted intercommunal and inter-confessional respect and cooperation. Hirschon shows how the refugees’ ‘knowledge of diversity’, stemming from their cosmopolitan experience of co-existence with Turks and other minorities in the Ottoman Empire, provided a sense of identity that distinguished them from the homogenous world-view of the Greeks of the nation-state.¹⁸⁴ Hirschon similarly refers to Patriarch Athenagoras’ autobiography which commemorates a ‘sort of biblical coexistence’ between Christians and Muslims.¹⁸⁵

This narrative is also at work in Cyprus. Amongst many Greek-Cypriots, there is a persistent tendency to stress the positive nature of intercommunal relationships between Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots prior to the 1974 Turkish invasion. Inter-mingling during festivities is cited, alongside childhood games and drinking companions. Such accounts were adorned by the now-familiar generalisations, ‘we got on well with the Turks’, ‘we didn’t have any problems with the Turks’, and ‘we lived like brothers’. These memories of intercommunal harmony were offered alongside the linear accounts of ‘barbaric’ Turks, who slaughtered Greek-Cypriots, in the 1950s, in 1963, 1964, 1967, and especially during the 1974 invasion.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁴ R. Hirschon, ‘Knowledge of Diversity: Towards a More Differentiated Set of “Greek” Perceptions of “Turks”’, *South European Society and Politics*, (2006), pp. 61-78; R. Hirschon, “‘We Got On Well with the Turks’: Christian-Muslim Relations in Late Ottoman Times’, in D. Shankland (ed.), *Archaeology, Anthropology and Heritage in the Balkans and Anatolia: the Life and Times of F.W. Hasluck 1878-1920*, (Istanbul, 2004), pp. 325-343.

¹⁸⁵ Hirschon, “‘We Got On Well with the Turks’”, p. 335 [Athenagoras’ words]; similar narratives among Istanbul’s Muslim residents are noted by A. Mills, ‘Boundaries of the Nation in the Space of the Urban: Landscape and Social Memory in Istanbul’, *Cultural Geographies*, (2006), pp. 384-385.

¹⁸⁶ H. Halstead, “‘Through the Prism of Their Own Experiences, through the Glasses that They’ve Put On You’: Lived Experience and Collective Memory in Greek-Cypriot Recollections of the 1974 Turkish Invasion of Cyprus’, (BA diss., University of York, 2010), pp. 6-8.

Narrative and identity

As Chris Mann argues, stories can be used ‘to claim group membership, and demonstrate ... allegiance to, the social and moral identity of the group.’¹⁸⁷ Indeed, these contrasting narratives implicitly attach their narrators to different imagined communities. By ignoring socio-cultural interaction and harmony, the strife account constructs two distinct and antagonistic communities: Turks (villains) and Polites (victims). This repudiates any connection between the Polites and the Turkish community, just as the ‘four hundred-years of slavery’ filters out undesirable elements of Ottoman history. Yet the effect is also inclusive. By placing the experience of the Polites within a broader historical narrative of Greek persecution at the hands of the Turks, the narrative subsumes the Polites into a wider community of solidarity with all Greeks. It therefore has the added benefit of providing some imagined coherence to the culturally diverse and geographically widespread Hellenic community: they are held together by the mutual experience of persecution at the hands of the Turks. Indeed, Kaloumenos’ volume is dedicated to all those ‘annihilated by the Turks as they passed through the cradle of Hellenism and Christianity: Asia Minor, the Pontus, Eastern Thrace, and Constantinople’.¹⁸⁸

The harmony narrators, by contrast, construct a broader, intercommunal community; a community of inclusion with open relationships between minority Polites and majority Turks (and other minorities within a cosmopolitan Istanbul). This allows

¹⁸⁷ C. Mann, ‘Family Fables’, in M. Chamberlain and P. Thompson (eds.), *Narrative and Genre: Contexts and Types of Communication*, (London, 1998), p. 83.

¹⁸⁸ Kaloumenos, *Crucifixion of Christianity*, p. 11.

for heterogeneity and solidarity with non-Greek groups, retaining Hellenic culture without eradicating co-existence through separatist and antagonistic national identities. At the same time, this narrative may exclude native Greeks lacking such knowledge of diversity. The two narratives fluctuate around the Helleno-Romaic dilemma; as such they both possess inclusive and exclusive potential.

Michael Rothberg is right to reject the idea that ‘a straight line runs from memory to identity’ in an absolute sense, and that it is impossible to profess a memory or identity without repressing another.¹⁸⁹ Indeed, chapter one shows how identity can be manipulated and negotiated as necessary, and below we shall see that the same holds for antagonistic narratives. Nevertheless, it remains pertinent to remember that in certain contexts, in Mann’s words, desire for group allegiance ‘may suppress alternative understandings of events.’¹⁹⁰ In the specific context of the ethnographic interview, some informants exhibit a tendency to emphasise one interpretation over another to advance a certain self-portrayal.

Narrative in the present

Yet these narratives are more than just historical accounts that situate an individual amongst imagined groupings. As Jessica Senehi tells us, stories have a practical

¹⁸⁹ Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, pp. 4-5.

¹⁹⁰ Mann, ‘Family Fables’, p. 83.

function: they ‘operate in the world and get results’.¹⁹¹ Narratives project interpretations of the past to an external audience: operating in the world to get results. Our interview context – providing the informant with an opportunity to publicise their pragmatic wishes to a foreign audience – draws out these interpretations, and may account for the attempt to emphasise one narrative over another.

Strife – wounds, cohesion, and security

In the written accounts considered above, the author’s practical purpose is often explicitly stated. The Constantinopolitan Union’s pamphlet finishes with the statement that ‘we ... believe in the conservation of our national memory ... [and] we pass it on to our children and to all Greeks.’¹⁹² Similarly, *The Crucifixion of Christianity* was reprinted ‘to remind the civilised world and later generations of Greeks of the unprecedented monstrous crimes carried out by the Turkish mob.’¹⁹³ The stated audience is not just Polites who remember the events, but their children, native Greeks in general, and a worldwide audience. The emphasis placed on persecution in these written accounts both draws domestic and international attention to the plight of the Polites, and justifies their migrant presence in Greece (in the face of an administration and sometimes populace that was ambivalent about their presence).

¹⁹¹ J. Senehi, ‘Constructive Storytelling in Intercommunal Conflicts: Building Community, Building Peace’, in S. Byrne and C. Irvin (eds.), *Reconcilable Differences: Turning Points in Ethnopolitical Conflict*, (Connecticut, 2000), p. 110.

¹⁹² Constantinopolitan Union of Northern Greece, *Memorial*, p. 29.

¹⁹³ Kaloumenos, *Crucifixion of Christianity*, p. 34.

Our oral strife narratives can be seen to be aiming for a similar effect. Both Mikhael and Theodoros are important members of migrant societies in Athens. In Theodoros' case, our interview actually took place in the headquarters of his organisation, with three other key members within earshot. In their daily work with the organisations, both are passionate about gaining international recognition and, particularly in the case of Theodoros, Turkish compensation for the serious persecutions inflicted upon the Polites during their final century in Istanbul. In Theodoros' words:

[We] unite the expatriated Greeks with the community in Constantinople, to support the community there ... to promote the problem of Constantinopolitans in all international forums, but also to keep the Greek-Constantinopolitan tradition and culture [alive] even after Istanbul.¹⁹⁴

The organisation proposes the (optional) restitution of the Greek community to Istanbul, compensation for past wrongs, and measures to rectify persisting persecution and prevent future violations.¹⁹⁵ One of their primary activities is to lobby the EU and the Turkish government to advance these aims.¹⁹⁶ Their goals are suitably summarised here:

No state in the world can claim that “I have not violated human rights in the past.” What is important is to admit the wrongs of the past and take steps to correct them. Although it is not possible to return back in time, the most important issue at present is to take measures of remedy and reparations towards the next generations of the victims.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁴ Theodoros, interview.

¹⁹⁵ Ecumenical Federation of Constantinopolitans, *Proposals Concerning the Restoration of Minority Rights of the Greek Communities of Turkey*, (Athens, 2011).

¹⁹⁶ For instance drawing attention to the difficulties faced by the Patriarchate, see Ecumenical Federation of Constantinopolitans, Letter to Hans-Gert Pöttering, 22 August 2007.

¹⁹⁷ N. Uzunoglu, ‘The Return of Greeks of Istanbul and the Facts’, *Zaman*, December 7 2011.

Such proposals are, in part, a direct response to the Turkish government's invitation to the Polites to return to Istanbul.¹⁹⁸ Mikhael's organisation is perhaps slightly less geared towards these specific measures aimed at restitution, and more concerned with Greek, Turkish, and international recognition for the catalogue of human rights violations endured by the Polites. Indeed, his society was heavily involved in the production of a Helsinki Watch booklet highlighting human rights violations of the Greeks in Istanbul.¹⁹⁹ Marios, active in the same organisation as Mikhael, makes the point explicitly, at the end of his life history account:

There is a Constantinopolitan club ... we organised there, we went to the United Nations, we went to the European Union ... they didn't know what had happened to us. Slowly, we taught them.²⁰⁰

In their positions as part of such movements, these men have frequently given interviews, and written documents, detailing persecution and calling for recognition. Obtaining this recognition is important in creating a warning for later generations. It was often suggested that the Polites – as the only Greeks to intimately know the character of the Turks – are best placed to advise the Greek government on avoiding the Turkish threat in the future. These narrators are not opposed to Greek-Turkish friendship *per se* – indeed Theodoros' organisation encourages intercommunal dialogue. Yet in the context of an interview with a foreign academic, their primary concern is to stress the persecutions for which their organisations strive to obtain

¹⁹⁸ Ecumenical Federation of Constantinopolitans, Letter to Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan, 4 March 2008.

¹⁹⁹ See Helsinki Watch, *Denying Human Rights and Ethnic Identity: The Greeks of Turkey*, (New York, 1992).

²⁰⁰ Marios, interview.

recognition and compensation.²⁰¹ Strife thus highlights wounds for a domestic and international audience, creates internal Greek group cohesion against external Turkish threat, and feeds claims for restitution, compensation, and future communal security. Any recollections of harmonious intercommunal solidarity in Istanbul would be detrimental to this message and would undermine the notion of pan-Hellenic unity – a precondition for support from native Greeks; logically, they are omitted.

Leonidas Koumakis – a Constantinopolitan author – has written an autobiographical tale entitled *The Miracle*, detailing the persecutions against the Polites. He states that ‘the purpose of this book is to communicate ... the Turkish policy against Hellenism and beyond’.²⁰² On the back cover left-wing English politician Tony Benn is quoted: ‘it is a powerful indictment ... and a moving story. I hope it will be widely read.’²⁰³ This is precisely the result that the strife narrative tries to achieve: to issue a powerful indictment of Turkish persecution which will be widely read in Greece and abroad.

Myths and realities

As the strife narrative boasts a largely historical tone, whilst harmony is constructed in a personal mode mostly through reference to small-scale interpersonal

²⁰¹ There is not necessarily any direct link between society membership and narrative emphasis: indeed, Petros was also involved in a society.

²⁰² L. Koumakis, *The Miracle: A True Story*, (Athens, 1996), inside cover.

²⁰³ Koumakis, *The Miracle*, back cover.

relationships, it could be tempting to label the strife narrative the ‘dominant’ collective memory – a mythical nationalistic account imposed upon ordinary people by homogenising and antagonistic nation-states – and harmonious pluralism the lived reality, silenced by nationalistic authority.

The Popular Memory Group distinguish between dominating and actively constructed ‘public representations’, and everyday life – a ‘common sense of the past’ that exists without amplification in daily talk and personal culture.²⁰⁴

Discussion of strife and harmony narratives amongst scholars of Greek-Turkish relations have often deployed a similar model. Hirschon speaks of the opposition between the traditional nationalistic and antagonistic account – an ‘official discourse of hostility’ which constitutes a ‘purposeful distortion of the Ottoman past’ – and first-hand recollections – a popular view of history based on verifiable lived history of often-harmonious co-existence.²⁰⁵ A distinction, in other words, between ‘abstract categories of the imagination’ and ‘perceptions based on actual knowledge and lived experience’.²⁰⁶ Similarly, Theodossopoulos states that strife narratives feature more heavily in ‘the formal representation of the nation’, whilst harmony is more commonly found in ‘private conversation or during nostalgic recollections’.²⁰⁷

There is certainly a great deal of truth in these statements. A narrative of Greco-Turkish strife is indeed prevalent within official Greek discourse, perhaps most

²⁰⁴ Popular Memory Group, ‘Popular Memory: Theory, Politics, Method’, in R. Perks and A. Thomson (eds.), *The Oral History Reader*, (London, 2004), pp. 75-78.

²⁰⁵ Hirschon, “‘We Got On Well with the Turks’”, pp. 325-328.

²⁰⁶ Hirschon, ‘Knowledge of Diversity’, p. 72.

²⁰⁷ Theodossopoulos, ‘Introduction: the “Turks” in the Imagination of the “Greeks”’, p. 16.

notably in educational textbooks.²⁰⁸ Moreover, as Hirschon notes, it is those Greeks with most lived experience of the Turks – the Asia Minor refugees – who most frequently offer the harmonious narrative, despite their traumatic expulsion from Turkey.²⁰⁹ There are, however, areas where we must exercise caution. It is not just the strife narrative that is selective in its use of data; turning lived experience of intercommunal friendships into a collective memory of trouble-free harmony requires an imaginative process of silencing, just as strife turns a blind eye to intercommunal friendships. Theodossopoulos is wary of missing the imaginative element to a harmonious narrative, stating that ethnographers’ ‘sensitivity ... towards unofficial views’ risks an implicit and misleading assumption that ‘contact with Others is always benign in nature.’²¹⁰

Likewise, Evropi Chatzipanagiotidou warns against viewing ‘unofficial’ histories such as the Cypriot harmony model as ‘blocks of absolute historical truth’, preferring to recognise that they too are associated with ‘power relations and structures’.²¹¹ Indeed, in Cyprus emphasising pre-invasion harmony has become part of official Greek-Cypriot rhetoric, as part of promoting the goal of reunification.²¹² The harmony narrative opens up group membership, extending the imagined community beyond Greek-Cypriots to include Turkish-Cypriots in pan-Cypriot

²⁰⁸ Theodossopoulos, ‘Introduction: the “Turks” in the Imagination of the “Greeks”’, pp. 12-13.

²⁰⁹ Hirschon, ‘Knowledge of Diversity’, pp. 73-76.

²¹⁰ Theodossopoulos, ‘Introduction: the “Turks” in the Imagination of the “Greeks”’, p. 16.

²¹¹ E. Chatzipanagiotidou, ‘The Conflicts of a “Peaceful” Diaspora: Identity, Power and Peace Politics Among Cypriots in the UK and Cyprus’, (PhD diss., University of Sussex, 2012), p. 81, p. 210.

²¹² Y. Papadakis, ‘Nation, Narrative and Commemoration: Political Ritual in Divided Cyprus’, *History and Anthropology*, (2003), p. 261.

solidarity.²¹³ As well as underlining the possibility of peaceful Greek-Turkish co-existence in a future reunified Cyprus, the harmony narrative forms part of a wider project to externalise blame for the Cypriot tragedy, by suggesting that such a harmonious co-existence could only have been disrupted through the nefarious intervention of great powers. In Cyprus, harmony hides the wounds of the invasion and intercommunal fighting, seeks cohesion in a wider Cypriot group, and dreams of future reunification and intercommunal co-existence.²¹⁴

Moreover, we can observe that these harmonious narratives, despite their construction in a personal mode and prevalence in private discourse, are also transmitted socially to those without personal experiences of harmony. This is well illustrated in the Cypriot context. Significantly, narratives of intercommunal harmony are offered even by Greek-Cypriots who had lived in mono-cultural villages, and never had any contact with Turkish-Cypriots. Moreover, harmony was frequently advanced (alongside strife) by the generation born after the division of the island, who also had no personal experience of living alongside Turks whatsoever. Hirschon similarly observed that a ‘knowledge of diversity’ as identity was inherited by the descendants of the refugees.²¹⁵ Indeed, some of the Polites’ native-Greek partners, and some of their Greek-born descendants, had acquired an appreciation that many Greeks and Turks lived happily together, as well as an awareness of events like the pogrom. Marianne Hirsch speaks of ‘postmemory’: a collective

²¹³ Although this Cypriot identity is strongly internally contested, and the boundary between ‘Cypriotism’ and ethnic nationalism is blurred, see Chatzipanagiotidou, ‘The Conflicts of a “Peaceful” Diaspora’, pp. 207-213.

²¹⁴ Papadakis, ‘Greek Cypriot Narratives’, pp. 151-153.

²¹⁵ Hirschon, “‘We Got On Well with the Turks’”, pp. 325–343.

narrative inherited by the generation born after a socially formative event.²¹⁶ Although constructed in a personal tone – and doubtless based on real experiences of intercommunal co-existence – the Greco-Turkish harmony narrative circulates as such a postmemory, available to those without lived experience.²¹⁷

Acknowledging these points does not necessitate a rejection of the factual basis for such narratives – Hirschon is right to critique those who see harmonious narratives as nothing more than romanticised nostalgia.²¹⁸ Indeed, whilst to offer a harmonious narrative that claims ‘no problems’ between Greeks and Turks may be untruthful on a surface level, it reveals a deeper truth: that its proponents felt a significant degree of communality and friendship with the Turks. Rather, it is to acknowledge that remembering harmony for social purposes often goes hand-in-hand with forgetting strife. Likewise, we cannot dismiss the strife account as entirely fictive or imaginative, simply because it resonates in official discourse. As Hirschon states, it is only through a ‘common history’ that combines antagonism with benign co-existence that we can get at a realistic representation of the Greco-Turkish past.²¹⁹

Harmony – communality and reconciliation

Harmony narrators are not just remembering real experiences of friendship, but also selectively emphasising these experiences for practical purposes: to create the

²¹⁶ M. Hirsch, ‘The Generation of Postmemory’, *Poetics Today*, (2008), pp. 103-128.

²¹⁷ Halstead, “‘Through the Prism of Their Own Experiences’”, pp. 6-8, pp. 10-11, p. 19.

²¹⁸ Hirschon, ‘Knowledge of Diversity’, p. 75.

²¹⁹ Hirschon, ‘Knowledge of Diversity’, p. 76.

possibility of future friendship, reconciliation, and co-existence. Hirschon comments on how the 1999 earthquakes unearthed a ‘deep repository of good will and sense of communality’ between Greeks and Turks.²²⁰ Indeed, the natural disaster provided a setting for the popular and even official articulation of the harmony narrative. When the earthquake hit Turkey, Petros was working with the Constantinopolitan organisation in Thessaloniki, and became heavily involved in ‘earthquake diplomacy’. Petros and colleagues procured vital supplies, most importantly clean water, purchased with funds raised from donations in Greece, to provide relief to the earthquake-hit Turks of Istanbul. Petros personally couriered the aid to Istanbul using hired transportation, and delivered it with the message ‘from your Greek friends’.²²¹

Petros’ transportation of aid to the Turks ‘from your Greek friends’ is an apt illustration of the practical application of the harmony narrative: he articulates a narrative of intercommunal friendship to reach across the communal divide and work towards Greek-Turkish reconciliation and friendship. By re-writing recent history so that Ottoman-era pluralism survives the onslaught of the nation-state, the harmony narrators create the groundwork for gestures such as these, by showing that pluralism and tolerance have precedents and can therefore be re-established. Ivan and Vangelis express similar hopes for the future of Greco-Turkish relations. Indeed, both express a desire to return to live in Istanbul, and therefore have a vested interest in peaceful Greco-Turkish relations; Vangelis’ attack on hyperbole in the strife

²²⁰ Hirschon, “‘We Got On Well with the Turks’”, p. 327.

²²¹ Petros, interview.

narrative may stem from his fear that it prevents reconciliation and endangers this future peaceful climate.²²² Savvas Tsilenus, in his autobiographical tale cited above, expresses a similar concern:

What will happen with the children[?] How will they survive in a world where globalization wants frontiers removed and the tolerance of the “Other” is still taught but is not experienced[?]²²³

Tsilenus is afraid that a lack of lived ‘knowledge of diversity’ will prevent tolerance of the Other. By attempting to re-establish communality and co-existence, it is precisely this concern that the harmony narrative tries to address.

Moreover, it is precisely this potential that makes the harmony narrative so important to academics such as Hirschon. She correctly identifies that lived experience of benign co-existence between Greeks and Turks is essential in narrating Greco-Turkish history in a way that reconciles the two states.²²⁴ Yet it is important to acknowledge that it is the harmony narrative’s mythic dimension and collective transmission that makes it so potent in social contexts. Its selective memory has powerful potential in overcoming antagonistic intercommunal relations. More significantly still, the proven potential for transmission of this narrative to those without personal lived experiences opens up the possibility for future harmonious co-existence: it allows benign lived experiences to outlive those who experienced them.

²²² Ivan, interview; Vangelis, interview.

²²³ Tsilenus, ‘The Migration’.

²²⁴ Hirschon, ‘Knowledge of Diversity’, pp. 73-76.

Competing collective memories?

On video-sharing website YouTube, a debate breaks out about Greco-Turkish relations in the comments section for a song by a Turkish-based Greek singer about Greco-Turkish friendship. One user sketches out an argument for friendship based on common culture and heritage:

We drink the same coffee, our languages have common roots, they lived together so many years, we have the same music, common history and culture! We believe in the same god! Even the Hagia Sophia [in Istanbul] unites us in every way: Christ and Minarets! Let's remember history but also our commonality so as to move forward, otherwise we will remain stationary!²²⁵

She references Cyprus as an example of this harmonious narrative: 'even in our troubled Cyprus the Greeks and the Turks lived happily together. The conflicts were artificially created from England'. The user is an eighteen-year old Greek girl, unlikely to have any lived experience of living with Turks, harmonious or otherwise. This kind of talk soon provokes reactions, such as the following from a middle-aged Greek-American:

If Turks are your brothers, it's because they raped your ancestors. If you have so many things in common, it's because they stole your inheritance ... You may say it's political, but it wasn't the politicians who first burnt the Kurdish homes & then exiled the Greeks. My grandfather died in Constantinople defending his store. Read some of YOUR history "Know where you come from that you may know where you're going"

²²⁵ Punctuation and spelling edited for clarity.

This interaction neatly encapsulates the observations we have made above. In the first statement, the user pleads for communality between Greeks and Turks, citing cultural and historical similarity, and also confessional interaction. The account draws on a timeless image of harmonious communality, blames politics for dividing the two groups, and sees peaceful co-existence and co-operation as the only way to move progressively into the future. The second user reacts angrily to such assertions, appealing to a linear history of persecution referencing the Ottoman Empire, the 1922/23 expulsions, and the pogrom in Istanbul. He accuses the harmonious account of historical ignorance and disrespecting Greek ancestors, and implies that ignoring history will lead to future mistakes. Likewise, whilst the Greek teenager constructs a united intercommunal group, the Greek-American man defends the specificity of Greek identity by stressing that any cultural overlap is due to enforced contamination or cultural theft. Both owe much to appropriated images and rhetoric temporally and spatially distant from the narrator: this does not seem to dampen their enthusiastic defence of their viewpoint.

Whilst it is certainly arguable that the strife narrative receives greater airing in public discourse, we should note that *both* sides of this debate are afraid that the opposite narrative will undermine their own message. Örs draws attention to a disagreement between those Polites derogatorily labelled as ‘Turk-lovers’, for their supposedly idyllic impressions of Turks, and those lambasted as ‘Hellenified’, due to their alleged ‘uncritical’ absorption of native-Greek anti-Turkish vilification.²²⁶

²²⁶ Örs, ‘Beyond the Greek and Turkish Dichotomy’, p. 84.

Indeed, there is an implicit sense of competition running through the narratives considered in this chapter. This is primarily revealed in the way that silences are plugged with conspicuous narrative devices such as ‘we didn’t have any problems.’ This slogan belies its own purpose: to counteract and silence an alternative, problem-laden narrative. In Vangelis’ attack on the strife narrative, we see this competition emerge explicitly. Mikhael, from the other side, objected to an overly harmonious narrative, complaining that it reflected only a fraction of the actual experience of living in Istanbul. He considered those who expounded such narratives as being blinkered by a nostalgia for Turkish friends, and feared their romanticism may dilute and undermine the memory of real and severe persecution.²²⁷

Life history narratives can be used competitively: as Rothberg states, ‘memory competition does exist and sometimes overrides other possibilities for thinking about the relation between different histories’.²²⁸ Thus informants, specifically in our interview contexts, narrated one side of a story, whilst giving comparatively little airing to its counterpart, despite possessing knowledge of the alternative when challenged. In Elizabeth Tonkin’s terms, life histories can be structured to ‘convey the desire ... of this teller to present a self to this listener, at this particular moment’; in another moment, with another listener, another self may emerge.²²⁹ Even this, however, has required the borrowing of well-established narrative frameworks from elsewhere in Greek history; Rothberg’s ‘dynamic transfers that take place between

²²⁷ Author, field notes, 05/02/12.

²²⁸ Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, p. 10.

²²⁹ E. Tonkin, ‘History and the Myth of Realism’, in R. Samuel and P. Thompson (eds.), *The Myths We Live By*, (London; New York, 1990), p. 26, p. 34.

diverse places and times during the act of remembrance'.²³⁰ Moreover, despite their competitive interaction, both narratives have exhibited inclusive potential: harmony reaches across intercommunal divides, whilst strife reaches out to other Greeks across strong intracommunal divides.

Theodossopoulos, discussing cultural interaction between Greeks and Turks, states: 'cultural differences ... are put forward to justify the antagonism of the two nations, but are also overlooked for the sake of statements that emphasize similarity.'²³¹ Contained within this remark is the crux of the issue I have attempted to disentangle. Within Greek history of intercommunal relations with the Turks, there are two strands. One stresses differences – ignoring similarity in the process – to justify antagonism. This highlights wounds, and creates Greek group cohesion. The purpose: restitution, intracommunal unity, security. On the other hand, there is a narrative that emphasises similarity – overlooking difference in the process – to justify interaction. This broadens the community, and stresses shared lives. The purpose: reconciliation, communality, intercommunal integration. Neither should be treated as wholly fictive or factual, but rather as specific articulations of experience made socially useful; following Schwartz, memory does not just reflect reality, but shapes it 'by articulating ideals and generating the motivation to realise them'.²³² Together they operate to manage the Greco-Turkish relationship, sometimes antagonistically, yet also co-operatively. It is with the 'productive and multidirectional' co-operation between narratives – Rothberg's 'malleable discursive

²³⁰ Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, p. 11.

²³¹ Theodossopoulos, 'Introduction: the "Turks" in the Imagination of the "Greeks"', p. 8.

²³² Schwartz, *Forge of National Memory*, p. 5.

space' in which narratives flex and interact to create new meanings – that I will be concerned in the following pages.²³³

²³³ M. Rothberg, 'Against Zero-Sum Logic: A Response to Walter Benn Michaels', *American Literary History*, (2006), p. 307; Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, p. 5.

Chapter Three: Multidirectional Narratives

Such a productive interaction occurs in the Cypriot context, where our two would-be competing narratives co-exist in both official and popular memory, together seeking to resolve and explain the Cyprus division crisis. Certainly, this co-existence is not without its problems; for an example among many, Spyros Spyrou has explored Greek-Cypriot schoolchildren's difficulties in reconciling a narrative of harmonious co-existence alongside Turkish-Cypriots with one of barbarous persecution from the Turks.²³⁴ Yet it remains striking that the two narratives can co-exist productively; used in different contexts depending on what is to be emphasised.²³⁵ We can observe similar narrative productivity amongst the Polites.

Married negotiation

We will start with narrative flexibility on a small interpersonal scale, by examining the narratives offered by a married couple interviewed together to show how narrative negotiation can be used to reinforce close social relationships. Andreas and Sofia reside in Thessaloniki. They were born in Istanbul in the mid-1940s and mid-1950s respectively, and left in the mid-1970s. Sofia was born and grew up in Pera, whilst Andreas resided on the island of Chalki.

Asked to describe his life, Andreas offered a personal and educational summary,

²³⁴ Spyrou, 'Constructing "the Turk" as an Enemy', pp. 104-106.

²³⁵ Halstead, "'Through the Prism of Their Own Experiences'", p. 27, pp. 36-37; Papadakis, 'Greek Cypriot Narratives', pp. 151-153.

making no mention of communal relations, except to state that, ‘in ‘73 the situation wasn’t that good, due to the Cyprus affair, so I settled in Thessaloniki.’ Andreas then invited Sofia to offer her life history. She followed his lead in offering only a brief summary:

I was born in Constantinople, in 1955 ... Generally childhood years were lovely, in the summer we went to Chalki ... Yes. Simple. School. Lovely childhood years ... I left ‘75. Thessaloniki ... After we married and we stayed here.

Seemingly prompted by Sofia’s comment about lovely childhood years, Andreas automatically took up his account again, discussing intercommunal relationships in a manner reminiscent of fellow islander Ivan:

Chalki had, in my childhood years, both Turks and Rum ... But we played together, we grew up together, with the Turks, we didn’t have any problems, we were like brothers with the Turks. We went to school in the morning, in the evening we played together - all together ... With the Turks we played together, we grew up together ... We got on very well. We got on like brothers. And the summer was very nice because ... on the island Jews, and Armenians, and Rum, came too ... we went from the morning to the evening together, we passed very, very well ... After ‘74 things were spoiled. Things changed. The Cyprus affair, always on the TV we heard about Cyprus –

As the account moves to the spoiling of the climate, Sofia jumps in:

– that affected the inhabitants, and those that were friends began to have a different behaviour. And the shops we shopped in, and our supposed friends, had become more nervous, more antipathetic in front of us –

Andreas: [interrupting] Not everyone of course –

Sofia: [talking over] The majority –

Andreas: – not everyone –

Sofia: – the behaviour had changed.

As Andreas unfolds this narrative of intercommunal harmony, he has gone too far; Sofia jumps in at the first opportunity, and re-orientates the narrative towards strife. This leads to their first disagreement, no doubt largely produced by their contrary experiences as islander and city-dweller, over the degree to which Turkish friends changed during the Cyprus affair. Prompted by this challenge, Andreas sets off on another lengthy narrative:

They were difficult years, after the Cyprus affair, things got difficult ... You couldn't speak Greek ... You couldn't open a Greek newspaper to read ... they said, "what's that you're reading? Why are you reading a Greek newspaper? Why do you speak Greek? Where do you live?" [In the Greek shops] they put signs, cards, and they said, "you have earned enough money. You send so much to Cyprus, with that money they buy weapons, and kill the Turkish Cypriots, get up and leave, if you don't leave, we'll do bad things to your family, to your wife, to your children". In 1974 they put a cross on the Greek houses. They wanted to undertake that which they did in '55 again in '74 ... Things were very difficult in '74 ... And everyone slowly, slowly in '74 started to leave. After '64 - '64 was when they expelled the Greek citizens, and along with the Greek citizens fled others who were married, Turkish citizens, who were married, they all left together.

Responding to his wife's introduction of a strife narrative, Andreas embarks upon an account of intercommunal relations that deals with discrimination, and checks all the standard discriminatory waypoints. In doing so, he shows a willingness to access both harmony and strife narratives, reigning in his emphasis on harmony by introducing negative memories of discrimination.

The topic of conversation then shifted to making return visits to Turkey. Although Andreas and Sofia have both continued to visit Chalki yearly since their migration,

the former is more positive than the latter. Andreas' description of being reunited with his Turkish friends is strong and emotive:

I had not seen one friend for years, a childhood friend, we played from morning to night together. When we met, with this Turk, we embraced, and I had here [in his shirt pocket] a pencil, and he squeezed me so tight that my chest hurt for a week. Until today I have friends. Nothing has changed. I haven't got any problem with the Turks. With the state I have a problem.

This description continues Andreas' initial idyllic portrayal of multicultural friendship from 'morning to night.' Sofia, by contrast, is less emotionally involved:

Halstead: And the same for you?

Sofia: I didn't have many Turkish friends. I didn't lose any friends.

Halstead: And now do you have friends, new friends, from Andreas?

Sofia: Ok. Typical things. Not, "come to our house, let's go."

Whilst Andreas has never abandoned the open relationships of his childhood on Chalki, Sofia continues to have closed or distant relationships with Andreas' Turkish friends. This contrast permeates the issue of language, too:

Halstead: And do you speak Turkish still?

Sofia: Yes, I speak.

Halstead: Do you like speaking Turkish?

Sofia: [Pause] If I need it. Why not?

Andreas: I prefer to speak Turkish, with Turks. I mean, a Turk who comes here, and he knows Greek, I speak Turkish.

Sofia: I don't.

Andreas: I like to speak Turkish to the Turk ...

Sofia: I don't.

The couple disagree on the question of speaking Turkish, with both re-iterating their

opinion, and standing their ground. Sofia's insistence has, however, tweaked Andreas' curiosity, and he takes up the questioning himself:

Andreas: You don't like to speak Turkish?

Sofia: No.

Andreas: You dislike it?

Sofia: No I don't dislike it. I speak Turkish when I go to Istanbul. But in Greece, I don't see the logic to speak Turkish. In those years ... they obliged us in the Greek school to speak Turkish in the breaks. Whoever didn't speak was hit ... we had a lot of pressure and fear ... maybe that makes me this way.

Andreas seems surprised by his wife's attitude to the language question, and perhaps even a little disheartened. Nonetheless, once again, he makes an attempt to validate Sofia's concerns, albeit with a humorous anecdote:

Ok in school the Turkish teachers didn't allow us to speak Greek in the breaks ... I remember when I was in high school, we didn't read Greek in the lessons, we read just Turkish, so we could pass our exams for university ... and I remember Turkish history, exams, I had written perfect, and he gave me five [out of ten]. I said, "why?" "The alpha, you wrote it Greek," [he replied] ... And from then it has remained with me. Now [when] I write Turkish sometimes, [I say,] "God, that alpha, I'm still doing it Greek!"

Had I met Andreas alone, I may have left with a recording that bore a strong resemblance to Ivan's interview. In the social setting of our interview, however, Andreas instead shows a willingness to access two contrary narratives, as a means of validating his wife's narrative, and bringing the couple into narrative concord. An individual's life history is thus not a static story, but one in constant construction, and the presence of other characters during that construction can have a profound effect. Memory here is not a zero-sum game with clear winners and losers; rather

contrasting narratives can share the mnemonic space between husband and wife, as they negotiate to establish social solidarity.

Hidden Christians and the good Turk

A similar contextual narrative compromise is evident in the accounts of the strife narrators. Shifting between a strife and a harmony narrative in Cyprus required some creative re-arranging of imagined communities: a subtle (yet somewhat problematic) distinction between Turkish barbarians, and Turkish-Cypriot brothers.²³⁶ My strife informants have similar techniques. The villains in their life histories are the Turks, with whom it was not therefore appropriate to speak of friendly or banal relations. Yet under specific questioning all, to varying degrees, spoke of Turkish acquaintances. When context thus prevailed upon them to recall Turkish friends, various narrative modifications were deployed to open up imagined communities, and resolve the tension between a general impression of Turkish enemies and more specific instances of Turkish friends.

Reacting to my explanation of the harmonious accounts I had heard, Mikhael was keen to explain why Polites might have mixed feelings about Turks: traumatic events experienced at a young age are not easily forgotten. In continuing to counter a solely harmonious narrative, he proceeded to offer a conceptualization of the Turkish Other: ‘I can say Turks are good too – ten good, ninety bad. A Turkish

²³⁶ Papadakis, ‘Greek Cypriot Narratives’, pp. 151-153.

person is fine. Better than Greeks. But lots together, [is] three-thousand times worse.’

One Turk on their own is an exceptionally good individual, but multiple Turks become a dangerous crowd – good Turk, bad *Turks*. In this formula, Mikhael is able to provide a coherent counter to the harmony and friendship narratives, whilst also reconciling his own experiences: individual Turks – remembered from work and leisure – are exceptionally good people; but as a crowd, they become fanatical. Therefore, those who remember harmony are remembering the individuals in their immediate circle, and forgetting the crowd from the pogrom. Stating that the good Turk is better than the Greek sets up a potential Istanbulite solidarity closed to native Greeks: the narrative manipulation creates new exclusivity as well as inclusiveness.²³⁷ Such distinctions were drawn by others, including Mikhael’s wife, Alexandra, who supported her husband’s assessment:

Alexandra: A Turk has a pride, a love, that you won’t find in a Greek, or any other race. But, once they become two, three, four, five, a crowd, they start to be dangerous.

Halstead: But some Greeks were protected [in the pogrom] by the Turks?

Alexandra: Our family was protected. ‘55 was organised from 1950. All the Turks promised to throw a stone at an infidel house. Our friend promised on the Qur’an to throw a stone. So, after protecting our family, he went to go throw his rock [at another family].²³⁸

Here we see how the good Turk/bad Turks model operates within a single Turkish person: he protects his Greek friends as an individual, before proceeding to attack

²³⁷ Author, field notes, 05/02/2012.

²³⁸ Author, field notes, 05/02/2012.

the infidels as a member of a collective. Alexandra's ambivalent relationship with the Other is represented in this Turk's schizophrenic behaviour. Theodossopoulos discusses the duality in Greeks' perceptions of Turks, distinguishing between the 'personified Turk' – human, similar to the protagonist – and the 'anonymous Turk' – an inhuman Other.²³⁹ It is by manipulating this duality that narrators are able to manipulate meaning in context; whilst in a spontaneous life history emphasising strife one might offer generally negative impressions of the Other, in a different context – such as when talking about Turkish friends, or dealing with the challenge of a harmonious narrative – personified Turks can be subsumed into one's community by removing their Otherness. A 'particularization of the generalized Turk'.²⁴⁰

Yet this is not the only way of altering group membership. When Gerasimos encounters Turks, he says that he becomes uncomfortable and withdrawn; 'it comes from within, I cannot do otherwise.' He too links this to his negative experiences of persecution; but he, too, remembers having friendly relations with some Turks, explaining that, 'there are enlightened Turks, they're not all fanatical.' He offered this information voluntarily, before proceeding to carefully explain that those Turks who were friendly towards him turned out to have been hidden Christians, forcibly converted to Islam under the Ottoman Empire, but retaining their religion in private. Gerasimos extends this claim further. Every 23rd of April, thousands of pilgrims visit the Monastery of Saint George Koudounas on the Princes' Islands to offer

²³⁹ Theodossopoulos, 'Introduction: the "Turks" in the Imagination of the "Greeks"', p. 10.

²⁴⁰ Theodossopoulos, 'Introduction: the "Turks" in the Imagination of the "Greeks"', p. 10.

veneration and seek miracles. Today, these pilgrims are mostly non-Christians, including Muslims.²⁴¹ Gerasimos explains away these pilgrims as hidden Christians: ‘every year, 40,000, 50,000 people go there, and the newspaper asked, “where have they found so many Christians?”’

The concept that many Turks are Greek converts to Islam is not an unusual one, especially in nationalistic contexts, nor a wholly untrue one.²⁴² Whether those Turks mentioned by Gerasimos are actually hidden Christians is impossible to determine with any certainty; and I suspect, especially as regards the pilgrims, that Gerasimos does not know either. For our purposes, it is not the truth of these assertions but the fact of their telling that is significant.²⁴³ Gerasimos knows that there were Christian converts to Islam in Turkey; validation for which is found in the pilgrim ‘mystery’. By imaginatively extending this category, his friends become Christians; Christians, moreover, forcibly converted during the Ottoman era, and, therefore, probably also Hellenic. His particularisation of the generalised Turk involves an imaginative re-conversion to Christianity, which thus removes the strongest mark of alterity about the Turk: Islam.²⁴⁴

Whilst the conceptualisation of Turks offered by harmony narrators generally involves either ignoring bad experiences, or confining bad behaviour to a small minority, the strife narrators resolve the tension through stressing the individual-

²⁴¹ Hirschon, “‘We Got On Well with the Turks’”, pp. 336-337.

²⁴² Theodossopoulos, ‘Introduction: the “Turks” in the Imagination of the “Greeks”’, pp. 11-12.

²⁴³ See Portelli, *Battle of Valle Giulia*, pp. 48-50.

²⁴⁴ Gerasimos, interview.

collective schizophrenia of Turks, or by changing the religion of Turkish friends. Rothberg calls the borders of memory and identity ‘jagged’.²⁴⁵ Indeed, what may appear in one context to be a coherent and closed imagined community can in other contexts begin to spike out into other hitherto discrete groupings, taking along with it chunks of the Other. The life history interview provides a context in which informants can create fixed and exclusive imagined groupings: but identity must confront alterity, and it does so as much by inclusion as exclusion.

Maoism and political communal relationships

‘In the final analysis, national struggle is a matter of class struggle.’²⁴⁶

In the above quotation, criticising White American persecution of African Americans, Chinese Communist leader Mao Tse Tung reduces racial conflict to class conflict; our two left-wing, (erstwhile) Maoist informants exhibit a similar tendency. Most Polites were generally less politically involved than their native Greek counterparts, for whom the influence of the Second World War and the Civil War was decisive. They were therefore either apolitical, or passively centre-right in terms of political allegiance. As Spyros put it, when I asked him whether he ever had any fear of communism or the neighbouring Soviet Union, ‘we didn’t know very

²⁴⁵ Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, p. 5.

²⁴⁶ Mao Tse Tung, ‘Statement Supporting the American Negroes in Their Just Struggle Against Racial Discrimination by U.S. Imperialism’ (1963), quoted in H. He, *Dictionary of the Political Thought of the People's Republic of China*, (New York, 2001), p. 283.

well what communism was. We, as Rum, were afraid of the Turks.’²⁴⁷ This is the framework in which many Polites understand their experiences; one based either on ethnic divides or on ethnic solidarity. I will explore here how two left-wing informants make productive use of a different conceptual framework: one that makes ethnic struggle essentially a matter of political struggle.

Thanasis first encountered left-wing politics in one of Istanbul’s left-wing newspapers, which he had been reading purely because it contained the largest sports section. He charts a gradual conversion process: by the time he left Istanbul he had ‘a sympathy towards the left,’ and by 1980 he was free from ‘nationalist tendencies’. Apostolis became involved in left-wing politics whilst attending Turkish state school. He worked with left-wing organisations alongside his fellow Turkish students, both in school and university, selling newspapers, and distributing information. Both men continued to have connections to left-wing circles in Greece, and suggested that having access to this network smoothed their early experiences of migration. The productive loan of a Marxist narrative framework allows both men to plot their life experiences in an ideologically suitable manner – but the effect is rather different.²⁴⁸

Thanasis – inclusive political solidarity

Thanasis was born in the Bosphorus neighbourhood in the early 1950s. He has a fond

²⁴⁷ Spyros, interview by author, Thessaloniki, 02/12/11.

²⁴⁸ Apostolis, interview by author, Athens, 03/02/12; Thanasis, interview.

and nostalgic relationship to Istanbul, and stresses tolerance and understanding between different ethnic groups. However, he produces this emphasis not just by stressing harmony, but also by re-writing the strife narrative from a Marxist perspective, re-staging an ethnic-religious struggle as a socio-political one. Asked to describe daily life in Istanbul, he elaborated:

Daily life in Istanbul passed through many periods. The greatest we describe always is '55. The *Septembriana* ... they smashed, churches, shops. It was the infamous night of Christianity in Constantinople. Afterwards the [1960] military coup happened [in Turkey], and then '63 the first episodes began in Cyprus, with Grivas, Makarios, and Fazıl Küçük, an extreme wave of nationalism began, against the Greeks, and not just Greeks, also Armenians, and Jews, and other minorities.

Some of the normal discriminatory waypoints are checked, yet the focus is different. Thanasis draws attention to the negative impact of the anti-democratic coup in Turkey, and links persecution of minorities to 'an extreme wave of nationalism' triggered by Greek-Cypriot Giorgos Grivas (right-wing leader of guerrilla organizations EOKA-A and EOKA-B), Archbishop Makarios III (former member of EOKA-A, and president of Cyprus), and Fazıl Küçük (Turkish-Cypriot vice-president of Cyprus). He dismissed Grivas as a fascist for his murder of Turkish-Cypriot civilians, and criticised the right-wing Greek military government's 'stupidity' in attempting to force union with Cyprus (an account which bears a strong resemblance to left-wing Greek-Cypriots' version of events).²⁴⁹ Greeks and Turks everywhere thus become united victims of fascism. When I continued to quiz Thanasis about his relationships with the Turks, he stated:

²⁴⁹ Papadakis, 'Nation, Narrative and Commemoration', p. 258.

It was typically a very good phenomenon, brotherly. Always I have the impression that in the most difficult moments, the repressions we faced, always there were some Turks who helped the Greeks. Like us, in our family. I have a brotherly friend, Turk, democratic, who was persecuted too [following the 1971 military coup] ... as a democrat.

By reinforcing the importance of political allegiance, Thanasis downplays ethnic distinctions and breaks down ethnic barriers. Elaborating on the pogrom, Thanasis continues this emphasis on socio-political causation, blaming Turkey's lack of an anti-fascist culture for the escalation of right-wing fanaticism. Talking about his conversion from nationalism, he says:

I don't have a hatred [towards Turks] ... when I was 15 or 16, I had a hatred. I had nationalistic tendencies ... but afterwards, reading ... seeing the social conditions that shape consciousness, seeing the guilty conscience of the Turk, seeing how much they apologise, seeing the civil war that happened in the '70s ...

Thanasis interprets the pogrom through Marxist conventions, blaming the 'social conditions' for shaping a nationalistic consciousness. By mentioning severe left-right tensions in the 1970s to demonstrate the political cleavages that exist within Turkish society, he undermines the image of Turks united in their oppression of the Polites. The protagonists are Greek and Turkish democrats, and the antagonists not Turks but right-wingers; Greco-Turkish intercommunal antagonism is therefore dismissed as a political conflict inspired by fascism.²⁵⁰

Thanasis was also asked to describe his life in Greece:

²⁵⁰ Thanasis, interview.

I came in '71 as a student. '73 I went to university, in '74 the junta fell, we had democracy, '71 my father opened the confectionary shop, we worked, I studied in Thessaloniki, after 1980 I came to Athens.

His mention of the military government and the advent of democracy immediately distinguishes him from other *Polites*, who normally ignore these political landmarks. Thanasis is balanced on his experiences of living in Greece, but nevertheless feels that he has never been fully integrated into Greek society. He contrasted the mutual respect between cultured Istanbul residents with the 'utter ignorance' of the native Greeks, especially the Peloponnesian southerners. He characterises the tension between natives and *Polites* in political terms:

There was a suspiciousness, from both sides ... Here things were more harsh, because here the civil war happened, something the Rum of Istanbul did not experience, and so we were never fanatical in politics, the Rum were never divided ... I saw the Greeks not as ... I was expecting. More wicked ... more [inclined] to have fights with each other, they weren't very pure in their transactions.

Thanasis here explains his trouble identifying and assimilating with Greeks in terms of their political extremism. Since migration, Thanasis acquired new Turkish friends as he helped left-wing Turks flee Istanbul towards Europe in the 1980s. Again he stresses the importance of political over national solidarity, explaining that the political refugees did not care about his ethnicity but were 'interested only that I was democratic, against the junta'.²⁵¹

Thanasis uses his narrative to break down ethnic barriers, and then re-build imagined

²⁵¹ Thanasis, interview.

communities in a more inclusive manner along political lines. An ethnic interpretation of intercommunal conflict carries a totalising, collectivist, and all-encompassing danger: it drags all Greeks and all Turks into the conflict as mutually-exclusive and antagonistic communities.²⁵² By re-writing both divisions and solidarities along political lines, Thanasis confines the conflict. All negative memories and characteristics are siphoned off into an imagined right-wing character; the rest of the Turks are spared villain status, becoming either fellow democratic victims (the Istanbul Turks), or victims themselves of social conditions and fascist propaganda (the Anatolian pogrom rioters). In Thanasis' narrative, this imagined right-wing villain even gets a personification: 'the extreme right-wingers, with moustaches, with cut-throat razors – they hunted us'. Unlike the 'good Turk' – where the generalised Other becomes real – this moustached right-winger is a real Turk metamorphosed into an imagined Other who takes the fall for popular persecution; a generalisation of a particular Turk, a moustached repository for negative characteristics. The native Greeks who chastised the Polites are exonerated in a similar manner: their behaviour explained away by poverty and political extremism.

Anyone who is not an overtly right-wing extremist is, for simplicity, automatically subsumed into the protagonist category of democratic anti-nationalists – the centre-right or apolitical Polites as well as the Turks become passive left-wing agents. Indeed, Thanasis claims that left-wing politics are the logical corollary to cosmopolitanism. This keeps group memberships open. On the one hand, a Marxist

²⁵² Loizos, 'Intercommunal Killing', pp. 649-650.

narrative allows Thanasis to distinguish himself from his fellow Polites as particularly democratic and anti-nationalist. On the other, by unilaterally absorbing the Polites at large into the democratic community, Thanasis is still able to establish belonging to the wider Istanbul-Greek community when necessary.

A Marxist framework permits Thanasis to reconstruct his history in an inclusive manner, opening up group memberships by disregarding totalising ethnic distinctions, ascribing discriminatory behaviour to socio-economic causes rather than ethnic characteristics, and transferring generalised ethnic persecution to a particularised political villain archetype.²⁵³

Apostolis – political isolation

Apostolis exhibits a similar left-wing slant to his narrative, although the effect is rather to construct a sense of social *exclusion*, both pre- and post-migration. Apostolis was born in Pera shortly before the 1955 pogrom, but moved to the Princes' Islands at around age ten. Having attended Greek primary and elementary school, he went to a Turkish state school to learn better Turkish in preparation for university. Apostolis' situation is thus comparable with Ivan's, yet his narrative is very different. Apostolis places emphasis on daily strife, stressing that it was 'a limited life', and referring to relationships with other ethnicities as 'closed.' Asked to describe his life, he concisely stated:

²⁵³ Thanasis, interview.

I left Istanbul in 1975, after the Cyprus question ... I grew up in Pera, my childhood years were in Pera, and after the age of twelve – ten years old, I lived in the island permanently ... I went to primary school there, elementary school, high school, and after, I came here. I didn't intend to come. I wanted to stay there. We were amongst the few Rum who stayed. But after the Cyprus affair things changed a lot, there was a lot of nationalism and repression, for the Greek minority. And we were forced, I personally, was forced to leave, and come here ... Since then I haven't been back.

His life history is matter-of-fact, lacking explicit nostalgia. His blunt closing line leaves us with two conflicting impressions. Whilst it does convey a sense of finality and closure, it also hints at a regret, and a reluctance to engage emotionally with the past. It also seems defiant – he has not wanted to return to a place from where he was expelled. The tension created by having not wanted to leave, and having decided not to return since, may account for the disengaged tone. Proceeding to discuss daily life, his narrative stresses political over ethnic strife:

Halstead: In the Turkish school, how was life, the relations with the Turks?

Apostolis: There ... we didn't have any problem, they didn't bother me, because I was alone. We had an Armenian, in another building. They didn't bother us, nor did they tease us, because they weren't threatened ... what would the threat be, from me one person? ... Only with politics did we have problems in that period, because we had split into factions. Some were left, some were right. That was the problem. In that period those that were far right were more organised, and they did terrorism. That problem we had.

As a student in the Turkish school, Apostolis felt pressure not as a Greek amongst Turks, but as a left-winger, alongside fellow left-wing Turks, pressured by right-wingers. When asked about the Cyprus affair, Apostolis spoke about a conflict between the Stalinists – who supported Turkish action to restore order – and the Maoists – who saw the invasion as a violation of Cypriot independence – rather than the conflict between Christians and Muslims. Similarly, when asked if he recalled

graffiti attacking the Rum, he stated: ‘against the Rum? No. [I remember] the Dodecanese are Turkish, Cyprus is Turkish ... death to Makarios ... out of NATO, independent Turkey ... independent Cyprus. Death to imperialism, to the Americans.’ Where most Polites remembered slogans specifically attacking the Rum, Apostolis recalled the political slogans. Like Thanasis, Apostolis was too young to remember the pogrom, but he too identified socio-economic motivations in the rioters:

Ethnic-cleansing ... Simply it was to terrorise. A pogrom, as we say, to force the Greeks from Istanbul to leave ... and it was much lower economic [level people] – workers. Those people got together and fell on the Rum, [because] they thought they were the privileged [ones] of Istanbul, economically.

He does not harbour resentment for the Turks as a race, instead blaming political propaganda: ‘look, the people are not to blame for anything. It is the politics that directs them ... people, simple people, what blame can they have?’ Summarising his decision to leave, he stated: ‘politics forced us to leave. Otherwise we would not leave our land.’

Apostolis’ tendency to construct strife as political does not prevent him from also combining this with an ethnic narrative. For instance, despite having earlier stressed that politics was the only cause of trouble in his school, when specifically asked about his relationships with the Turks he felt that their relationships were ‘reserved’, and that the Turks always felt superior; ‘that is not politicised,’ he explained, ‘he [the Turk] knows it from instinct’. Nonetheless, he brings the issue back to politics,

stating ‘there was a co-operation, a spirit of co-operation [amongst students] ... [unless] you spoke about politics.’ Whether Apostolis’ negative account of life in Istanbul purely reflects his desire to stress the trauma of political struggle, or whether it acts partly as a screen memory for positive recollections that might awaken nostalgia, is unclear.²⁵⁴

This matter-of-fact, struggle-laden quality persists into Apostolis’ account of life post-migration:

Apostolis: Life in Greece was difficult ... I was young ... I was forced to do whatever, whatever migrants do, the same. I was forced to search for work, to survive, because I was alone ... I found whatever work I could, various jobs ... slowly, slowly, then at some point I met a girl from here, I married, because they didn’t give us residence permits, they treated us like migrants. Do you understand? *Homogeneis*²⁵⁵ and whatever they say, it was a theory ... I had a problem, they said they would expel me.

Halstead: Really?

Apostolis: Of course. Always I had the feeling that something might happen and they would expel me, to Turkey. I didn’t want to go back. And I was forced to marry. I found a nice girl, I married, had two children, and continued to work. I stayed, afterwards I took my papers, after years, mind ... and I continued ... That’s my life here. But in the beginning it was very hard, for us, as we didn’t have money ... My father died ... I made attempts on my own ...

Like his narrative of Istanbul, Apostolis’ account here is one of struggle, framed largely in economic terms; happy elements of life are passed over briefly. By attacking the myth of ethnic solidarity, and constructing himself as a struggling migrant, Apostolis outlines a difficult and uncompromising view of life in Greece, mediated only by the suggestion of independence and graft in phrases such as ‘I

²⁵⁴ Apostolis, interview.

²⁵⁵ I.e. of Greek descent.

made attempts on my own.’ When prompted, Apostolis did recall being referred to as ‘Turk,’ but he continued primarily to recall being chastised as a migrant clogging up the job market. Apostolis makes little attempt to establish any communal belonging, which symbolises his isolation and independent struggle – a Marxist narrative places Apostolis’ sense of self within the archetype of a struggling worker.²⁵⁶

Left-wing narratives

There are important distinctions to be drawn that help us to understand the contrasting accounts of these two narrators. Firstly, although the two are close in date of birth and migration, Apostolis was perhaps more intimately involved in politics whilst in Istanbul than Thanasis, and, in the Turkish school, was certainly involved in a more volatile setting. Moreover, whilst Thanasis migrated to Greece as a teenager with his father, Apostolis had to support himself as an adult immediately. For Apostolis, then, political strife and economic struggle may have been experienced more forcefully and personally. The manner in which the two men approached their interviews was also radically different. Thanasis was very aware of the tape recorder, and was keen to ensure that the finished recording was a polished product. For this reason, his narrative takes on a story-like quality, and he elaborates at length on important points. Apostolis, by contrast, was not keen to offer a self-sustaining narrative. Seemingly unfazed by the presence of the recorder, he preferred

²⁵⁶ Apostolis, interview.

to be asked specific questions, and responded concisely. This doubtless affects the tone of both interviews.

An ethnic master-narrative is not the only way in which life in Istanbul can be interpreted. Both men were part of a left-wing minority within an ethnic minority – this is the primary means by which they distinguish themselves from their kin. Interpreting Greco-Turkish strife as political is a broader left-wing pattern – Hirschon noticed this narrative amongst the refugees in the left-wing neighbourhood in which she worked, and Mackridge reports that the tendency is shared by left-wing Asia Minor authors.²⁵⁷ Plotting their life experiences within a broader political struggle not only better reflects their ideology, but also gives political purpose to otherwise futile ethnic struggles; as Thomson puts it, we compose histories which make us comfortable with our lives.²⁵⁸ The effect of this narrative, however, on the texture of their interviews differs drastically. Whilst Thanasis uses a Marxist framework to create group *inclusion* for an Istanbul community, Apostolis creates group *exclusion* for himself, symbolising his independent struggle as a minority member, political dissident, and migrant worker. Viewing intercommunal relations through a Marxist framework can create new forms of political solidarity to mitigate ethnic antagonism; yet there is also a benefit, within the life history context, of actually *avoiding* group inclusion, as a narrative device to represent struggle.²⁵⁹

²⁵⁷ Hirschon, “‘We Got On Well with the Turks’”, p. 331; P. Mackridge, ‘The Myth of Asia Minor in Greek Fiction’, in R. Hirschon (ed.), *Crossing the Aegean: an Appraisal of the 1923 Compulsory Population Exchange Between Greece and Turkey*, (Oxford, 2008), pp. 243-244.

²⁵⁸ Thomson, ‘The Anzac Legend’, p. 78.

²⁵⁹ Apostolis, interview; Thanasis, interview.

Narrative appropriation and juxtaposition

Whilst Mikhael's life history ended abruptly with migration, thrusting focus upon life in Istanbul, other informants spontaneously continued to offer an account of life in Greece. Far from distracting from their narratives of inter-communality, combining these spatially and temporally distant narratives permits these individuals clearly and strongly to articulate their ideological interpretation of ethnic relations.

Intracommunal strife

The national homogenisation envisaged by the population exchange was largely illusory, ending centuries-long association between Ottoman Christians and Muslims, and throwing peoples together who shared precious little history. In the evocative phrase of Mazower, the exchange could only be seen as repatriation through 'nationalist blinkers'.²⁶⁰ It was through these nationalist blinkers that the Polites were viewed during the twentieth century. The final piece of an incomplete homogenisation process in Turkey, they turned to the embrace of 'mother Greece', yet many found her embrace to be colder and more reserved than they had hoped. In the words of Sofia, 'we are in Istanbul Greeks, and in Thessaloniki Turks'.²⁶¹

This narrative is most starkly illustrated by the two informants who were keenest to distance themselves from Greek identity. Without being prompted about life in

²⁶⁰ Mazower, *Dark Continent*, pp. 40-42, pp. 60-62 [quote p. 61].

²⁶¹ Andreas and Sofia, interview.

Greece, Vangelis stated:

I left in '80, and I left because – [it was] a mistake that I left; I shouldn't have left ... My daughter had grown up, my wife wanted us to leave ... and I left, although I shouldn't have left ... All of us thought that Greece was something [dramatic pause]. Greece was nothing; Greece was that which it is now ... So, a mistake that we came here ... I never came happily to Greece ... I never loved the place [Greece], I didn't warm to the place. I am a foreigner, as I was the first day I came; I am a foreigner. And if I was, and this you can write down and say it, if I was twenty years younger, I would go back; that's certain.

Vangelis repeated refrain 'I shouldn't have left,' which recurs throughout the interview, underpins a narrative that is exceptionally disappointed about life in Greece with the Greeks, and very mournful about migration from Istanbul. He complains that the Greeks 'didn't want me, they teased me,' and dismisses Greece as 'this degenerated, this barbaric land.' His disappointment finds expression in the familiar urban-rural dichotomy: he refers to the Athenians as villagers who came to live in the city to drive their cars around as they used to ride their donkeys. His rejection of Greece serves to highlight his fondness for Istanbul, and identification with its population. His eagerness to have this side of the story told is revealed in his statement, 'this you can write down.'²⁶²

Ivan felt similarly rejected in his new country: 'they saw me as though I shouldn't be in Greece, not that I was a Muslim, something worse than a Muslim ... maybe they thought of me as a parasite.' Ivan's rejection by the Greeks is twofold; first in Chalki's Greek minority schools, secondly in the Greek nation state. More than the

²⁶² Vangelis, interview.

populace, however, Ivan is particularly critical of the Greek state's reluctance to make the Polites citizens, or to provide them with any sort of aid.²⁶³

Intracommunal harmony

Gerasimos also finished his account of relationships with Istanbul's Turks by making a contrast with Greece:

Greece had the basic things that Turkey didn't have: freedom, the language and the religion. All of those things made us feel immediately open, and free. You don't have any trouble to go out and to shout and to speak. That, for us, was a big change ... It was for us, a paradise, because we felt free ... It was a life that didn't have all of that characteristic fear that we had.

Far from feeling like a parasitic foreigner, Gerasimos extolled the virtues of a country where there was freedom and no fear. Challenged specifically about how the native Greeks received him as a migrant from Turkey, Gerasimos acknowledged that there was an issue, but, in marked contrast to the rejection narratives, dismissed this as harmless fun:

Such problems, yes, we had them. When we spoke, they understood you, immediately. That wasn't bad. They might bother you but you weren't in danger. In Turkey, you were in danger of taking a stone to the head. There's a big difference ... It was a sweet nuisance, not a hassle.

A wholesale feeling of rejection from Vangelis' narrative has become a 'sweet nuisance', contrasted with the threat of physical violence in Turkey; and whilst

²⁶³ Ivan, interview.

Vangelis tackled the difficulties automatically, with Gerasimos they were obtained only through specific challenge.²⁶⁴ Theodoros approached the issue in a similar vein, acknowledging some ambivalent treatment, but still emphasising freedom and opportunity in Greece:

It was a country [in which] you can speak freely. Of course there were many difficulties. Greece was also a nation-state structure. It didn't welcome the refugees neither in 1922 nor in our case in the 1960s. But I think there is one very important thing – you can speak here completely freely and you are not afraid of anything. Speaking was a factor. I become a university professor.²⁶⁵

Theodoros associates Greece with freedom and opportunity, symbolised by his professional success.

Both Vangelis and Ivan offered spontaneous narratives of intracommunal discrimination in Greece, which sharply contrasts with their accounts of harmonious intercommunal life in Istanbul. This narrative juxtaposition divides their lives into two periods: pre-migratory, multicultural, idyllic Istanbul, contrasted with post-migration, mono-cultural, intolerant Greece. A cosmopolitan sense of belonging begun in their intercommunal narratives is thus reinforced; along with Hirschon's refugees, Ivan and Vangelis' knowledge of diversity provides them with a unique identity distinguishing them from the homogeneous, culturally ignorant native Greeks. *Inclusion* in an imagined pan-ethnic community thus permits Ivan and Vangelis to cope with their *exclusion* in Greek society; rejection explained by incompatibility with homogeneity. Contrastingly, Gerasimos and Theodoros'

²⁶⁴ Gerasimos, interview.

²⁶⁵ Theodoros, interview.

accounts of freedom and opportunity in Greece throw sharp relief upon their discrimination in Istanbul, migration to Greece representing an escape from persecution. Their construction of a Greek community of solidarity is confirmed by their feeling of freedom in Greek society, whilst persecution occurred only in Turkey, making discrimination a uniquely Turkish condition. Juxtaposing pre- and post-migration life thus does not distract from the message about intercommunal relations begun in their life histories, but productively stresses this emphasis.

Appropriating refugee narratives

Pre-migration, Ivan lived in the comparative isolation of Chalki, whilst Gerasimos experienced the worst of the persecution in central Istanbul. After migration, Ivan's assimilation into Greek society was particularly problematic, as he did not speak Greek, and was deprived of Greek citizenship for two decades. Gerasimos, by contrast, was a fluent Greek-speaker, and, as his father had Greek citizenship, was able to acquire Greek citizenship without such delay. Ivan, feeling rejected and struggling to learn Greek, continued to have Turkish friends, speak Turkish, consume Turkish popular culture, and, when permitted, visit Chalki. Gerasimos has conversely cut himself off from Turkey, visiting only once to rid himself of painful nostalgia. Psychological scholarship on memory has persuasively demonstrated that mnemonic reconstructions of past events are heavily influenced by preceding and subsequent experiences and information.²⁶⁶ If Ivan's attachment and fondness for

²⁶⁶ See for instance U. Neisser, 'Snapshots or Benchmarks', in U. Neisser (ed.), *Memory Observed: Remembering in Natural Contexts*, (San Francisco, 1982), pp. 45-46; or E. Loftus and J. Palmer,

Chalki thus makes him more attuned to Greece's deficiencies, then Gerasimos' traumatic experiences and troubled post-migration relationship with Turkey would make him more receptive to Greece's benefits. Conversely, in light of his rejection in Greece, Ivan may idealise his experiences in Istanbul, whilst Gerasimos' easy integration may cause him to look back on his marginalisation in Turkey more resentfully. We should avoid assuming a cause-and-effect relationship between intercommunal and intracommunal narratives, as this model does not hold universally. Nevertheless, we observe that narratives are more than the telling of specific past incidents; they reflect broader impressions gathered over a lifetime.²⁶⁷

Moreover, this narrative construction is not confined to personally experienced impressions, but also involves appropriating imagery from elsewhere; namely, from the collective memory of the Asia Minor refugees. For instance, as the refugees before him, Vangelis responded to marginalisation by dismissing the Greeks as villagers (just as some native Greeks appropriated the 1922-era derogatory terminology in chastising the Polites). Many other informants similarly made mileage out of comparisons with the 1922 refugees. Thanasis, for instance, refers to himself as the 'last refugee', whilst Ioanna, considering the current economic crisis in Greece, wondered if the Polites might become 'more refugee than the refugees'.²⁶⁸

'Reconstruction of Automobile Destruction', in U. Neisser (ed.), *Memory Observed: Remembering in Natural Contexts*, (San Francisco, 1982), p. 114.

²⁶⁷ Gerasimos, interview; Ivan, interview.

²⁶⁸ Ioanna, interview; Thanasis, interview.

Eftihia Voutira explores a similar trend with the New Pontics.²⁶⁹ In the official rhetoric, the Pontics are ‘repatriates’, not refugees.²⁷⁰ The Pontics themselves, however, dissatisfied with their migrant situation, and ‘aware of the positive connotations of “refugees” ... seized upon the term as self-ascription in an attempt to achieve greater entitlements’.²⁷¹ Likewise, some Polites appropriate imagery, rhetoric, and language from the refugee era to frame their alienation in Greek society.

Such narrative appropriation is productive more than restrictive. African-American activist Khalid Muhammad expressed concern that Holocaust memorial distracts attention from persecution of African Americans; yet as Rothberg shows, Muhammad’s appropriation of the Holocaust memory in his lament actually throws sharp relief on American racism. Likewise, far from distracting from their own plight, narrative comparison with the Asia Minor refugees highlights the suffering of the Polites and the Pontics. Rothberg argues that it is the perceived uniqueness of the Holocaust that makes it such a potent metaphor for appropriation in highlighting other discrimination. Equally, the perceived uniqueness of the Asia Minor Catastrophe in Greek culture makes it a powerful narrative device for establishing marginalisation and alienation. Moreover, as with the Pontic migrants, comparison

²⁶⁹ ‘New Pontics’, or, with slightly derogatory undertones, ‘Russo-Pontics’, refers to those Pontics who fled to Russia after the Greco-Turkish war. After the fall of the Soviet Union, many began to migrate to Greece.

²⁷⁰ E. Voutira, ‘Refugees: Whose Term is it Anyway? Emic and Etic Constructions of “Refugees” in Modern Greek’, in J. van Selm *et al.* (eds.), *The Refugee Convention at Fifty: A View from Forced Migration Studies*, (Oxford, 2003), p. 73.

²⁷¹ Voutira, ‘Refugees’, p. 72.

with the refugees serves the practical purpose of eliciting comparable support from the Greek government.²⁷²

Yet the loaded potency of the term ‘refugee’ is precisely the reason why many Polites declined to make the comparison, feeling they could not share the traumatic legacy of the refugees. So whilst narrative appropriation may be productive, people certainly can behave as though memory is competitive, and decline to ‘compete’ with the legacy of other groups. Some informants coined new phrases to overcome this difficulty: Fotini, for instance, referred to herself as a ‘modern refugee, because we’re very different. You can’t compare it with those who were brought ... in a boat with a pile of children and no clothes’.²⁷³ This allows her to co-opt some of the imagery of the refugee without having to prove claims to ‘refugee-ness’ against the daunting litmus test of the Asia Minor Greeks.

If some appropriate the refugees’ marginalisation narrative, Gerasimos and Theodoros rather situate their experiences within the official nationalist memory of the refugee situation. Addressing Greece as a mother-country that gave them refuge from persecution, they replicate irredentist rhetoric commonplace in Greek nationalist narratives. Their accounts thus appropriate the officially-endorsed notion that the incoming refugees were successfully assimilated as redeemed Greeks, and enriched native Greek culture with their own folk traditions.²⁷⁴ Where the Pontics

²⁷² Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, p. 3, p. 11.

²⁷³ Fotini and Natasha, interview.

²⁷⁴ Hirschon, ‘History’s Long Shadow’, p. 90; Voutira, ‘Refugees’, p. 66; E. Voutira, ‘When Greeks Meet Other Greeks: Settlement Policy Issues in the Contemporary Greek Context’, in R. Hirschon

use the rhetoric of the refugees to make claims for how they *should* be integrated, Gerasimos and Theodoros deploy the narrative to establish that they *have* been integrated. Constructing themselves as redeemed Greeks through this narrative powerfully establishes their inclusion and legitimacy in the Greek imagined community. Moreover, appropriation of this narrative transfers to the Polites the positive connotations of cultural enrichment endowed upon the Asia Minor Greeks.

Inclusion and exclusion in appropriated victimhood

This is not the only context in which my informants appropriated narratives associated with other groups. The Ecumenical Federation of Constantinopolitans draws comparisons between the Holocaust and anti-Greek persecution, for instance likening the pogrom to Kristallnacht.²⁷⁵ Similarly, Theodoros compared the Turks to the Germans due to their fanatical obedience to their leader, whilst Gerasimos compared Mustafa Kemal to Adolf Hitler.²⁷⁶ Others expressed great empathy with the Armenians, or the Kurds, arguing that the latter should be given independence from Turkey. Finally, Polites referenced their shared experiences with the Muslims of Western Thrace, the other ‘exempted’ population. In Gerasimos’ words:

The Muslims who live in Greek Thrace. I many times have been able to speak to such people, and I understand them ... they love Turkey ... they feel like Turks, as we felt like Greeks there.²⁷⁷

(ed.), *Crossing the Aegean: an Appraisal of the 1923 Compulsory Population Exchange Between Greece and Turkey*, (Oxford, 2008), p. 145, p. 157.

²⁷⁵ Ecumenical Federation of Constantinopolitans, *Report on Human and Minority Rights*, p. 4.

²⁷⁶ Theodoros, interview; Gerasimos, interview.

²⁷⁷ Gerasimos, interview.

Rather than distracting from the seriousness and uniqueness of their own suffering, the Polites find appropriating the imagery of these fellow victims of persecution to be a productive way of highlighting their own claims to oppression, whilst also providing common solidarity and common enmity (especially when the perpetrators are Turks). Making sense of lived experiences through the narratives of other groups is not always a process of expressing communality, however, and negative narrative appropriation also abounds. Gerasimos, for instance, continuing his discussion of the Thracian Muslims, says:

But they haven't got a problem of fear ... for that reason, only 2000 of us remained there, and here there are 120,000 [Thracian Muslims]. And they shout and everything and say, "ah we haven't got freedom," and other stupidities.²⁷⁸

Here, Gerasimos evokes the Thracian Muslims' narrative of persecution by the Greek state, but only so as to highlight ironically how much worse the situation was for the Polites in Turkey. Similarly, Ivan mentioned what he perceives to be a disproportionate amount of aid accorded to the New Pontic refugees to highlight the lack of assistance offered to the Polites: 'why [was] so much help [given] to the Russo-Pontics, when the Constantinopolitans weren't helped at all?'²⁷⁹

Narrative appropriation

In making memories, the Polites appropriate social narratives from other groups, other times, and other places. This sometimes has a competitive edge – an attempt to

²⁷⁸ Gerasimos, interview.

²⁷⁹ Ivan, interview.

demonstrate that one experience is worse than another – but equally it can be productive; incorporating one narrative into an account need not displace or diminish another, and can in fact serve to articulate and highlight experiences. I will now discuss how such appropriation can be used to negotiate the Greco-Turkish communal divide.²⁸⁰

Solidarity with the expelled – intercommunal negotiation

In the narrows of the Bosphorus,
Yiannis cries in the evening,
And Memetis next to him,
Drinks and sings to him,

I am a Turk and you are a Rum,
I am a people and you are a people,
You Christ and I Allah,
But the two of us *ah ve vah* [Turkish: woe is me],

With a little love and wine,
I get drunk and so do you,
Drink a little from my cup,
My brother and my *kardasi* [Turkish: brother].²⁸¹

The above lyrics, written by a Greek lyricist whose family was of Asia Minor origin, are a mournful ode to Greco-Turkish friendship. In the song, two figures representing Greeks and Turks share a sociable moment by the banks of Istanbul's great waterfront. The Turkish protagonist serenades his Greek companion, lamenting the differences that impede their brotherly relationship. I have heard it suggested that Yiannis is meant to represent John the Baptist, and Memetis Sultan Mehmed II, 'the

²⁸⁰ Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, p. 11.

²⁸¹ A. Kaldaras and P. Papastamatiou [Pythagoras] (1972), In the Narrows of the Bosphorus, on *Greek Composers*, Apostolos Kaldaras, 2005.

Conqueror' whose armies captured Constantinople for the Ottoman Empire; if so, the song's two characters symbolise the historical antagonism between the two peoples, and their friendly meeting is the greatest rallying call to end intercommunal hostility. The song appeared on an album reflecting upon the Asia Minor Catastrophe, and forms part of a wider expression of intercommunal friendship through song.²⁸² It reaches across the communal divide, making an appeal to Greek-Turkish friendship despite historical antagonism, under the liberating effect of alcohol.

In this section, I will consider how members of these two communities use narrative to reach across the communal divide, demonstrating that collective narratives are not the exclusive property of specific groups, and can in fact be borrowed inter-communally to restructure and realign group identities.

The Fall of Istanbul

In his foreword to Dimitris Kaloumenos' *The Crucifixion of Christianity*, Istanbul Greek sociologist Neoklis Sarris writes:

The real Fall of Constantinople, in the sense of the irreparable destruction of its culture and civilisation and its replacement with another city, inhospitable Istanbul ... took place not on 29 May, 1453 but on the night of 6 September, 1955.²⁸³

²⁸² An excellent contemporary example of which is Çigdem Aslan, a Turkish singer who tours with one Turkish and two Greek musicians playing songs common to both countries; *Torn Apart by History*, Ç. Aslan, Sheffield Cathedral, Sheffield, 5 June 2011.

²⁸³ N. Sarris in Kaloumenos, *Crucifixion of Christianity*, pp. 15-16.

In a 2009 article, Turkish scholar Nedim Gürsel explores the theme of multiculturalism in the works of mid-nineteenth-century Turkish author Sait Faik. Sait Faik is unusual in Turkish literature in his dealing with the Greek community of Istanbul. Throughout his works, he expresses a profound emotional attachment to the cosmopolitanism given to Istanbul by its minorities, particularly the Greeks.²⁸⁴ Gürsel, concluding his study, laments the loss of Sait Faik's cosmopolitan Istanbul:

Istanbul, the beloved city of Sait Faik ... did not fall in 1453, as is commonly claimed - but it is "falling" today. The Golden Horn, that beautiful mirror of the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires, that body of crystal clear water, has become a putrid swamp. Jewish, Greek, and Levantine neighbourhoods in Galata and Pera have been destroyed one after another, and replaced by sky-scrapers and luxury hotels ... Today ... the minorities are gone. No trace of cosmopolitan Istanbul, nor of Sait Faik's characters, remains.²⁸⁵

The Fall of Constantinople is a – perhaps *the* – turning point in both Greek and Western European historical narratives, whereas in Turkish historiography it is the 'Conquest of Constantinople'. For the Istanbul Greek author to deploy this metaphor in discussing the 1955 pogrom is relatively unsurprising, and familiar from similar appropriations above – he uses it to construct the pogrom as a battle between civilization and barbarity, a tragic violation of Greek culture by Turkish hordes, and the end of a great Hellenic city. Turkish author Gürsel's appropriation of the Fall metaphor is more intriguing. He deploys the Fall as a lament to cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism. His willingness to borrow a metaphor from the Western Other breaches the communal divide and re-structures group solidarity; a damning and

²⁸⁴ N. Gürsel, 'The Greek Community of Istanbul in the Works of Sait Faik', in C. Dufft (ed.), *Turkish Literature and Cultural Memory: "Multiculturalism" as a Literary Theme after 1980*, (Göttingen, 2009), pp. 107-128.

²⁸⁵ Gürsel, 'Works of Sait Faik', p. 127.

provocative assessment of Turkish nationalism, which distances the author from homogenisation, and aligns him with a cosmopolitan community. Even the rhetorical devices which seem to ‘belong’ most strongly to one group – which seem most coherently to oppose ‘us’ against ‘them’ – are open to appropriation by the Other in an attempt to make ‘us’ and ‘them’ *one*. It is a stark illustration that memories are not owned by certain groups.

Istanbul, My Nostalgia

This Turkish nostalgia for lost cosmopolitanism is a wider trend.²⁸⁶ Typical are the comments of Turkish photographer Ara Güler, which carry an uncanny similarity with many Polites’ comments on life in Greece:

We have been overrun by villagers from Anatolia who don’t understand the poetry or the romance of Istanbul. They don’t even know the great pleasures of civilization, like how to eat well. They came, and the Greeks, the Armenians and the Jews – who became rich here and made this city so wonderful – left for various reasons. This is how we lost what we had for 400 years.²⁸⁷

In 2010, as part of Istanbul’s year as a European Capital of Culture, a group of Turkish scholars undertook a project to ‘find out the nostalgic aspects of Istanbul as pronounced by its former dwellers’ – the Polites.²⁸⁸ The group travelled to Greece

²⁸⁶ Komins, ‘Depopulated Cosmopolitanism’, p. 362, p. 365, pp. 368-370, p. 381; Güven, ‘The “Deep” State’, pp. 12-15; Katsanos, ‘6/7 September 1955’, p. 39; Mills, ‘Narratives in City Landscapes’, pp. 441-462; I. Türeli, ‘Ara Güler’s Photographs of “Old Istanbul” and Cosmopolitan Nostalgia’, *History of Photography*, (2010), pp. 300-313.

²⁸⁷ S. Kinzer, ‘Turkey’s Passionate Interpreter to the World’, *New York Times*, April 13 1997.

²⁸⁸ Ç. Turan, M. Pekin and S. Gûvenç, *Istanbul, My Nostalgia: First-hand Stories and the Nostalgia of the Rum for Istanbul*, (Istanbul, 2010), p. 243.

and interviewed forty-seven Polites, publishing their accounts in Greek and Turkish as *Istanbul, My Nostalgia*. As well as documenting the experiences of Polites ‘forced to leave their homelands due to the improper and unfair policies exercised upon them’, the authors hoped that the book would contribute to ‘the civil dialogue between Greece and Turkey’.²⁸⁹

The main body of the book is taken up with transcripts of the interviews, presented alongside photographs from the informant’s life. Accompanying these transcripts is an analysis of the project’s findings, which begins with an historical background. This section deals with the persecutions experienced by the Polites in Istanbul, starting with the population exchange, and then moving through the wartime discriminations, the 1955 pogrom, the expulsions of 1964, the Cyprus affair, and various incidents since such as the closure of the theological school on Chalki. The perpetrators of these actions are denounced as ‘racists’.²⁹⁰ The authors lament the persecution which has led to ‘a serious fading of one of the brightest colours of Istanbul thus distorting the cosmopolitan character of the city.’²⁹¹

Having established this history of anti-Greek persecution, the authors proceed to explore their interviewees’ nostalgia for Istanbul. Of the forty-seven informants, only two expressed no yearning for their former city, both blaming their unpleasant experiences; the remaining informants satisfied the authors’ quest for nostalgia. The authors explore statistically those aspects of Istanbul which their informants yearned

²⁸⁹ Turan *et al*, *Istanbul, My Nostalgia*, p. 243.

²⁹⁰ Turan *et al*, *Istanbul, My Nostalgia*, p. 246.

²⁹¹ Turan *et al*, *Istanbul, My Nostalgia*, pp. 243-249.

for most, highlighting that amongst the ‘most longed for’ are cultural aspects that transcend the communal divide, such as Turkish music, the *adhan* (Islamic call to prayer), and Istanbulite cuisine. The authors note with approval that their interviewees remembered mosques nostalgically ‘even though they are not directly part of their culture’.²⁹²

Their informants expressed great pride at being from Istanbul, and their ‘childhood and youth years in Istanbul were a dream ... they were very happy in those days ... they especially emphasised their good relations with their neighbours.’²⁹³ Moreover, they did not ‘generalize the negative events they have lived’ and some blamed politics for driving the two peoples apart (one informant accuses England of planning intercommunal violence between two communities that have no inherent enmity).²⁹⁴ As an aside on interview context, the high proportion of fond and harmonious accounts found in this book may be partly due to the presence of Turkish interlocutors; it is possible that informants felt more comfortable expressing strife to an English interviewer. Concluding, the authors lament the poor treatment of the Polites, yet note that ‘in spite of the fact that these people left due to unfavourable conditions ... most said they missed their homeland a lot.’²⁹⁵ Steps, they explain, should be taken to end outstanding minority persecution, provide

²⁹² Turan *et al*, *Istanbul, My Nostalgia*, p. 260.

²⁹³ Turan *et al*, *Istanbul, My Nostalgia*, p. 260.

²⁹⁴ Turan *et al*, *Istanbul, My Nostalgia*, p. 261.

²⁹⁵ Turan *et al*, *Istanbul, My Nostalgia*, p. 260.

assurances to minority groups, and improve bilateral relations between the two communities.²⁹⁶

By borrowing and expressing the Polites' strife narrative – by telling, in other words, the history of twentieth-century Istanbul from the point of view of the minorities – the authors breach the communal divide in much the same way as Gürsel's appropriation of the Fall metaphor. Having thus established solidarity with the Polites, the authors proceed to engage in nostalgic reminiscences with their informants, joining together in their shared loss of cosmopolitan Istanbul. Archetypically, this harmony narrative stresses idyllic childhood relations, shared cultural features, and externalises blame to nefarious great powers. It is now the informants' turn to borrow inter-culturally, as they elaborate on their fondness for Turkish aspects of Istanbul's culture. As Hirschon notes, these 'shared cultural items' can form 'the basis of warm interpersonal relations'.²⁹⁷ The two contrasting narratives operate in much the same way as we have seen before. Strife seeks recognition and restitution: the Turkish authors accomplish the former, and call for the latter. Meanwhile, harmony seeks communality and friendship, expressed here in shared culture and regret.

A number of informants take this redrawing of communal lines further than others. One transcript reads: 'we are Rum not Greeks, I want to live always together [with

²⁹⁶ Turan *et al*, *Istanbul, My Nostalgia*, pp. 260-261.

²⁹⁷ Hirschon, 'History's Long Shadow', p. 85.

other ethnicities] ... to not have that enmity.’²⁹⁸ This informant contextually re-aligns group boundaries to distinguish and exclude native Greeks, and include other Istanbulite ethnicities, including, presumably, her Turkish interlocutor. Intriguingly, she proceeds to state, ‘that’s why we want to forget the events of 1955. We want to forget them.’²⁹⁹ Whilst the Turkish authors are busy remembering the events of 1955 to reach out to the Polites and distinguish themselves from Turkish nationalist historiography, this informant actually appropriates the narrative silence of the Turkish nation-state as regards the pogrom, in a mutual attempt at reconciliation. Indeed, as Istanbul-Greek psychologist Pantelis Papadopoulos writes, healing the trauma of persecution requires both an admission of wrongdoing from one side, and an act of forgiveness from the other.³⁰⁰

Istanbul, My Nostalgia can be seen as an exercise in truth and reconciliation: narratives of strife and communality working co-operatively to contribute to an intercommunal dialogue that draws communities together. The encounters occasioned by the creation of this book – conducted in Turkish between Polites and Muslim Turks – illustrate how individuals can borrow, share, compromise, and negotiate on prevalent social narratives in order to change the dynamic of group relationships. In the Turkish academics’ eagerness to adopt the strife narrative we see confirmation that narratives are not exclusive group properties; in the

²⁹⁸ Turan *et al*, *Istanbul, My Nostalgia*, p. 117, p. 119.

²⁹⁹ Turan *et al*, *Istanbul, My Nostalgia*, p. 117, p. 119.

³⁰⁰ P. Papadopoulos, ‘Healing the Wound of the Septembriana’, *Proceedings of the International Conference: 6-7/9/1955 An Act of Annihilation of the Greek Community of Istanbul*, (2008), p. 54.

informant's willingness to abandon a strife narrative we find affirmation that groups are not controlled by narratives.

Reported reconciliation

On return visits to Istanbul, my informants are frequently greeted by nostalgic exclamations such as, 'why did you leave? It's such a shame that you left!'³⁰¹ Recent years have also seen an increase in Turkish criticism of anti-minority policies, for example the 2003 pogrom documentary *The Night of Shame*.³⁰² Some Polites are understandably sceptical, questioning the sincerity of such gestures.³⁰³ Meanwhile, many Polites complained that the modern residents of the city – younger people as well as Anatolian migrants – don't even know that there was a Greek population of Istanbul. One of my informants had the opportunity to exorcise both of these demons on a visit to Istanbul with some female friends. Sitting in a restaurant in Istanbul, the group was chattering animatedly in Greek, when Alexandra noticed that some young Turks sitting nearby were watching them. She takes up the story:

One of them was looking peculiarly at us ... "Oh", I thought, "is this going to turn into an incident?" I got up, and said to the girl, "I'm sorry, we're foreign, it's their first time in Istanbul. If it's annoying you, I'll take them and leave." The girl got up, and said, "why would you leave?" I told them we were descendants of people from Turkey. "No, no problem," she said, "where from?" "From Greece," I said. "No, no stay. Can you sit, so we can ask you some things? We study history ... we are interested to know, they told us that one time there were lots of Rum, and now there

³⁰¹ Cf. Uzunoglu, 'The Return of Greeks'.

³⁰² Katsanos, '6/7 September 1955', p. 39; Mills, 'Narratives in City Landscapes', p. 448.

³⁰³ Indeed, for the peculiarities and ironies of Istanbul's cosmopolitan nostalgia see Mills, 'Narratives in City Landscapes', esp. pp. 453-459; and Mills, 'Boundaries of the Nation', pp. 367-368, p. 379, pp. 387-389.

are very few.” I responded, “I left here at the age of 24, I studied, I married, and left with my children”. “Why did you leave?” the girl asked. “Why?” I replied, “understand, life for the Rum in Istanbul was finished!” I was worried that they might be secret police. They showed me their student cards. “I want to learn the truth,” the girl insisted.

Alexandra proceeded to explain to the girls what had happened to the Polites, and why they had been compelled to leave. She describes their reactions:

The girls were horrified. I told them about all the events, the whole story. One of the girls began to cry, and she kneeled down in front of me, and took my hands. “What’re you doing?” I asked. “I,” she responded, “as a Turkish girl, I feel ashamed for what we did. We’re sorry. What can we do?” I told her, “teach your peers, and those who come after you, that all people must live together as brothers, and not have hatred for one another. The sufferings should become lessons.” There was a silence around the room.

In this encounter, we can see the reconciling effect of sharing narratives across social divides, as the Turkish girl learns the narrative of the Other, and expresses solidarity with the expelled Alexandra.³⁰⁴

The significance of this encounter may go beyond the two main protagonists, however. People often have better recall for the meaning rather than surface content of past speech.³⁰⁵ Indeed, Richard Ely and Allyssa McCabe, discussing reported speech in oral narratives, suggest that it represents the ‘reconstructive or sense-making nature of memories’ which can include creative constructions of what could

³⁰⁴ Author, field notes, 05/02/12.

³⁰⁵ See U. Neisser, ‘John Dean’s Memory: A Case Study’, in U. Neisser (ed.), *Memory Observed: Remembering in Natural Contexts*, (San Francisco, 1982), pp. 147-148, p. 159; and E. Sanford, ‘Professor Sanford’s Morning Prayer’, in U. Neisser (ed.), *Memory Observed: Remembering in Natural Contexts*, (San Francisco, 1982), p. 176. On the other hand, for a suggestion that phrases with ‘high interactional content’ are well-remembered cf. J. Keenan, B. MacWhinney and D. Mayhew, ‘A Study of Natural Conversation’, in U. Neisser (ed.), *Memory Observed: Remembering in Natural Contexts*, (San Francisco, 1982), p. 323.

or should have been said.³⁰⁶ It is thus possible that Alexandra is remembering not just what the Turkish girl said, but also what she feels Turks in general *ought* to have said to her – a sense-making exercise in which Alexandra mobilizes the ambiguity in reported speech to receive the full apology that she should have received from those Turks who actually wronged her, through the medium of this particular Turkish girl.

Multidirectional narratives

As Rothberg informs us, memories are not exclusive properties of groups, any more than groups are restricted to a single collective narrative; ‘memories are not owned by groups – nor are groups “owned” by memories.’³⁰⁷ Schwartz similarly posits that a single present can sustain multiple memories, just as different presents can sustain the same memory.³⁰⁸ Indeed, social narratives are not possessed or restricted: they can be borrowed and appropriated by different groups, and combined and deployed in diverse ways, as individuals and collectives seek to make meaning in social contexts. It is not, therefore, particularly problematic for individuals to have recourse to multiple and even contradictory narratives; on the contrary, the present’s ability to sustain multiple memories permits individuals to adapt to social circumstances. These borrowings often involve reaching across spatial and temporal divides, including boundaries that are assumed to be impenetrable. Rothberg supports a multidirectional model as it reflects the ‘productive, intercultural dynamic’ of social

³⁰⁶ R. Ely and A. McCabe, ‘Gender Differences in Memories for Speech’, in S. Leydesdorff, L. Passerini and P. Thompson (eds.), *Gender and Memory*, (Oxford, 2005), p. 17, p. 19.

³⁰⁷ Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, p. 5.

³⁰⁸ Schwartz, *Forge of National Memory*, pp. 302-303.

memory whose ‘powerful creativity’ can create ‘new forms of solidarity’, ‘new communal ... identities’ and ‘mutual understanding’.³⁰⁹ In this chapter we have seen this dynamic in operation: altering communal identities to extend solidarity contextually to friends otherwise lost to alterity; creating mutual understanding between close social relations; and creating new communal identities through shared experiential, political or cultural solidarity.

³⁰⁹ Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, p. 3, p. 5, p. 11.

Chapter Four: Culture's In-between – Inclusion and Exclusion

Spyros was born in 1930, and left Istanbul in 1964, but not before growing up, working, and serving in the army in Turkey. I had arranged to meet him at the Constantinopolitan Union at six-thirty in the afternoon. Before I arrived, he had called the Union to inform them that he would be late. When he arrived thirty minutes later, he again apologised profusely for the delay, and explained that punctuality is very important to the Polites, 'unlike here [in Greece].'³¹⁰ This was the first of a catalogue of socio-cultural distinctions between Polites and native Greeks drawn during the course of our interview. Spyros noted with displeasure that native Greeks did not address their elders in the plural, give their seats up for elderly people on public transport, or pull chairs out for women in restaurants. He became most animated when discussing native Greeks' gait, proceeding to get out of his seat and walk about the room with his hands in his pockets and his shoulders hunched, as a comical impersonation of how a Greek man walks about in church; 'don't walk with your hands in your pocket,' he complained, 'if ... you fall, you won't be able to get your hands out in time!'³¹¹

Comments such as these adorn the majority of my interviews. It is always dangerous to generalise – the degree to which Polites wished to distinguish their culture from that of the native Greeks varied, from those who saw the two as being totally

³¹⁰ For a discussion and defence of Greek time-keeping, see R. Hirschon, 'Cultural Mismatches: Greek Concepts of Time, Personal Identity and Authority in the Context of Europe', in K. Featherstone (ed.), *Europe in Modern Greek History*, (forthcoming).

³¹¹ Spyros, interview.

disconnected to those professing to see no significant differences. Nor is cultural distinction necessarily paralleled by identity distinction: Spyros considered Greek and Rum to be one and the same, regardless of the cultural differences. Nevertheless, as we have established above, many Polites found a sense of cultural distinction or even superiority to be the primary means by which they could construct a unique sense of self in Greece.

In this chapter, I will examine the various uses to which my informants put narratives of cultural superiority. I will first consider cuisine, to investigate the issue of gendered narratives. Secondly, narratives of workmanship will be discussed, to observe how different threads within a life history interact.

A touch of spice – cuisine, gender, and identity

Butter is thicker than oil? Women and food preparation

Istanbul migrant Tassos Boulmetis' film *Politiki Kouzina*³¹² follows the fortunes of Fanis Iakovides, a Hellene who was expelled as a child in 1964, and moved to Athens. In Istanbul, Fanis was taught about the world by his uncle through the symbolic medium of spices; so, for instance, cinnamon, a liberating spice that makes people amiable, takes on the role of love. In Athens, keen cook Fanis preserves a

³¹² *Cuisine of the City*, the city being specifically Istanbul.

sense of Constantinopolitan identity, and a link to his homeland, through his use of spices, which distinguishes his food from that of his new countrymen.³¹³

Taking my lead from this film, I questioned my informants about the food they ate in Istanbul, and how it compared to the food that they found before them in Greece. Female informants tended to react strongly, offering impassioned and emotive accounts extolling the virtues of Constantinopolitan cuisine, complete with damning assessments of native Greek food. Alexandra, who lived in Istanbul into adulthood and started a family there, was particularly keen to spell out explicitly the differences in cuisine. I asked her if the food eaten in Istanbul was the same as that eaten in Athens:

Alexandra: No, no. No resemblance. No resemblance. No resemblance. Greek food by comparison with our food that we had in Istanbul doesn't have any connection.

Halstead: What's the difference?

Alexandra: In Istanbul ... the food we made with meat, we never put oil in it. We put butter, good butter. Whoever put oil in the food, they were mocked, and they said to them "are you a Jew? You're putting oil in meat!" And then we came to Greece, and ... I saw [that] they put oil in the meat, and I laughed at them.

Using butter instead of oil is only one element that Alexandra touches upon; she also considers the use of spices and onions, traces her food back to Byzantine cuisine, and explains that she still cooks Constantinopolitan food and has not adapted to the native Greek style of cooking.³¹⁴

³¹³ *Politiki Kouzina*, directed by Tassos Boulmetis, (Greece, 2003).

³¹⁴ Alexandra, interview.

Hellene Anna was born in 1923, and, unlike most of my informants, left as early as 1937, at the age of fourteen. She, too, was hugely disappointed with the food she encountered in Greece, blaming the economic situation:

Halstead: When you arrived, did the local Greeks eat the same food [as you]?

Anna: No, no. Awful. Awful ... people didn't have money ... you can't imagine the poverty here.³¹⁵

Ioanna, similarly, reacted to the cuisine questions by stating, 'let me tell you something, my child, in Greece I learnt to eat *pligouri* [bulgur wheat]. In Istanbul we thought it was a second class of food.' The reference to *pligouri*, associated with poverty, again contrasts the economic level of Istanbul and Greece. Like Fanis in *Politiki Kouzina*, these women continue to preserve a sense of their Constantinopolitan identity, and distinguish themselves from native Greek women, through their preparation of food. This extends to beverages. In the Constantinopolitan Union, instead of offering the customary native Greek cup of coffee, the Rum women serve tea, in a distinctive glass, with lemon and sugar (see fig. 1). In Tasoula's assessment, serving tea in this way helps them to preserve their culture.³¹⁶

³¹⁵ Anna, interview by author, Thessaloniki, 28/11/11.

³¹⁶ Ioanna, interview; Tasoula, interview.



Fig. 1 Tea at the Constantinopolitan Union, served in a distinctive glass found in Turkey (and elsewhere), but not commonly used by native Greeks.³¹⁷

Sure, spices: male indifference to food preparation

There was a marked contrast in the reactions of most men, who were generally nonplussed by the cuisine questions, giving indifferent or straightforward answers. Petros, for instance, in response to the question, ‘what food did you eat in Istanbul?’ responded, ‘everything. All foods.’ When asked specifically if the food in Greece was any different, he hesitated only for a second: ‘the only difference – no, there wasn’t a difference. Whatever they eat here, we ate there. Everything.’ Petros is evidently not inspired by the question, and shows no desire to pursue the topic.³¹⁸ This was a common response, and some respondents seemed almost taken aback by the question:

³¹⁷ Tea in Greece is generally reserved for the sick and the British.

³¹⁸ Petros, interview.

Halstead: What food did you eat in Istanbul?

Kostas: What food?

Halstead: Yes.

Kostas: Everything. I don't know. Both their [Turkish] food, and European food. I don't know, what can I say?

When pushed, Kostas could identify basic differences in the early years of migration, but was uninterested in pursuing the issue further, and evidently did not consider the question terribly important. This contrasts strongly with the reaction of many women, who were not at all surprised by the question, and had a very clear idea what they could say on the subject.³¹⁹

This inter-gender disagreement is best explored in the interaction between Spyros and Tasoula. Spyros was interviewed with Tasoula – an unrelated acquaintance – within earshot. I asked Spyros what food he ate in Greece. ‘Meat,’ he replied, ‘because my dad was a butcher. All food.’ I asked him if native Greek food was the same. ‘It’s the same,’ he stated, ‘whatever we knew there, we found here.’ Tasoula, hitherto otherwise occupied, chipped in at this point: ‘they didn’t have everything here, in the beginning. Of spices and things like that ...’ ‘Ok,’ Spyros acknowledged, chuckling, ‘sure, spices ...’³²⁰

Spyros had not been particularly interested in discussing the intricacies of cuisine differentiation across the Aegean; whilst Tasoula, despite having already explained the importance of Constantinopolitan food at length in our earlier interview, felt compelled to correct Spyros, pleading with him to remember the spices. This is all

³¹⁹ Kostas, interview by author, Athens, 05/02/12.

³²⁰ Spyros, interview.

the more remarkable given how keen Spyros generally was to identify cultural distinctions between Polites and native Greeks. The mention of spices is particularly revealing. Apart from the fact that spice was one of the most distinctive characteristics of Istanbul cuisine, it is also an 'invisible' element in cuisine, added during food preparation. In Istanbul women were generally solely responsible for the preparation of food; men were uninvolved, reflected in their lack of sensitivity to spices. For women, spices are central, the primary means of creating a distinctive taste for common ingredients, and, in migration, of asserting their distinct identity.

The importance of cuisine in gender identity formation has long been recognised in the anthropology of food.³²¹ Food is important in gender power relations: control over the production of food gives women a unique power, to counterbalance men's economic productive power.³²² In the context of migration, cuisine preparation not only provides female Polites with a distinct feminine identity, but also with a means of distinguishing themselves from native Greek women. It is not that men are entirely unaware of the differences, but that as cuisine was not their sphere of influence they are less likely to interpret their migratory experiences, or anchor their identities, in the semantic field of food. When I asked Andreas about cuisine, he initially looked expectantly to his wife, automatically ceding the floor to her. Nonetheless, it later transpired that he was perfectly well-informed about the

³²¹ S. Mintz and M. Du Bois, 'The Anthropology of Food and Eating', *Annual Review of Anthropology*, (2002), pp. 109-110.

³²² C. Counihan, *The Anthropology of Food and Body: Gender, Meaning, and Power*, (New York; London, 1999), pp. 11-12.

subtleties of Istanbul cuisine; he merely didn't feel that it was his place to explain these subtleties, especially with an expert (his wife) in the room.³²³

The table: cuisine and service

In his work in northern Ghana, anthropologist Jack Goody notes that, whilst domestic cooking is generally seen as being within the female sphere, certain other culinary activities – such as hunting, butchering, or wild/ritual cooking – can enter into the masculine sphere.³²⁴ Accordingly, when the realm of cuisine left the home in our narratives, and became more 'visible', men showed a greater tendency to observe it.

Quality of service, in both homes and restaurants, was a popular target for many women, who felt that it was not up to standard in Greece. Women complained that native Greeks did not know how to 'make a table'; to make a table in Greek means to have guests for a sit-down meal, and encompasses layout of the table, the type of food served, and the style of service. Anna was particularly distressed by the Greeks' inability to lay a proper table for dinner, and, whilst she was prepared to accept that the difference in foodstuffs was economic, she stated that the service problem persists today, and that therefore, 'it's not an economic thing; it's a lifestyle thing'. She lamented:

³²³ Andreas and Sofia, interview.

³²⁴ J. Goody, *Cooking, Cuisine and Class: A Study in Comparative Sociology*, (Cambridge, 1982), p. 71.

One thing they still don't have here is 'the table'. I'm alone, but I can't eat without laying a table. They just sit in front of the TV and eat with a plate and a fork. That is unthinkable in Istanbul. Unthinkable!³²⁵

Men were more inclined to join their womenfolk in these service criticisms, especially when they took place outside the home. Spyros, for instance, once challenged by Tasoula, concurred that waiters were superior in Istanbul, and that the native Greeks did not make a table correctly. Food as a means of drawing distinctions between Istanbul and Greece is not entirely lost to men; whilst many were loath to delve into the depths of culinary identity when asked questions that focussed the mind on hearth and home, some were perfectly content to discuss the superior quality of Istanbul culinary skill when the issue came up in a more appropriate context, such as restaurant service, or in the sphere of work.³²⁶

The tack tack tuk of the butcher's knife - food and work

Spyros' unwillingness to engage with food preparation in the context of cuisine evaporated when he came to talk about the quality of his father's butcher's shop, which was frequented by the 'crème de la crème' of Turkish society. Spyros contrasted the way that a Constantinopolitan butcher prepares meat for sale with that practised in Greece, disparagingly miming how a native Greek butcher chops up the meat in a haphazard manner. By contrast, his father, Spyros explained, followed the 'French system', preparing the meat into delicacies:

³²⁵ Anna, interview.

³²⁶ Spyros, interview.

We did chops you could eat raw.³²⁷ It's a skill. We did roasts, we took out the bones, we opened up the shoulder, we put in carrots, boiled eggs, we sewed them up, and made them into roasts for the big restaurants. A different system. Here [in Greece], *bam, bam, bam*. A big knife, he hits the meat five times.

The sort of issues that both Tasoula and I were trying – and failing – to get Spyros to engage with during a discussion about household cuisine, are here recounted with passion in the context of work. Although Spyros' story of meat preparation could easily have contributed to the earlier discussion (especially as he mentioned that they ate meat from his father's shop at home), he only remembered the story when a sphere of interest particular to him was invoked.³²⁸

Thanasis exhibited a similar response. He had specifically mentioned the film *Politiki Kouzina* in the context of intracommunal relationships, and so, as usual, I quizzed him about food:

Halstead: You spoke about that film, what food did you eat in Istanbul?

Thanasis: I don't remember anything different [from Greece]; that which a petty bourgeois or middle class family would eat.

Halstead: And, when you came here, was the food the same as in Istanbul?

Thanasis: Yes, roughly. Nothing changed; nothing much changed.

Thanasis, like many others, was not particularly interested in the question, and reckoned that domestic food consumption was little affected by migration. He owned a confectionary shop in Istanbul, and continued that line of work in Greece. I picked upon this, changing tack with the leading question:

³²⁷ A figure of speech, meaning that they were very high quality.

³²⁸ Spyros, interview.

Halstead: So your shop here ... it sells the same things that we would find if we went to a native Greek one?

Thanasis: No. It's a Constantinopolitan confectionary shop. Half of the things are traditional Constantinopolitan.

Halstead: Ah, so in the sweets we do have a difference then?

Thanasis: Yes, yes. There is a variety. There are sweets that you eat, and in ten minutes you want to eat another; there are sweets that you'll eat once a week ... They're not all the same sweets; there are levels.

Halstead: [So] you wouldn't want to have in your shop the same as they have in the other Greek shops?

Thanasis: We preserve some things in sweet and food.

Thanasis is at first uninterested in the subject of cuisine; it is only when the question is approached from the point of view of his employment as a shop owner that he delves into the importance of food to his identity, offering the intriguing distinction between different 'levels' of sweets for different occasions and needs, and observing that elements of his culture are preserved in cuisine.³²⁹

Vangelis, in his eagerness to find multiple ways of expressing his alienation in Greek society, goes further. I asked what food he ate in Istanbul. He instantly took to the question, making an unsolicited comparison with Greece:

What food? I will answer you immediately. When I came to Greece, they brought me some *pastes* [a sweet] with some cream on top. "What sort of thing is that? What is that?" [I asked]. They said, "it's *pastes*." "Do you eat these things here?" [I said].

Vangelis then turned his attention to butchery, in a manner strongly reminiscent of Spyros' tale:

³²⁹ Thanasis, interview.

If you go to Istanbul, for example, in a butcher's, and you ask to eat steaks, he'll hold it [the meat] with a knife and he'll split it. You'll wait of course. He'll take another knife; he'll put it down and *tack, tack, tuk*. He'll cut the fat bit. Fourteen pieces will come out. He'll take it; he'll split up, or separate, the gristle ... and he'll throw it away ... Here [in Greece], you go to a butcher, and you ask for chops. He'll take it ... [Vangelis mimes with his hands someone chopping meat haphazardly]. Done. One piece of meat with three bones; one bone without any meat.

Having criticised these visible, largely work-related aspects of cuisine, Vangelis delved into the preparation of food. He extolled the virtues of butter as a cooking ingredient, distinguishing between two distinct types of particularly high-quality butter available in Istanbul, which improve the taste. There followed a lengthy explanation of how to prepare sweets correctly, again reminding the interviewer of the importance of using butter rather than oil. In his pursuit of a distinct identity, Vangelis adopts even the more feminine, domestic aspects of culinary narratives.³³⁰

Cuisine as a marker of distinct Constantinopolitan identity, then, first appears to be a narrative technique available mostly to women; indeed, the fictional Fanis, due to his un-masculine mnemonic identification with spices in the domestic female sphere, was considered by his family to be a homosexual.³³¹ Men, however, are also capable of adopting this narrative when they wish particularly to distinguish themselves from native Greeks, and do so more readily when a sphere that is relevant to them – such as work or service in restaurants – is under discussion.

³³⁰ Vangelis, interview.

³³¹ *Politiki Kouzina*.

Multidirectional gender?

Leydesdorff and colleagues, introducing their *Gender and Memory* volume, refer to the ‘different qualities of memory’ between men and women stemming from the different spheres in which they operate.³³² Similarly, although women in Madrid during the Spanish Civil War performed archetypically masculine duties, their spontaneous narratives prioritised the traditionally feminine elements; the former only emerging through specific challenge from the interviewer.³³³ Certainly, we have seen a strong pattern to support the idea that gendered spheres of influence leave their mark on personal narratives. Nevertheless, we must acknowledge that gender does not confine narrative. Masculine and feminine are unstable analytical categories, and as Leydesdorff elaborates in her 2005 foreword to the same volume, sharp distinctions between male and female are ‘becoming obsolete’.³³⁴

Moreover, gendered narrative conventions are socially, not sexually, produced, and are therefore as mobile as social experiences.³³⁵ Isabelle Bertaux-Wiame encountered a female informant who narrated her life after the death of her husband

³³² Leydesdorff *et al.*, ‘Introduction’, p. 1.

³³³ E. Cabezali, M. Cuevas and M. Chicote, ‘Myth as Suppression: Motherhood and the Historical Consciousness of the Women of Madrid, 1936-9’, in R. Samuel and P. Thompson (eds.), *The Myths We Live By*, (London; New York, 1990), pp. 168-169.

³³⁴ S. Leydesdorff, ‘Introduction to the Transaction Edition: Gender and Memory Ten Years On’, in S. Leydesdorff, L. Passerini and P. Thompson (eds.), *Gender and Memory*, (Oxford, 2005), p. ix; J. Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History*, (New York, 1999), pp. 28-52 and *passim*.

³³⁵ I. Bertaux-Wiame, ‘The Life History Approach to the Study of Internal Migration: How Women and Men Came to Paris Between the Wars’, in P. Thompson (ed.), *Our Common History: The Transformation of Europe*, (New Jersey, 1982), p. 196; Leydesdorff *et al.*, ‘Introduction’, p. 14; A. Piscitelli, ‘Love and Ambition: Gender, Memory and Stories from Brazilian Coffee Plantation Families’, in S. Leydesdorff, L. Passerini and P. Thompson (eds.), *Gender and Memory*, (Oxford, 2005), p. 103.

with recourse to typically masculine narrative forms (stressing the ego and individual choice over the collective), whilst maintaining feminine patterns for life before the death; with the death of her husband, her gendered social situation changed, exposing her to masculine spheres, and her narrative changed accordingly.³³⁶ Similarly, another of my informants, Eleftherios, is unemployed, and his wife brings in the household income; Eleftherios, therefore, takes on the household chores, including food preparation.³³⁷ Accordingly, his narrative was sensitive to culinary issues, covering butter, spice, and the variety of the Constantinopolitan table.³³⁸ We thus need not be astonished to hear a man employ a culinary narrative. Just as groups do not own memories, nor are certain narratives the exclusive property of one sex: seemingly gender-specific narratives can be borrowed across the gender divide as social context demands.

Workmanship and the economy

Nevertheless, household cuisine remains a predominantly feminine concern in modern Greece, and in differentiating themselves from native Greeks men often had recourse to a narrative that resonated more strongly with their social experiences. Women generally did not work outside the home in Istanbul, especially after marriage; and although in migration some women were forced to for economic reasons, most Polites tried to preserve this social division of labour in Greece.

³³⁶ Bertaux-Wiame, 'The Life History Approach', p. 196.

³³⁷ Done because the wife found work easier: in Eleftherios' words, 'I said to my wife, "I'll become the woman of the house and you'll become the man of the house"'. Eleftherios, interview by author, Athens, 30/01/12.

³³⁸ Eleftherios, interview.

Accordingly, as Hirschon observed amongst Asia Minor refugees, whilst women tend to recall activities relating to the ‘religious and family spheres of life’, men preferred to speak of ‘the economic dealings between them, reflecting issues related to relative status and power.’³³⁹

Superior workmanship and identity

Petros was keen to recount the tale of his apprenticeship in Istanbul. His father decided that as a teenager he should learn a trade. ‘If something happens,’ his father said, ‘and we get up and leave this country ... and you don’t know a trade, what will you do?’ Petros thus trained to become a turner, and he takes pride in the apprenticeship system in Istanbul:

In Turkey you don’t go to school to learn a trade, you learn it from a young age by working ... I went to learn a skill, as much as I could of course, but that small amount that I learnt, here when I came aged eighteen, I was not a perfect technician, I was a helper, but I found a job and I worked, and after I developed.

Petros explained that the Polites were distinguishable in Greece by the quality of their workmanship:

In certain jobs [in Greece] there were some who were lazy ... When I worked [in Greece] ... as a turner, I turned out fifty pieces per day. The others turned out twenty. So, they came [to me], and made a fuss, “hey, stop working so hard, calm down a bit”. We hadn’t learnt to be like that. There the worker takes pride in good work.

³³⁹ Hirschon, ‘Knowledge of Diversity’, p. 71; see also Piscitelli, ‘Love and Ambition’, pp. 93-94.

Petros felt that the native Greeks were idle in the workplace, keen to do the minimum amount necessary, and not working to their full potential – by their hard-work and skill, the Polites establish a distinct masculine identity to differentiate themselves from native Greek men. As Bertaux-Wiame notes, work is often the primary means through which men establish a social identity.³⁴⁰ Superior workmanship thus confirms the superior masculinity and social worth of the male Polites as compared to native men.³⁴¹

Vampiric bosses – workmanship and socialism

A narrative of superior workmanship also serves as a form of political commentary. Petros, for instance, having sketched out the laziness in Greece, blamed an attitude which pitted workers in a perpetual struggle against their employers:

In Istanbul, we learnt to work for the job. Here in Greece, there exists ... still the problem that the worker considers his boss to be drinking his blood. That is wrong: we don't look to sabotage our work, we look to do our work.

Polites do not sabotage their work – by doing the bare minimum or taking strike action – as the Greeks do.³⁴² The connection is made much more explicitly by Spyros:

They had a different culture here [in Greece] ... They had unions. You'll clock off at five. We didn't have unions. And six, and seven, and eight, work finished. Work, the

³⁴⁰ Bertaux-Wiame, 'The Life History Approach', p. 192.

³⁴¹ Petros, interview.

³⁴² Petros, interview.

client first. From the customer I live. What I am going to do if I work an hour extra, go to the cafe? ... Here he [the boss] sucks my blood. I've heard it, and I say, "are your bosses vampires?" My boss drinks my blood, because instead of working until eight I work until eight-thirty? ... You have to finish your work, so that the customer is happy, so he comes again tomorrow. It's another mentality: here with the unions ... The unions cannot control the state ... Andreas Papandreou [socialist Greek politician and two-times prime minister of Greece] gave all of these rights ... School kids of primary and secondary school age set up committees, they opened and closed the schools, and did strikes, smashing the schools, and no one gets punished. We don't like such things, we want the law to be law. You make a mistake, you'll be punished ... These things were done by the late, lamented Andrikos [Andreas Papandreou]. He started to give rights, so he could get votes. Rights, rights, rights everywhere, committees, myths, and now that they are removing these rights, people make a fuss. Then they were happy, now they shout.³⁴³

In this lament, Spyros connects Greece's inferior workmanship to the spread of unionism, socialism, and runaway workers' rights. Betraying a right-of-centre approach, he criticises union power and popular uprisings, extolling the virtues of the strong arm of the law and individualistic hard-work. Tying a right-wing critique of unionism to an account of superior workmanship, Spyros finds an appropriate and familiar mechanism for understanding his alienation in the Greek workplace. Simultaneously, this alienation is deployed to confirm his ideological presuppositions. Just as socialist narrators found in narratives of intercommunal relations legitimisation of their belief in class as the underlying principle behind all social conflict, others see in Greece's union-inspired poor workmanship confirmation of their right-wing economic outlook. This shows us that narrative threads within people's life histories are not simply disparate stories of lived experience, but interweaving meaning-making devices that construct a viable and malleable sense of social self.

³⁴³ Spyros, interview.

Workmanship and economic crisis

When I started my fieldwork in November 2011, the European sovereign debt crisis was in full swing. Greece's massive government debt and ailing economy was at the centre of this maelstrom, as austerity measures – preconditions for EU bailout deals – were implemented. The consequences for the Greek people – rising unemployment (especially amongst the young), disappearing pensions, forced early retirements, cuts to public services – were (and remain) severe.³⁴⁴ The Western response was largely played out through an established narrative that wonders how the ancestors of European civilisation can have become, in Herzfeld's words, the 'West's poorly socialized and wayward offspring.'³⁴⁵ As Holden aptly put it, Greece is socio-economically underdeveloped yet historically overdeveloped, and therefore unable 'to treat herself, or to be treated by others, on her present merits [or present deficiencies].'³⁴⁶ Operating under this imagined Western legacy of former greatness has only increased the stigma of Greece's current financial plight in European discourse.

Within Greece itself, the primary means of digesting this economic catastrophe and its Western stigma has been to dredge up an old but never forgotten narrative. As David Sutton has demonstrated, narratives of an interfering 'foreign finger' from

³⁴⁴ D. Mac Fhearraigh, 'SYRIZA and the Rise of Radical Left-reformism in Europe', *Irish Marxist Review*, (2012), p. 105.

³⁴⁵ Herzfeld, *Anthropology Through the Looking-glass*, pp. 19-21.

³⁴⁶ Holden, *Greece Without Columns*, p. 36.

great powers are prevalent features in Greece during moments of crisis.³⁴⁷ In the case of the economic crisis, it is a German finger that has poked Greece. Germany – one of Greece’s biggest creditors – has long laboured under an ambivalent relationship with Greece due to the occupation and devastation wrought upon the latter by the former during the Second World War.

The economic crisis becomes Germany’s second occupation of Greece, accompanied by the provocative claim that as Germany failed to make its war reparations to Greece, Greece should not be obliged to repay its debts to Germany. As well as receiving popular circulation, this claim has been raised by Greek politicians and war veterans, and by April 2012 had gathered enough momentum to require an official response from the German administration.³⁴⁸ Whilst these accounts are serious enough to have prompted an official rebuke, on the popular level, at least, they contain an element of satire. As Sutton stresses, there is frequently a humorous or ironic undertone to foreign finger narratives: ‘statements of certainty ... intermixed with humour and an admission of the[ir] hypothetical basis’.³⁴⁹ The Germany-as-aggressor narrative thus partly represents an ironic riposte to Western condemnation of Greek agency in the crisis. At any rate, the memory of the Second World War provides a familiar narrative to Greeks within which to digest economic crisis. For the Polites – who lack both lived experience and to an

³⁴⁷ D. Sutton, ‘Poked by the “Foreign Finger” in Greece: Conspiracy Theory or the Hermeneutics of Suspicion?’ in K. Brown and Y. Hamilakis (eds.), *The Usable Past: Greek Metahistories*, (Maryland, 2003), pp. 191-210.

³⁴⁸ *Athens News*, ‘German Foreign Ministry Puts Lid on War Reparations Debate’, April 1 2012; *Athens News*, ‘Twenty-eight MPs Raise German War Reparations Issue’, February 2 2012.

³⁴⁹ Sutton, ‘Poked by the “Foreign Finger”’, p. 204.

extent postmemory of the war – this narrative is not so easily accessible, and many instead deal with the economic crisis through their narrative of cultural superiority.

Petros, ending his explanation of inferior Greek workmanship, stated: ‘that’s why this country [Greece] has arrived in this poor state – it’s not just one or two [people], it’s lots. Lots and lots. Unfortunately.’³⁵⁰ Spyros, too, connects Greeks’ work ethos with their economic plight. Concluding his account of Greek unionism, he says: ‘Greece has been spoiled by the unions, you see what’s happening now.’ Similarly, speaking of Greeks’ know-it-all behaviour inhibiting their learning of skills: ‘[the Greeks say] “I know, I know” ... That’s how we withered away. “I know, I know, I know.”’³⁵¹ Ivan likewise voices his disappointment with the Greeks in the context of economic crisis:

We have got to the point today, unfortunately, that we are embarrassed to say that we are Greeks ... [When we arrived], of course we didn’t find things here as we wanted, the Greeks mostly disappointed us. Today, in 2011, they disappoint us even more. It doesn’t cease to be a beautiful country, [but] the people are the problem, unfortunately. The people of this country.³⁵²

Ivan’s rejection of Greek identity is thus partly produced by the present stigma of Greece’s economic failure.

Greece’s economic crisis is attributed to the Greeks’ poor workmanship, perhaps linked to unionism and a workers-rights infused socialist mentality; the Polites are

³⁵⁰ Petros, interview.

³⁵¹ Spyros, interview.

³⁵² Ivan, interview.

exempt from this criticism, due to their status as honest hard-workers, and so are distanced from the economic failure. The two narratives – cultural/labour superiority and economic failure – evolve alongside one another, each legitimating the other in the process. In Spyros' account, three narrative concerns are subtly interwoven: his hard-working mentality distinguishes him from the native Greeks, who, with their left-wing rights-obsessed unionism and runaway liberties have succeeded in ruining the country. Spyros thus finds a distinct sense of identity, an escape from economic crisis, and validation of his ideological standpoint. Memories are not static, but change and develop in a discourse with other memories.

Postmemory of superiority

The most intriguing manifestation of this narrative combination comes with its appropriation as a postmemory by Ivan's daughter. Ivan dissociates himself from Greece – describing his identity as simply 'not Greek' – and thus distances himself from economic failure. During our interview, it became apparent that Ivan's daughter – born and raised in Greece – may be plotting a similar escape. With the daughter within earshot, I asked Ivan if he thought his children have any sort of Constantinopolitan element to their identity. He replied:

No. My children feel that they have a father from Istanbul, but they don't feel anything else for Istanbul, apart from tourism ... They are pure Greek girls, they have a Greek mentality ... No. They haven't got a different culture. They feel Greeks ...

At this point, his daughter began to cough very deliberately, and shake her head.

Registering this, Ivan continued:

... regardless of the situation which has brought them to the point of no longer wanting to be called Greeks.

Ivan's daughter challenges his imposition of Greek identity upon her. Ivan recognises this, and implies that her rejection of Greek identity is a new tendency, a direct result of the economic situation. In the present context, it appears that the daughter has adopted her father's 'not Greek' identity to distinguish herself from the failures of the Greeks. Just as young Greeks today may dredge up a German occupation completed decades before their birth, so it appears that a narrative of Constantinopolitan cultural superiority is available as a postmemory for second-generation migrants.³⁵³

Mackridge writes that the economic crisis has precipitated an identity crisis in Greece: for many Polites, an escape from this crisis of self-definition is found by taking refuge in those aspects of their identity cluster that make them distinct from the native Greeks.³⁵⁴

Cultural inclusion

Whilst narratives of cultural superiority can establish group exclusivity for the

³⁵³ Ivan, interview.

³⁵⁴ Mackridge, 'The Heritages of the Modern Greeks', p. 33.

Polites, they also possess an inclusive potential.

Even today in Turkey: shared superior culture

Cultural narratives formed the basis of some Polites' attempts to construct a cosmopolitan identity shared with non-Greek Istanbulites and withheld from native Greeks.³⁵⁵ Spyros extended his category of skilled hard-workers to Istanbul's Turks, explaining that they came to Greek establishments to learn a trade:

There was a Turkish child, we played together at my house ... His father ... said ... "you will only go to Spyros' house, not to the other Turkish children's houses." He said, "alongside the Rum – the Greek – [my son] will acquire another culture, another mentality. The Rum know skills." ... And now in Istanbul there are lots of good skilled tradesmen, and when I go, I ask them, "where did you learn your trade?" "From Christos!"³⁵⁶ "From the Armenian!" [they say] ... They came from the villages, they went to Greek shops, they learnt a trade, and they have a living.

Spyros establishes a paternalistic relationship between the Turks and the Polites, the former – rural, uneducated – coming to the latter – urban, skilled – to raise their cultural and economic level. He then proceeded to make an unsolicited contrast between attitudes to learning in Turkey and Greece:

The Turks, and their children, say, "I don't know. I don't know. How do I do that?" Here in Greece if you say, "I'll tell you something", [they will say] "I know, I know" ... "I know, I know, I know". Is it bad to listen? Listen, and throw it. Take one or two [things] you want from it ... but sit and listen! You won't lose anything. Here they don't listen much. They're know-alls. That's bad. The Turk will say, "I don't know". All the Turks, who came from inner-Anatolia to work in our shops, said, "I don't know, how do I do that, boss?"

³⁵⁵ Also see Örs, 'Beyond the Greek and Turkish Dichotomy', especially pp. 81-92.

³⁵⁶ I.e. an Istanbul-Greek man.

Spyros contrasts enterprising Turkish workers with know-it-all Greeks – he creates a cross-cultural community of solidarity which includes Turks and Polites and excludes Greeks.³⁵⁷ Petros concurs, and stresses that Turkish commitment to the job persists to the present day: ‘[In Greece] there were some who were lazy ... In Turkey, still, there exists the antithetical, the *antithetical* mentality.’ His workmanship narrative thus sustains his wider narrative of cosmopolitan solidarity in Istanbul (see above).³⁵⁸

Culinary superiority, too, was extended to the Turks of Istanbul, and again was considered to be a persistent feature. Commenting on restaurant service, Vangelis explained that whilst service is non-existent in Greece, in Turkey ‘it’s a science.’ A restaurant proprietor, he explains, will see you coming from fifteen metres away, and will jump up to serve you – the attempt is ‘exhaustive.’ Tasoula noted that when she visited Istanbul in 1991 even in fast-food restaurants the standards of service were high, and recalled thinking that Greece is ‘one hundred-years behind’ Turkey. Additionally, Spyros noted that the Turks were more respectful in churches than the Greeks, commenting: ‘Turks, when they go into the church, take off their hats.’ Narratives of superior culture that exclude native Greeks can thus simultaneously include Muslim Turks: contextually manipulating group boundaries by sharing cultural superiority, much as in *Istanbul, My Nostalgia*.³⁵⁹

It is not just the Turks of Istanbul that can share in this culture, however. Indeed,

³⁵⁷ Spyros, interview.

³⁵⁸ Petros, interview.

³⁵⁹ Tasoula, interview; Spyros, interview; Vangelis, interview.

more than the Turks, Spyros is keen to lavish praise upon the Kurds:

In my shop ... I had Kurds. Hard-working, honest people. Very honest. And very hard-working. They didn't know letters. In the afternoon I taught them *alpha, beta*, the alphabet, they started to read. When my brother left [Istanbul], the last one [of our family to leave] ... he gave the shop to them as a present. I went the year before last, they took my hand [in gratitude] ... they are people that don't forget a good deed. Kurds, right? Another race.

Spyros' identification with his Kurdish employees is a less common narrative – Kurds in Istanbul occupied lower economic rungs and many Polites did not have as much interaction with them. For Spyros, however, who did because of his work, incorporation of the Kurds into this community of superior workers is productive. To Spyros, the Kurds are another victim of Turkish nationalism, with whom he expresses great empathy. Establishing communality with the Kurds as honest workers allows him simultaneously to be distinct from native Greeks whilst also joining the Kurds in solidarity against Turkish homogenisation (as in chapter three). It also shows that the urban-rural dichotomy often employed by Polites is not restrictive, and Spyros is able to find room for the rural Kurds.³⁶⁰

We taught them that! Culture as assimilation

Polites' cultural narratives also have a role to play in including them in native Greek society. As we saw above, in Greek historiography, the silver lining on the Asia Minor Catastrophe was the (alleged) successful incorporation of the Asia Minor

³⁶⁰ Spyros, interview.

refugees, and the consequent enrichment of Greek culture.³⁶¹ The Polites certainly feel that they had a similar effect. Many women explained that native Greeks ‘went mad’ for their food; Alexandra is particularly fond of a story in which a native Greek neighbour of hers laughed at her for putting too many onions in her food, until she tried it and then lavished praise upon Alexandra’s cooking. Spyros and Tasoula similarly felt that the Polites taught the natives the art of service, and Ivan believes that they introduced the *semedaki* – a decorative tablecloth – to Greece.³⁶²

It is possible to interpret this behaviour as competitive and exclusive – further illustrations of Constantinopolitan cultural superiority – but there is an alternative dimension. Stressing these cultural contributions to Greek society can be read as an attempt by the Polites to establish their contribution to the country, to integrate and assimilate themselves into the Greek population by adding to its rich cultural tapestry, and thereby tackle their reception as aliens. As seen above, plotting their migration within a 1922-era narrative of successful cultural enrichment gives the Polites value and purpose in Greek society. Even with narratives of cultural superiority – which in their essence imply exclusivity – we observe powerful inclusive potential, as culture is shared in order to redraw group borders and establish social solidarity.

³⁶¹ Hirschon, ‘History’s Long Shadow’, p. 90; Voutira, ‘When Greeks Meet Other Greeks’, p. 145, p. 157; Voutira, ‘Refugees’, p. 66.

³⁶² Alexandra, interview; Ivan, interview; Spyros, interview.

In-between cultures

Homi Bhabha speaks of the ‘contaminated yet connective tissue between cultures’ that he calls ‘culture’s “in-between”’ which is ‘bafflingly both alike and different’.³⁶³ In this section, we have seen how the Polites make use of this productive space betwixt cultures, in which they can be both bafflingly alike and different from native Greeks and Muslim Turks, as social context dictates. We also observe that memories are not timeless, static devices, nor discrete isolated entities. Rather, they evolve in tandem over time as the individual and their social context changes, informing and borrowing from one another to manipulate meaning. In Maurice Halbwachs’ terms:

Each memory is a viewpoint on the collective memory ... this viewpoint changes as my position changes ... this position itself changes as my relationships to other milieus change.³⁶⁴

When a Constantinopolitan man thinks about the current economic crisis, he is also thinking with narratives of cultural difference and political ideology from another time and place; when a Constantinopolitan lady thinks about her migration, she is also considering culinary skill acquired pre-migration.

³⁶³ H. Bhabha, ‘Culture’s In-Between’, in S. Hall and P. du Gay (eds.), *Questions of Cultural Identity*, (London, 2003), p. 54.

³⁶⁴ M. Halbwachs, ‘The Collective Memory’, in J. Olick, V. Vinitzky-Seroussi and D. Levy (eds.), *The Collective Memory Reader*, (Oxford, 2011), p. 142.

Conclusions

Narrative, competition, and myth

Social memory has often been conceptualised in the semantic field of war: a fight to the death between competing social narratives that represent single and coherent groups. The winner achieves its hegemony through its mythical content and nefarious operation, and is rewarded with official recognition, whilst other more truthful and natural competitors survive only as the endangered species of minority memory.

Perhaps the clearest articulation of this politics of memory approach is the work of John Bodnar. Bodnar contrasts an official memory with a vernacular memory. The former is not ambiguous or complex, and aims to dominate through reducing the power of vernacular memory. The latter, by contrast, is diverse and changing, and is less interested in asserting itself over others, but rather more modestly in advancing the interests of subnational communities. The official memory reflects what society should be like, the vernacular what social reality really feels like; one deals with imagined communities, the other with views of reality based on first-hand experiences in small-scale communities.³⁶⁵ Although public memory emerges from the mediation between the official and the vernacular, this interaction is an unequal

³⁶⁵ As Alon Confino critically exclaims, 'what a neat binary opposition between authentic vernacular culture and manipulative official one!' A. Confino, 'Collective Memory and Cultural History: Problems of Method', *American Historical Review*, (1997), p. 1401.

‘struggle for supremacy’, and the opposition between pernicious official myth and benign vernacular reality adorns Bodnar’s analysis.³⁶⁶

Certainly, these arguments capture one aspect of social memory. Nation building in Modern Greece involved a large degree of imagining an idealised Hellenic nation in the face of a vernacular Romaic peninsula, and the Greek national imagining of their Turkish Other, especially in education, often seems geared to eradicating any positive ambiguity. Competitive memory was encountered in chapter two, most vividly played out in the narrative of Vangelis, whose primary concern is to counteract what he sees as a dominant myth about the 1955 pogrom with his own first-hand experiences. Whilst I thus agree that memory can be used competitively in power struggles, I have tried in this essay to join Rothberg and Schwartz in calling attention to other aspects of mnemonic operation. Competition and domination are only ‘component parts’, in Rothberg’s terms, of memory’s operation, and we must *also* be sensitive to the productive, inclusive, and interconnected nature of social memory.³⁶⁷ People can be competitive, memory is not inherently so; and there is no strict opposition between official myth and vernacular reality in memory.

It is inaccurate to see official memory as unitary and unambiguous. Indeed, we have seen that official historiography in Cyprus absorbs and combines multiple narratives; Yiannis Papadakis refers to this official accommodation of strife and harmony as ‘a symbolic official double-talk’, and its contradictory tension illustrates that official

³⁶⁶ J. Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century*, (Princeton, 1994), esp. pp. 13-19.

³⁶⁷ Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, p. 11.

memory is not the carefully constructed blueprint for domination it is sometimes held to be.³⁶⁸ As Bhabha warns, we should not see ‘power as a kind of homogenous, hegemonic block’.³⁶⁹ Nor are personal accounts, within specific contexts, always nuanced and variable. Theodossopoulos claims that ethnographic accounts’ multiplicity sharply contrasts with the one-dimensional nature of official narratives.³⁷⁰ Whilst this is nearly always true over the course of an entire ethnographic interview or fieldwork experiment, in the context of a single spontaneous life history individual narrative can be as one-dimensional as the official narrative can be ambiguous and multiple; lived experience may be diverse, but this diversity does not always emerge in a narrative context.

As Papadakis states, just as ‘states and parties create their own mythologies to justify and glorify their pasts and to promote their future aims, so do ... individuals’.³⁷¹ Indeed, the individual life histories analysed in this thesis – from the most one-dimensional to the most wide-ranging – contain mythic elements. Following Raphael Samuel and Paul Thompson, to refer to myth in these narratives ‘is not to deny their roots in real incidents and real social conflicts’.³⁷² Myth is not the opposite of reality; it re-shapes reality into new meanings.³⁷³ A harmony narrative shapes a reality of benign Greco-Turkish relationships into a myth of trouble-free harmony

³⁶⁸ Papadakis, ‘Greek Cypriot Narratives’, p. 153.

³⁶⁹ Bhabha, ‘Between Identities’, p. 190.

³⁷⁰ Theodossopoulos, ‘Introduction: the “Turks” in the Imagination of the “Greeks”’, p. 17.

³⁷¹ Papadakis, ‘Greek Cypriot Narratives’, p. 157.

³⁷² R. Samuel and P. Thompson, ‘Introduction’, in R. Samuel and P. Thompson (eds.), *The Myths We Live By*, (London; New York, 1990), p. 19; cf. Tonkin, ‘History and the Myth of Realism’, p. 28.

³⁷³ A. Bravo, L. Davite and D. Jalla, ‘Myth, Impotence, and Survival in the Concentration Camps’, in R. Samuel and P. Thompson (eds.), *The Myths We Live By*, (London; New York, 1990), p. 107; Schwartz, *Forge of National Memory*, p. 5.

that carries the meaning: ethnicities can and should live together. Meanwhile, strife shapes reality of persecution into endless fear and antagonism with the message: past wrongs should be rectified and avoided in the future.

Following Luisa Passerini, life histories are ‘constructions of single mythbiographies, using a choice of resources, that include myths, combining the new and ancient in unique expressions’.³⁷⁴ Official narratives, too, are mythbiographies of nations, drawing on varied resources, and accessed popularly by individuals as well as institutionally. It is therefore unhelpful to contrast the nefarious operation of official memory with the benign operation of popular reality; as Schwartz complains, the politics of memory approach pays great attention to official memory’s ‘profane motives’ whilst failing to apply the same critique to memories ‘cherished by minorities’.³⁷⁵ To insist upon an opposition between official myth and lived reality is not only to deny the truth contained in the former and the myth in the later; it is also to disregard the tenacity and power of a harmony narrative to achieve practical collective action. It is the mythical element to stories that turns diverse reality into socially useful meanings: myth is reality made useful.

Multidirectional memory

In chapter two, we saw how two contrasting mythbiographies served different social functions, and could be used in competitive attempts to establish a particular history.

³⁷⁴ L. Passerini, ‘Mythbiography in Oral History’, in R. Samuel and P. Thompson (eds.), *The Myths We Live By*, (London; New York, 1990), p. 59.

³⁷⁵ Schwartz, *Forge of National Memory*, p. 15.

In the following chapter, along with Papadakis, I attempted to demonstrate that individuals are not bound by the terms of these contrasting narratives, and that ‘it is more productive to regard these paradigms as enabling rather than as constraining, since there are always possibilities for selectively or strategically using them according to the context and the actors’ aims’.³⁷⁶ Such a strategic usage was aptly demonstrated by the narrative negotiation of Andreas, who was able to deploy a harmonious narrative to advance his own contextual self-presentation to the ethnographer, whilst simultaneously validating his wife’s account through access to a strife narrative.

Rothberg has demonstrated that Holocaust memory emerged in dialogue with narratives of decolonization; memories, he thus concludes, do not block each other’s expression, but contribute to each other’s articulation.³⁷⁷ Indeed, we have seen how narratives of cultural superiority have evolved in dialogue with the sovereign debt crisis, the struggle of migration, and socio-political ideology. Likewise, Holocaust or refugee memories are not obstacles to the Polites’ own expression of suffering, but appropriable mediums for thinking about and highlighting those sufferings. Rather than seeing memory as zero-sum, Rothberg prefers to recognise that today’s losers can be tomorrow’s winners, and that winning may require adapting the rhetoric of the Other.³⁷⁸ Indeed, if multicultural Turks were the losers in Turkey’s nationalist yesterday, today they attempt to become the winners through appropriation of the Polites’ narratives of persecution and nostalgia. Muslim Turkish pro-multicultural

³⁷⁶ Papadakis, ‘Greek Cypriot Narratives’, p. 162; Andreas and Sofia, interview.

³⁷⁷ Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, pp. 1-12 and *passim*.

³⁷⁸ Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, p. 6.

historical revisionism thus evolves through interaction with both the strife-laden persecution narratives and harmony-infused nostalgic narratives of the Greek Other.

Narratives offered by individuals are therefore not just constructed of lived experience unique to them, but draw on established patterns and collective experiences. Building on the experiences of the past makes the meanings of the present seem plausible. As Schwartz argues, the past is ‘a familiar rather than a foreign country’: new symbolic structures are superimposed onto the old without fundamentally altering the basic structure.³⁷⁹ Whilst we could view this as *constraining* – making the present hostage to the past as Karl Marx saw it – it is perhaps more profitable to see the past as *enabling* the present to create new, socially useful meanings and adapt to social change without necessitating revolution or identity crises.³⁸⁰ We make use of the memory of the past not so much because we must, but because it is productive to do so – change grounded in familiarity has greater tenacity.³⁸¹ Creating new worlds out of old ones in this manner is, in Rothberg’s estimation, memory’s ‘powerful creativity’.³⁸² Moreover, as social narratives are so appropriable, they permit the migration of meanings to those without lived experience of events: creating transferable social action. Thus young Greeks can work towards intercommunal reconciliation through their appropriation of a harmonious narrative; or ex-pat American-Greeks can preserve the lessons of history as a warning for the future. In Schwartz’ terms, individuals know the past

³⁷⁹ Schwartz, *Forge of National Memory*, p. 18, p. 25, pp. 301-303; Schwartz, *Post-Heroic Era*, p. 11, p. 18.

³⁸⁰ K. Marx, *The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, (London, 2001 [1852]), pp. 7-11.

³⁸¹ Cf. Tully, ‘The Pen is a Mighty Sword’, pp. 9-19.

³⁸² Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, p. 5.

‘through the knowledge and symbols that predecessors and contemporaries transmit to them’.³⁸³

Multidirectional memory dynamically restructures identities and solidarities. As Rothberg states, memory can transcend and link various ‘spatial, temporal, and cultural sites’ creating ‘solidarity out of the specificities, overlaps, and echoes of different historical experiences’.³⁸⁴ Indeed, deploying the echoes of 1453, 1821, and 1922, the strife narrative creates a pan-Hellenic solidarity based on the overlap of historical experience of persecution at ‘Turkish’ hands; this links Greek-speakers together across vast spatial, temporal, and cultural sites. Likewise, harmony creates a pan-ethnic multicultural community out of the echoes of shared historical experiences in the overlapping space of the Ottoman Empire and beyond. As Rothberg elaborates, social memory is not a fight to the death for the scarce resource of public recognition, but rather a malleable discursive space in which groups come into being through interactions with others.³⁸⁵ It is within this malleable discursive space that a Greek community expands to include ‘good Turks’ or hidden Christians, or that a cosmopolitan community of Istanbulites constructs itself in opposition to both Greek and Turkish ignorant villagers. Senehi states that ‘people with common adversity can empower themselves by sharing their stories’, and indeed expelled Polites and pro-multicultural Turks empower themselves by sharing Turkish nationalist homogenisation as a common adversity.³⁸⁶ The ability of memory to

³⁸³ Schwartz, *Post-Heroic Era*, p. 11.

³⁸⁴ Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, p. 11, pp. 15-16.

³⁸⁵ Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, p. 5.

³⁸⁶ Senehi, ‘Constructive Storytelling’, p. 107.

‘traverse sacrosanct borders of ethnicity and era’, in Rothberg’s terms, as in Turkish appropriation of narratives from the Fall of Constantinople to the 1955 pogrom, can be a powerful mechanism for re-drawing such group boundaries.³⁸⁷

As Senehi adds, because stories are ‘accessible, flexible, and used contextually’, they can be deployed to reformulate cultural notions, or ‘comment critically and persuasively on community life’.³⁸⁸ Thus we saw how Thanasis could deploy a political, Marxist narrative to comment critically on the ethnic narrative, and to reformulate community as culturally united, and only politically divided. The accessible and flexible nature of these narratives permits, and requires, group identities to be constantly re-drawn; as Rothberg states, ‘because the structures of individual and collective memory are multidirectional, they prove difficult to contain in the moulds of exclusivist identities’.³⁸⁹ It is this malleable dynamism that makes social memory society’s most adept meaning-making system.³⁹⁰

Memory does not have to be a battlefield. We have seen that different social narratives can co-exist in a mnemonic space limited only literally by the cognitive confines of a society’s individuals. This co-existence occurs even between seemingly contradictory narratives, as they serve different social purposes, and allow individuals to access a range of meanings in context. Such memories are not the sole property of any individual or group, and commonly narratives are borrowed across

³⁸⁷ Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, p. 17.

³⁸⁸ Senehi, ‘Constructive Storytelling’, p. 103.

³⁸⁹ Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, p. 19.

³⁹⁰ Cf. Schwartz, *Forge of National Memory*, pp. 17-18.

purportedly antagonistic divides. Narrative malleability can also be used to create social solidarity, and reach across social divides, notwithstanding its ability simultaneously to exclude. Alon Confino criticises the link made between politics and memory, arguing that more attention should be paid to the reception (transmission, diffusion, meaning) of memory: highlighting its social and experiential aspects to work towards ‘an everyday history of memory’.³⁹¹ I like Confino’s turn of phrase, as it captures the necessity to explore the dynamic operation and significance of memory in diverse daily contexts. Rather than buying into the dominance and fixity that memories often claim, it is productive to observe the manner in which social narratives constantly evolve and adapt in tandem with one another, in a system of perpetual borrowing and interaction that manages inclusion as well as exclusion, reconciliation as well as competition.

³⁹¹ Confino, ‘Collective Memory and Cultural History’, pp. 1393-1397, p. 1402.

Epilogue – Multidirectional Memory and Greco-Turkish Relations

A recognition of memory's multidirectionality has encouraging implications for reconciling two antagonistic nation-states with much shared history. Social memories may be at their most potent when they work co-operatively, not competitively. A strife narrative alone risks perpetuating the costly conflict that it often professes to be trying to avoid; whilst a nostalgic harmonious narrative alone can actually serve to silence past persecution and create the climate for repetition.³⁹² Interacting, however, in a malleable discursive space such as that created by *Istanbul, My Nostalgia*, they can create the potential for reconciliation: finding in the past both knowledge of error and evidence that co-existence is possible and profitable. The shared cultural, social, and even geographical space between Greece and Turkey may be a source of conflict and anxiety, but it can also facilitate the inclusive restructuring of communal identities, creating the setting in which experiential overlap can be re-configured into new solidarities; turning common experience into communality. In other words, if a Greek and a Turk encountering one another are to try to create some solidarity out of antagonistic alterity, it helps that they can drink the same coffee, eat the same food, and learn to sing the same songs in each other's languages. If the competitive aspects of memory created Greco-Turkish tension, then everyday multidirectional memory may replace this with Greco-Turkish friendship.

³⁹² Mills, 'Narratives in City Landscapes', p. 447, pp. 458-459; and Mills, 'Boundaries of the Nation', p. 368, pp. 387-389.

Definitions

For clarity, I distinguish between ‘Istanbul’ as a modern day city and ‘Constantinople’ as a historic city, ending in 1453.³⁹³ As a collective, I refer to the Istanbul-Greeks as ‘Polites’. Polites – literally ‘citizens’ – is a contraction of the Greek word *Konstantinoupolites*. As an adjective pertaining to the Istanbul-Greek community I use ‘Constantinopolitan’; reserving ‘Istanbulite’ for references to the broader Istanbul society encompassing Greeks, Turks, and other ethnicities. I choose the English form ‘Constantinopolitan’ to avoid gender/declination issues that would arise from attempting to use a Greek form. I also sometimes distinguish between those Istanbul-Greeks holding Greek citizenship (Hellenes/Hellene) and those with Turkish citizenship (Rum/Rum). I refer to Greek-speakers born in the modern Greek nation state as native Greeks, and, where necessary, distinguish Asia Minor Greeks (referring to refugees who left Turkey after the 1919-1922 war). There is of course an arbitrary element to such terminological distinctions, although they do closely follow those that the majority of my interviewees employed.

³⁹³ This is a practical rather than political decision. The city is generally called Istanbul in Turkey, and Constantinople in Greece. My informants tended to use the contraction *I Poli* – The City – and for consistency I translate both this and ‘Constantinople’ as Istanbul.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Published primary sources

Film and music

Kaldaras, A. and Papastamatiou, P. [Pythagoras], (1972), In the Narrows of the Bosphorus, on *Greek Composers*, *Apostolos Kaldaras*, 2005. [In Greek]

Politiki Kouzina, directed by Tassos Boulmetis, Greece, 2003. [In Greek]

Newspapers and newspaper articles

Millas, H., 'The Rum of Istanbul as Citizens and as a Minority', *Eptalofos*, December 1996. [In Greek]

Uzunoglu, N., 'The Return of Greeks of Istanbul and the Facts', *Zaman*, December 7 2011.

Vryonis, S., 'September 6, 1955: Krystallnacht [sic] in Constantinople', *Greek America*, September/October, 2007.

Publications

Constantinopolitan Society, *Istanbul and Education: Greek Education in Istanbul in the Last Two-hundred Years*, Athens, 1997. [In Greek]

Constantinopolitan Society, *1928-2008 80 Years of Service*, Athens, 2008. [In Greek]

Constantinopolitan Society, *The Violations of the Human Rights of the Greek Minority in Turkey: Atrocities and Persecutions 1923-2009*, Athens, 2009.

Constantinopolitan Union of Northern Greece, *Memorial of the Constantinopolitan Union: 40 Years 6-7 September Memorial Day*, Thessaloniki, 1995. [In Greek]

Ecumenical Federation of Constantinopolitans, *History and Status of the Human Rights of the Greek Orthodox Minority of Turkey*, Athens, 2010.

Ecumenical Federation of Constantinopolitans, *Report on Human and Minority Rights of the Greek-Orthodox Community of Istanbul*, Athens, 2010.

Ecumenical Federation of Constantinopolitans, *Proposals Concerning the Restoration of Minority Rights of the Greek Communities of Turkey*, Athens, 2011.

Ecumenical Federation of Constantinopolitans, *Recent Developments on the Minority and Human Rights of the Greek Minority of Istanbul Based on the Report of Mr. Thomas Hammarberg (1/10/2009) Human Rights Commissioner-Council of Europe*, Athens, 2011.

Helsinki Watch, *Denying Human Rights and Ethnic Identity: The Greeks of Turkey*, New York, 1992.

Institute of Historical Study, *The Uprooting: the Expansionist Politics of Turkey and the Persecutions of Greeks by the Turks in the 20th Century*, Athens, 1985. [In Greek]

Kaloumenos, D., *The Crucifixion of Christianity*, Athens, 2001. [In English and Greek]

Koumakis, L., *The Miracle: A True Story*, Athens, 1996. [In English and Greek]

Tsilenus, S., 'The Migration', *I Dexameni: Journal of Literature and Art of Istanbul, Imbros, and Tenedos*, Athens, 1999, pp. 96-102. [In Greek]

Turan, Ç., M. Pekin and S. Gûvenç, *Istanbul, My Nostalgia: First-hand Stories and the Nostalgia of the Rum for Istanbul*, Istanbul, 2010. [In English, Greek, and Turkish]

Unpublished primary sources

Correspondence

Ecumenical Federation of Constantinopolitans, Letter to Hans-Gert Pöttering, 22 August 2007.

Ecumenical Federation of Constantinopolitans, Letter to Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan, 4 March 2008.

Film and music

Torn Apart by History, Ç. Aslan, Sheffield Cathedral, Sheffield, 5 June 2011.

Oral history interviews

See table in appendix 1 for details.

Published secondary sources

Books

Alexandris, A., *The Greek Minority of Istanbul and Greek Turkish Relations 1918-1974*, Athens, 1983.

Bodnar, J., *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century*, Princeton, 1994.

Broome, B., *Exploring the Greek Mosaic: a Guide to Intercultural Communication in Greece*, Maine, 1996.

Campbell, M. and P. Sherrard, *Modern Greece*, London, 1968.

Clark, B., *Twice a Stranger: How Mass Expulsion Forged Modern Greece and Turkey*, London, 2006.

Counihan, C., *The Anthropology of Food and Body: Gender, Meaning, and Power*, New York; London, 1999.

Cubitt, G., *History and Memory*, Manchester, 2007.

Dobkin, M., *Smyrna 1922: the Destruction of a City*, London, 1972.

Fermor, P., *Roumeli: Travels in Northern Greece*, London, 1966.

Freely, J., *Children of Achilles: the Greeks in Asia Minor Since the Days of Troy*, London, 2010.

Gallant, T., *Brief Histories: Modern Greece*, London, 2001.

Goody, J., *Cooking, Cuisine and Class: A Study in Comparative Sociology*, Cambridge, 1982.

Greene, M., *A Shared World: Christians and Muslims in the Early Modern Mediterranean*, Princeton, 2000.

Hall, S. and P. du Gay (eds.), *Questions of Cultural Identity*, London, 2003.

He, H., *Dictionary of the Political Thought of the People's Republic of China*, New York, 2001.

Herzfeld, M., *Anthropology Through the Looking-glass: Critical Ethnography in the Margins of Europe*, Cambridge, 1987.

Heurtley, W., H. Darby, C. Crawley and C. Woodhouse, *A Short History of Greece: From Early Times to 1964*, Cambridge, 1967.

Hirschon, R. (ed.), *Crossing the Aegean: an Appraisal of the 1923 Compulsory Population Exchange Between Greece and Turkey*, Oxford, 2008.

Hirschon, R., *Heirs of the Greek Catastrophe: the Social Life of Asia Minor Refugees in Piraeus*, Oxford, 2008.

Holden, D., *Greece Without Columns: the Making of the Modern Greeks*, London, 1972.

Kiratzopoulos, V., *Unregistered Genocide: Constantinople September 1955*, Athens, 2006. [In Greek]

Leydesdorff, S., L. Passerini and P. Thompson (eds.), *Gender and Memory*, Oxford, 2005.

Llewellyn-Smith, M., *Ionian Vision: Greece in Asia Minor, 1919-22*, London, 1973.

Loizos, P., *The Heart Grown Bitter*, Cambridge; London, 1981.

Mackridge, P., *Language and National Identity in Greece, 1766-1976*, Oxford, 2009.

Marx, K., *The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, London, 2001 [1852].

Mazower, M., *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century*, London, 1998.

Mazower, M., *Salonica City of Ghosts: Christians, Muslims, and Jews 1430-1950*, London, 2005.

Milton, G., *Paradise Lost: Smyrna 1922 – the Destruction of Islam's City of Tolerance*, London, 2008.

Neisser, U. (ed.), *Memory Observed: Remembering in Natural Contexts*, San Francisco, 1982.

Olick, J., V. Vinitzky-Seroussi and D. Levy (eds.), *The Collective Memory Reader*, Oxford, 2011.

Özkirimli, U. and S. Sofos, *Tormented by History: Nationalism in Greece and Turkey*, London, 2008.

Portelli, A., *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History*, Albany, 1991.

Portelli, A., *The Battle of Valle Giulia: Oral History and the Art of Dialogue*, Madison; London, 1997.

Rothberg, M., *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization*, Stanford, 2009.

Samuel, R. and P. Thompson (eds.), *The Myths We Live By*, London; New York, 1990.

Schwartz, B., *Abraham Lincoln and the Forge of National Memory*, Chicago; London, 2000.

Schwartz, B., *Abraham Lincoln in the Post-Heroic Era: History and Memory in Late Twentieth Century America*, Chicago, 2009.

Scott, J., *Gender and the Politics of History*, New York, 1999.

Souvatzoglou, V. and Y. Kalfopoulos, *Athletic Activity of the Rum of Istanbul*, Istanbul, 1979. [In Greek]

Stanley, L., *The Auto/biographical I: the Theory and Practice of Feminist Auto/biography*, Manchester; New York, 1992.

Sumner-Boyd, H. and J. Freely, *Strolling Through Istanbul: a Guide to the City*, London; 1987.

Thompson, P., *The Voice of the Past*, Oxford, 1978.

Thomson, A., *Anzac Memories: Living with the Legend*, Oxford, 1995.

Tonkin, E., M. McDonald and M. Chapman (eds.), *History and Ethnicity*, London; New York, 1989.

Vryonis, S., *The Mechanism of Catastrophe: the Turkish Pogrom of September 6-7, 1955, and the Destruction of the Greek Community in Istanbul*, New York, 2005.

Book chapters and journal articles

Alexander, J., 'Toward a Theory of Cultural Trauma', in J. Alexander, R. Eyerman, B. Giesen, N. Smelser and P. Sztompka (eds.), *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*, Berkeley; London, 2004, pp. 1-30.

Alexandris, A., 'Religion or Ethnicity: the Identity Issue of the Minorities in Greece and Turkey', in R. Hirschon (ed.), *Crossing the Aegean: an Appraisal of the 1923 Compulsory Population Exchange Between Greece and Turkey*, Oxford, 2008, pp. 117-132.

Argyrou, V., 'How Greeks Think: About Turks, for Example', *South European Society and Politics*, 2006, pp. 33-46.

Bertaux-Wiame, I., 'The Life History Approach to the Study of Internal Migration: How Women and Men Came to Paris Between the Wars', in P. Thompson (ed.), *Our Common History: The Transformation of Europe*, New Jersey, 1982, pp. 186-200.

Bertrand, G., 'Greek-Turkish Relations: from Cold War to Rapprochement', *Observatory of European Foreign Policy: EU-Turkish Relations Dossier*, 2003.

Bhabha, H., 'Culture's In-Between', in S. Hall and P. du Gay (eds.), *Questions of Cultural Identity*, London, 2003, pp. 53-60.

Bhabha, H., interviewed by P. Thompson, 'Between Identities', in R. Benmayor and A. Skotnes (eds.), *Migration and Identity*, New Brunswick; London, 2005, pp. 183-199.

Bowman, J., 'Seeing What's Missing in Memories of Cyprus', *Peace Review: A Journal of Social Justice*, 2006, pp. 119-127.

Bravo, A., L. Davite and D. Jalla, 'Myth, Impotence, and Survival in the Concentration Camps', in R. Samuel and P. Thompson (eds.), *The Myths We Live By*, London; New York, 1990, pp. 95-110.

Cabezali, E., M. Cuevas and M. Chicote, 'Myth as Suppression: Motherhood and the Historical Consciousness of the Women of Madrid, 1936-9', in R. Samuel and P. Thompson (eds.), *The Myths We Live By*, London; New York, 1990, pp. 161-173.

Chapman, M., M. McDonald and E. Tonkin, 'Introduction', in E. Tonkin, M. McDonald and M. Chapman (eds.), *History and Ethnicity*, London; New York, 1989, pp. 1-21.

Christopoulos, D., 'Country Report: Greece', *EUDO Citizenship Observatory*, Florence, 2009.

Confino, A., 'Collective Memory and Cultural History: Problems of Method', *American Historical Review*, 1997, pp. 1386-1403.

Croll, E., 'Gendered Moments and Inscripted Memories: Girlhood in Twentieth-century Chinese Autobiography', in S. Leydesdorff, L. Passerini and P. Thompson (eds.), *Gender and Memory*, Oxford, 2005, pp. 117-132.

Ely, R. and A. McCabe, 'Gender Differences in Memories for Speech', in S. Leydesdorff, L. Passerini and P. Thompson (eds.), *Gender and Memory*, Oxford, 2005, pp. 17-30.

Eyerman, R., 'The Past in the Present: Culture and the Transmission of Memory', *Acta Sociologica*, 2004, pp. 159-169.

Foucault, M., 'Film in Popular Memory: An Interview with Michel Foucault', in J. Olick, V. Vinitzky-Seroussi and D. Levy (eds.), *The Collective Memory Reader*, Oxford, 2011, pp. 252-253.

Gropas, R. and A. Triandafyllidou, 'Migration in Greece at a Glance', *Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy*, Athens, 2005.

Gürsel, N., 'The Greek Community of Istanbul in the Works of Sait Faik', in C. Dufft (ed.), *Turkish Literature and Cultural Memory: "Multiculturalism" as a Literary Theme after 1980*, Göttingen, 2009, pp. 107-128.

Güven, D., 'The "Deep" State, the Septembriana and Democracy in Modern Turkey', *Proceedings of the International Conference: 6-7/9/1955 An Act of Annihilation of the Greek Community of Istanbul*, 2008, pp. 9-15, pp. 109-115. [In Greek and English]

Halbwachs, M., 'The Collective Memory', in J. Olick, V. Vinitzky-Seroussi and D. Levy (eds.), *The Collective Memory Reader*, Oxford, 2011, pp. 139-149.

Hall, S., 'Introduction: Who Needs "Identity"?', in S. Hall and P. du Gay (eds.), *Questions of Cultural Identity*, London, 2003, pp. 1-17.

Hirsch, M., 'The Generation of Postmemory', *Poetics Today*, 2008, pp. 103-128.

Hirschon, R., 'Identity and the Greek State: Some Conceptual Issues and Paradoxes', in R. Clogg (ed.), *The Greek Diaspora in the Twentieth Century*, London, 1999, pp. 158-180.

Hirschon, R., "'We Got On Well with the Turks": Christian-Muslim Relations in Late Ottoman Times', in D. Shankland (ed.), *Archaeology, Anthropology and Heritage in the Balkans and Anatolia: the Life and Times of F.W. Hasluck 1878-1920*, Istanbul, 2004, pp. 325-343.

Hirschon, R., 'Knowledge of Diversity: Towards a More Differentiated Set of "Greek" Perceptions of "Turks"', *South European Society and Politics*, 2006, pp. 61-78.

Hirschon, R., 'Bourdieu in Olymbos: the Symbolic Character of the Karpathiko House', *Karpathos and Folklore*, 2008, pp. 565-579.

Hirschon, R., 'Dismantling the Millet: Religion and National Identity in Contemporary Greece', in A. Aktar, U. Özkirimli and N. Kizilyürek (eds.), *Nationalism in the Troubled Triangle: Greece, Turkey, Cyprus*, 2008, pp. 61-75.

Hirschon, R., "'Unmixing Peoples" in the Aegean Region', in R. Hirschon (ed.), *Crossing the Aegean: an Appraisal of the 1923 Compulsory Population Exchange Between Greece and Turkey*, Oxford, 2008, pp. 3-12.

Hirschon, R., 'History's Long Shadow: the Lausanne Treaty and Contemporary Greco-Turkish Relations', in O. Anastasakis, K. Nicolaidis and K. Oktem (eds.), *The Long Shadow of Europe: Greeks and Turks in the Era of Post-nationalism*, Leiden; Boston, 2009, pp. 73-94.

Hirschon, R., 'Cultural Mismatches: Greek Concepts of Time, Personal Identity and Authority in the Context of Europe', in K. Featherstone (ed.), *Europe in Modern Greek History*, forthcoming.

James, A., 'Memories of Anatolia: Generating Greek Refugee Identity',

Balkanologie, 2001, pp. 229-238.

James, A. and B. Smith, 'The Mirror of Their Past: Greek Refugee Photographs and

Memories of Anatolia', *Visual Anthropology Review*, 2000/2001, pp. 25-42.

Just, R., 'Triumph of the Ethnos', in E. Tonkin, M. McDonald and M. Chapman

(eds.), *History and Ethnicity*, London; New York, 1989, pp. 71-88.

Katsanos, G., '6/7 September 1955: Immediate and Contemporary Perceptions of the

Pogrom in Turkish Society', *Proceedings of the International Conference: 6-*

7/9/1955 An Act of Annihilation of the Greek Community of Istanbul, 2008, pp. 36-

42, pp. 135-141. [In Greek and English]

Keenan, J., B. MacWhinney and D. Mayhew, 'A Study of Natural Conversation', in

U. Neisser (ed.), *Memory Observed: Remembering in Natural Contexts*, San

Francisco, 1982, pp. 315-324.

Keyder, Ç., 'The Consequences of the Exchange of Populations for Turkey', in R.

Hirschon (ed.), *Crossing the Aegean: an Appraisal of the 1923 Compulsory*

Population Exchange Between Greece and Turkey, Oxford, 2008, pp. 39-52.

Komins, B., 'Depopulated Cosmopolitanism: the Cultures of Integration, Concealment, and Evacuation in Istanbul', *Comparative Literature Studies*, 2002, pp. 360-385.

Leydesdorff, S., L. Passerini and P. Thompson, 'Introduction', in S. Leydesdorff, L. Passerini and P. Thompson (eds.), *Gender and Memory*, Oxford, 2005, pp. 1-16.

Leydesdorff, S., 'Introduction to the Transaction Edition: Gender and Memory Ten Years On', in S. Leydesdorff, L. Passerini and P. Thompson (eds.), *Gender and Memory*, Oxford, 2005, pp. vii-xv.

Loftus, E. and J. Palmer, 'Reconstruction of Automobile Destruction', in U. Neisser (ed.), *Memory Observed: Remembering in Natural Contexts*, San Francisco, 1982, pp. 109-115.

Loizos, P., 'Intercommunal Killing in Cyprus', *Man*, 1988, pp. 639-653.

Mac Fhearraigh, D., 'SYRIZA and the Rise of Radical Left-reformism in Europe', *Irish Marxist Review*, 2012, pp. 103-109.

Mackridge, P., 'The Myth of Asia Minor in Greek Fiction', in R. Hirschon (ed.), *Crossing the Aegean: an Appraisal of the 1923 Compulsory Population Exchange Between Greece and Turkey*, Oxford, 2008, pp. 235-246.

- Mackridge, P., 'The Heritages of the Modern Greeks', *British Academy Review*, 2012, pp. 33-41.
- Mann, C., 'Family Fables', in M. Chamberlain and P. Thompson (eds.), *Narrative and Genre: Contexts and Types of Communication*, London, 1998, pp. 81-98.
- Mills, A., 'Narratives in City Landscapes: Cultural Identity in Istanbul', *The Geographical Review*, 2005, pp. 441-462.
- Mills, A., 'Boundaries of the Nation in the Space of the Urban: Landscape and Social Memory in Istanbul', *Cultural Geographies*, 2006, pp. 367-394.
- Mintz, S. and M. Du Bois, 'The Anthropology of Food and Eating', *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 2002, pp. 99-119.
- Neisser, U., 'John Dean's Memory: A Case Study', in U. Neisser (ed.), *Memory Observed: Remembering in Natural Contexts*, San Francisco, 1982, pp. 139-159.
- Neisser, U., 'Snapshots or Benchmarks', in U. Neisser (ed.), *Memory Observed: Remembering in Natural Contexts*, San Francisco, 1982, pp. 43-48.
- Neyzi, L., 'Remembering Smyrna/Izmir: Shared History, Shared Trauma', *History and Memory*, 2008, pp. 106-127.

Oran, B., 'The Story of Those Who Stayed: Lessons from Articles 1 and 2 of the 1923 Convention', in R. Hirschon (ed.), *Crossing the Aegean: an Appraisal of the 1923 Compulsory Population Exchange Between Greece and Turkey*, Oxford, 2008, pp. 97-116.

Örs, I., 'Beyond the Greek and Turkish Dichotomy: the Rum Polites of Istanbul and Athens', *South European Society and Politics*, 2006, pp. 79-94.

Papadakis, Y., 'Greek Cypriot Narratives of History and Collective Identity: Nationalism as a Contested Process', *American Ethnologist*, 1998, pp. 149-165.

Papadakis, Y., 'Nation, Narrative and Commemoration: Political Ritual in Divided Cyprus', *History and Anthropology*, 2003, pp. 253-270.

Papadopoulos, P., 'Healing the Wound of the Septembriana', *Proceedings of the International Conference: 6-7/9/1955 An Act of Annihilation of the Greek Community of Istanbul*, 2008, pp. 48-54, pp. 147-152. [In Greek and English]

Passerini, L., 'Mythbiography in Oral History', in R. Samuel and P. Thompson (eds.), *The Myths We Live By*, London; New York, 1990, pp. 49-60.

Pennebaker, J. and B. Banasik, 'On the Creation and Maintenance of Collective Memories: History as Social Psychology', in J. Pennebaker, D. Paez and B. Rimé (eds.), *Collective Memory of Political Events: Social Psychological Perspectives*, Mahwah, 1997, pp. 3-20.

Piscitelli, A., 'Love and Ambition: Gender, Memory and Stories from Brazilian Coffee Plantation Families', in S. Leydesdorff, L. Passerini and P. Thompson (eds.), *Gender and Memory*, Oxford, 2005, pp. 89-104.

Popular Memory Group, 'Popular Memory: Theory, Politics, Method', in R. Perks and A. Thomson (eds.), *The Oral History Reader*, London, 1998, pp. 75-86.

Portelli, A., 'Unchronic Dreams: Working-class Memory and Possible Worlds', in R. Samuel and P. Thompson (eds.), *The Myths We Live By*, London; New York, 1990, pp. 143-160.

Robins, K., 'Interrupting Identities: Turkey/Europe', in S. Hall and P. du Gay (eds.), *Questions of Cultural Identity*, London, 2003, pp. 61-86.

Rothberg, M., 'Against Zero-Sum Logic: A Response to Walter Benn Michaels', *American Literary History*, 2006, pp. 303-311.

Samuel, R. and P. Thompson, 'Introduction', in R. Samuel and P. Thompson (eds.), *The Myths We Live By*, London; New York, 1990, pp. 1-22.

Sanford, E., 'Professor Sanford's Morning Prayer', in U. Neisser (ed.), *Memory Observed: Remembering in Natural Contexts*, San Francisco, 1982, pp. 176-177.

Schein, M., 'When Is an Ethnic Group? Ecology and Class Structure in Northern Greece', *Ethnology*, 1975, pp. 83-97.

Schudson, M., 'The Past in the Present Versus the Present in the Past', in J. Olick, V. Vinitzky-Seroussi and D. Levy (eds.), *The Collective Memory Reader*, Oxford, 2011, pp. 287-290.

Scott, J., 'Unanswered Questions', *American Historical Review*, 2008, pp. 1422-1429.

Senehi, J., 'Constructive Storytelling in Intercommunal Conflicts: Building Community, Building Peace', in S. Byrne and C. Irvin (eds.), *Reconcilable Differences: Turning Points in Ethnopolitical Conflict*, Connecticut, 2000, pp. 96-114.

Spyrou, S., 'Constructing "the Turk" as an Enemy: the Complexity of Stereotypes in Children's Everyday Worlds', *South European Society and Politics*, 2006, pp. 95-110.

Sutton, D., 'Poked by the "Foreign Finger" in Greece: Conspiracy Theory or the Hermeneutics of Suspicion?' in K. Brown and Y. Hamilakis (eds.), *The Usable Past: Greek Metahistories*, Maryland, 2003, pp. 191-210.

Theodorides, A., 'The Conception of the Septembriana by the Rum of Istanbul and the Construction of Their Memory', *Proceedings of the International Conference: 6-7/9/1955 An Act of Annihilation of the Greek Community of Istanbul*, 2008, pp. 43-46, pp. 142-145. [In Greek and English]

Theodossopoulos, D., 'Introduction: the "Turks" in the Imagination of the "Greeks"', *South European Society and Politics*, 2006, pp. 1-32.

Thomson, A., 'The Anzac Legend: Exploring National Myth and Memory in Australia', in R. Samuel and P. Thompson (eds.), *The Myths We Live By*, London; New York, 1990, pp. 73-82.

Tonkin, E., 'History and the Myth of Realism', in R. Samuel and P. Thompson (eds.), *The Myths We Live By*, London; New York, 1990, pp. 25-35.

Tully, J., 'The Pen is a Mighty Sword: Quentin Skinner's Analysis of Politics', in J. Tully (ed.), *Meaning and Context: Quentin Skinner and his Critics*, Cambridge, 1988, pp. 7-25.

Türelı, I., 'Ara Güler's Photographs of "Old Istanbul" and Cosmopolitan Nostalgia', *History of Photography*, 2010, pp. 300-313.

Voutira, E., 'Refugees: Whose Term is it Anyway? Emic and Etic Constructions of "Refugees" in Modern Greek', in J. van Selm *et al.* (eds.), *The Refugee Convention at Fifty: A View from Forced Migration Studies*, Oxford, 2003, pp. 65-80.

Voutira, E., 'When Greeks Meet Other Greeks: Settlement Policy Issues in the Contemporary Greek Context', in R. Hirschon (ed.), *Crossing the Aegean: an Appraisal of the 1923 Compulsory Population Exchange Between Greece and Turkey*, Oxford, 2008, pp. 145-162.

de Zayas, A., 'The Istanbul Pogrom of 6–7 September 1955 in the Light of International Law', *Genocide Studies and Prevention*, 2007, pp. 137-154.

Newspaper articles and online resources

Anastasiadou, M., 'Graveyards of the Rum of Constantinople', *Encyclopaedia of the Hellenic World, Constantinople*, <http://www.ehw.gr/l.aspx?id=10988>, [accessed November 1 2011].

Athens News, 'Twenty-eight MPs Raise German War Reparations Issue', February 2 2012.

Athens News, 'German Foreign Ministry Puts Lid on War Reparations Debate', April 1 2012.

Benlisoy, F., 'Anti-Greek riots of September 1955 in Constantinople (Istanbul)', *Encyclopaedia of the Hellenic World, Constantinople* <http://www.ehw.gr/l.aspx?id=11464> [accessed November 1 2011].

Benlisoy, F., 'Greek Orthodox of Constantinople after the Lausanne Treaty', *Encyclopaedia of the Hellenic World, Constantinople*, <http://www.ehw.gr/l.aspx?id=11455> [accessed November 1 2011].

Choumerianos, M., 'Sports and sports clubs of the Greek Orthodox in Constantinople',

Encyclopaedia of the Hellenic World, Constantinople,

<http://www.ehw.gr/l.aspx?id=11510> [accessed November 1 2011].

Edwards, J., 'Smoke and Mirrors: Greek Self and Turkish Other', <http://interdisciplinary.net/ati/diversity/multiculturalism/mcb1/edwards%20paper.pdf> [accessed September 1 2012].

Hardy, S., 'Events of September 1955, Greece, Turkey', *Cultural Preservation*, <http://cultural-preservation.blogspot.com/2010/05/events-of-september-1955-greece-turkey.html> [accessed October 15 2011].

Jordan, P., 'The Truth About Politics at the Eurovision Song Contest', *ESC Insight*, <http://www.escinsight.com/2010/11/18/the-truth-about-the-politics-of-eurovision> [accessed January 11 2012].

Kadritzke, N., 'Forgetting a Remembered History: Greece's Earthquake Diplomacy', *Le Monde Diplomatique*, June 2002.

Kinzer, S., 'Turkey's Passionate Interpreter to the World', *New York Times*, April 13 1997.

Kinzer, S., 'Earthquakes Help Warm Greek-Turkish Relations', *The New York Times*, September 13 1999.

Lagoumitzi, G., 'The Uses of Nostalgia in the "Imagination" of Diaspora: the Case of the New Pontic Greek Refugees', <http://www.inter-disciplinary.net/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/Lagoumitzi-Paper.pdf> [accessed September 12 2012].

Meseci-Giorgetti, F., 'Discourse of the Student's Pledge in Turkey', (paper presented at *European Conference on Educational Research*, Freie Universität Berlin, September 14 2011, <http://www.eera-ecer.de/index.php?id=421&Action=showContributionDetail&conferenceUid=5&contributionUid=18778&cHash=49a57dfd676d2b14168d29a6806cffe7>) [accessed August 1 2012].

Unpublished secondary sources

Chatzipanagiotidou, E., 'The Conflicts of a "Peaceful" Diaspora: Identity, Power and Peace Politics Among Cypriots in the UK and Cyprus', PhD diss., University of Sussex, 2012.

Halstead, H., ““Through the Prism of Their Own Experiences, through the Glasses that They've Put On You”: Lived Experience and Collective Memory in Greek-Cypriot Recollections of the 1974 Turkish Invasion of Cyprus’, BA diss., University of York, 2010.

Millas, H., ““Greeks” in Turkish Textbooks – the Way For an Integratory Approach’, paper presented at *History Education and Textbooks*, Bosphorus University, Istanbul, 8-10 June 1995, unpublished hard copy.

Appendix 1: Table of Interviewees

Pseudonym	D.O.B.	Place of birth*	Residence in Istanbul	Date of migration	Stated Reason	Citizenship (then/now)	First return	Notes
Agathe	Not revealed	Yedikule	Yedikule	Not revealed	Not revealed	Not revealed	Not revealed	Declined to answer questions after initial presentation
Alexandra	1947	Edirnekapi	Pera (and others)	1971	Fear	Turkish/Greek	Not revealed	
Alexandros	1946	Skoutari	Skoutari pre-1955; Pera post-May 1955	1989	Position weakening, education failing	Turkish/Turkish	Not revealed - frequently	
Andreas	1943	Chalki	Chalki	1973	Cyprus affair	Turkish/Greek and Turkish	Immediately	Husband to Sofia
Angeliki	Not revealed	Athens	n/a	n/a	n/a	Greek	n/a	Native Greek
Anna	1923	Bosporus	Bosporus	1937	Education, Family	Greek/Greek	1952, not since	Unusually early migration
Apostolis	1955	Pera	Pera/ Princes' Islands (age 10/12 onwards)	1975	Forced nationalism, bad climate	Turkish/Greek (1986)	n/a	Maoist

* Informants vary in the degree of precision with which they refer to their birthplace; some of the places listed are specific neighbourhoods, and others larger districts.

Pseudonym	D.O.B.	Place of birth*	Residence in Istanbul	Date of migration	Stated Reason	Citizenship (then/now)	First return	Notes
Athanasia	1939	Taksim?	Taksim	1970/1971	Chain reaction from 1964	Turkish/Turkish	c. 1972-1974	
Diamantina	Not revealed	Athens	n/a	n/a	n/a	Greek	n/a	Native Greek
Eleftherios	Not revealed, c. 1960-1970	Not revealed	Not revealed	2000	For his children	Turkish/Turkish	c. 2002, c. 2005	
Evangelos	1950	Tarlabaşı	Tatavla	1964	Not revealed	Turkish/Greek (1982)	2000	
Evgenia	1950	Şişli	Şişli	1964	Situation in 1964	Turkish/Greek (1972)	1981	
Fotini	1943	Not revealed	Not revealed	Not revealed	Not revealed	Turkish and (hidden) Greek/not revealed	Not revealed	
Fotis	1950	Pera	Pera	1976	Wife left, climate spoilt	Turkish/Greek (c.1980)	c. 1980	
Gerasimos	1949	Tarlabaşı?	Tarlabaşı	1964	Father expelled as Greek citizen	Turkish/Greek (c.1964)	1989, not since	
Hakan	c. 1953	Not revealed	Not revealed	n/a	n/a	Turkish	n/a	Turkish
Herakles	1947	Tatavla	Tatavla, Chalki (summer)	1964	Father expelled as Greek citizen	Greek/Greek	c. 1980, frequently	

Pseudonym	D.O.B.	Place of birth*	Residence in Istanbul	Date of migration	Stated Reason	Citizenship (then/now)	First return	Notes
Ioanna	1944	Fanari?	(Near) Fanari, post-1955 Pera	1964	Parents' decision	Turkish/Greek (1982)	1982	
Ioannis	c. 1951	Athens (Greece)	n/a	n/a (father 1940)	n/a (father – to study)	Greek/Greek	n/a (first visit 1953)	Athens born
Ivan	1956	Chalki	Chalki	1975	Searching horizons	Turkish/Greek (Turkish pending)	c. 1995	
Konstantinos	1944	Not revealed	Not revealed	1959	Father expelled in 1958	Greek and Turkish/Greek	Not revealed	
Kostas	1941	Tatavla?	Tatavla	1972	Friends left; climate deteriorated	Turkish/Turkish	Not revealed - frequently	
Kyriakos	1951	Pera	Pera	1975	Wife left, economic problems, discrimination	Turkish/Greek (1982)	1977 (to marry) then 1996	
Marios	1941	Pera?	Pera, Bosphorus (Summer)	1966	Fear; friends leaving	Turkish/Greek (c. 1980)	Immediately, c. 1967	
Mikhael	1940	Not revealed	Pera (and others)	1971	Could not see life for the minority	Turkish/Greek	Not revealed	
Natasha	1948	Pera	Pera?	1976	Things had changed	Turkish and (hidden) Greek/ not revealed	Not revealed	

Pseudonym	D.O.B.	Place of birth*	Residence in Istanbul	Date of migration	Stated Reason	Citizenship (then/now)	First return	Notes
Nikolaos	1939	Not revealed	Not revealed	1964	Depopulation associated with expulsions	Turkish/Greek (1982)	Not revealed (has returned)	
Panagiotis	1946	Tarlabaşı	Tarlabaşı, Pera?	1963	Expulsions, indirectly	Turkish (lost 1973)/Greek (1983) and Turkish (2011)	Not revealed	
Petros	1946	Pera	Pera	1964	Suffocation, not wanting to face army problems	Turkish/Greek (1985)	1985	
Silas	Not revealed	Not revealed	Not revealed	Not revealed	Not revealed	Not revealed	Not revealed	Declined to answer questions after initial presentation on army life
Sofia	1955	Pera	Pera	1975	Cyprus affair	Turkish/Turkish	Immediately	Wife to Andreas
Sotiris	1946	Moda	Moda	1970	Love (<i>eros</i>)	Turkish/Turkish	1973	
Spyros	1930	Chalkidona	Chalkidona	1964	Fear, partner left	Turkish/Greek (c.1971)	c. 1974	
Stamatios	Not revealed	Not revealed	Not revealed	Not revealed	Not revealed	Not revealed	Not revealed	Left after initial presentation
Stavros	1947	Yedikule	Agio Stefanos	1963	Family and others starting to leave	Turkish/Greek (c. 1974)	1983	

Pseudonym	D.O.B.	Place of birth*	Residence in Istanbul	Date of migration	Stated Reason	Citizenship (then/now)	First return	Notes
Tasoula	c. 1951-1953	Tarlabaşı	Tatavla	1964	Not revealed	Turkish/Greek (c.1980)	1991, not since	
Thanasis	1953	Bosporus	Bosporus	1971	Terrorist pressure	Turkish/Greek (1981)	1994	Maoist
Thekla	1950	Chalkidona	Chalkidona	1977	Not revealed	Turkish/Greek (1992)	Immediately, then not until 2004	
Theodoros	1951	Chalkidona	Chalkidona	c. 1976	Threat to family home in 1974, no personal security	Turkish/Greek	c. 2002	Interview in English
Thomas	1928	Yedikule	Yedikule	1964	Couldn't live there anymore	Turkish/Greek?	Not revealed	
Vangelis	1934	Not revealed	Various	1980	Wife's wish, tired of watching people leave	Turkish/Greek (1981) and Turkish (date not revealed)	Not revealed	

Interviews were carried out during two fieldwork periods, the first in Thessaloniki (November-December 2011), and the second in Athens (January-February 2012). A brief detour was made to Thessaloniki in February 2012, one interview was carried out in Sheffield, and an additional interview was carried out via video link in August 2012. All interviews were carried out in Greek, and are translated by the author, with the exception of the interview with Theodoros (done in English), and the interviews with Evgenia and Hakan (carried out in both English and Greek).