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The European Union and Border Conflicts

Working Papers Series
in
EU Border Conflicts Studies

The European Union and Cultural Change in Greek-Turkish Relations

Bahar Rumelili, Ph.D.
Research Fellow
Bogazici University/ University of Birmingham

THE UNIVERSITY
OF BIRMINGHAM

No. 17
April 2005

The previous working papers on the Greek-Turkish conflict in this series (Rumelili, 2004a; 2004b) have primarily dealt with assessing the nature and extent of EU influence on Greek-Turkish relations at the political level. This paper will analyse the extent to which the recent improvements in Greek-Turkish relations at the political level have penetrated the wider societal level. Few studies on Greek-Turkish relations have given the wider societal level the due attention. The nationalistic public opinion in both countries is often accused of aggravating the political conflicts and causing retreats from improvements in bilateral relations. Adamson (2001), for example, argues that in the 1974 Cyprus crisis, Turkish political elites have been hampered, rather than helped, in their pursuit of diplomatic solutions by the press, parliament, and the public opinion. Similarly, a primary reason for the failure of the 'Davos process' in 1988 is cited as the uncooperative attitude of the public opinion and the press (Birand, 1991, Pridham, 1991). At the same time, in what has become a standard descriptive account, the outburst of popular empathy following the earthquakes is credited for paving the way for the rapprochement process (Gundogdu, 2001, Siegl, 2002). Nevertheless, public opinion studies continue to indicate the persistence of negative threat perceptions (Carkoglu and Kirisci, 2003). Except for these observations, the existing literature has little to offer, however, in terms of the causes behind these shifts in popular opinion, and the factors that affect their sustainability.

From the booming trade to the increasing number of tourists, from the Greek music played in Turkish bars to the famous Turkish kebob house in Athens, there are strong indications of a positive change in Greek-Turkish relations at the societal level. What is unclear is whether this change is sustainable, and whether it is strong enough to suppress nationalist reactions, and to empower and even to pressure the governments to achieve a resolution of their differences. Previously, I had argued that the post-1999 Greek-Turkish rapprochement at the political level is more likely to be sustainable (than past initiatives) because it possesses an EU dimension. Turkey's EU membership perspective has empowered the moderate elites in both countries who are interested in

promoting Greek-Turkish reconciliation and legitimised the civil society activities geared toward that purpose. The crucial question to ask with regard to the wider societal level is whether the EU can perform a similar legitimising and sustaining function. How and in what ways does the EU impact the wider societal level in Greece and Turkey? With what implications for the resolution of the Greek-Turkish conflicts?

Having set the focus of the paper as the EU's impact on Greek-Turkish relations via the wider societal level, the problems in adopting a binary distinction between the political and wider societal level, and elites versus masses need to be recognized. In the course of my research, I have identified at least five categories of actors, whose perceptions and activities on Greek-Turkish relations are of relevance in different ways:

1. In the first category are the people in positions of formal authority, dealing with political, economic, and cultural issues between the two countries.
2. Actors not in positions of formal authority, but recognized as influential opinion-makers, such as former politicians, diplomats, think-tanks, researchers. The primary audience of their activities are actors in categories 1 and 2.
3. In the third category, are actors such as journalists, educators, film-makers, artists, grassroots activists, etc., who are politically active and influential opinion-makers, dealing with political, economic, and cultural issues. These actors differ from those in the previous category in that their primary audience are people in categories 4 and 5 below.
4. In the fourth category are the people, who are not necessarily politically active, but engaged in direct economic and cultural relations with the other country, such as businessmen, tourists, mixed couples, minority groups (the Muslim-Turkish minority in Greece, and the Rum-Greek minority in Turkey).
5. And, in the final category are the people, who are neither politically active nor engaged in any direct relations with the other country, i.e. the true masses.

Of course people can and do wear different hats at different times: A businessman can become active in a Business Council promoting trade between the two countries and

this Council can lobby the governments as well as provide services for its members. However, I find this categorical distinction useful for two purposes: First, it helps me specify my research focus and objectives. Whereas my previous working papers in the EU Border Conflicts Series focused on actors in categories 1 and 2, and discussed the EU's impact on their policies and activities, the focus of this paper is going to be actors in categories 3 and 4. I will analyse how the EU has influenced the writings, products, and activities of individuals, who are active on Greek-Turkish issues, and whose primary audience are the common people. I will also analyse how the EU has affected the perceptions, attitudes, and motivations of people who are not necessarily politically active on Greek-Turkish issues, but who are engaged in direct contact and relations with the other country. On the other hand, the following working paper will focus entirely on the structural level of discourse, and on the question of whether and the extent to which the EU discourse conditions changes and shifts in the dominant representations of the border, conflict, and the Other.

This paper is going to analyse in successive sections whether and how the EU impacts the wider societal level in Turkey and Greece through its effects on history education, media, the status of minorities, arts, literature, and popular culture, and finally through its effects on cross-border trade, investment, and travel. Each section will first analyse how these areas impinge on Greek-Turkish relations, the nature and extent of recent changes, how the EU can and does influence these areas both at the direct and indirect levels, and assess the extent of EU impact in relation to other relevant actors and processes. It will be argued that these areas are qualitatively different; and as a result, the extent and nature of EU influences, and the conditions for their effectiveness vary. On the basis of these empirical observations, the concluding section of this paper will re-visit the question of whether the EU is able to perform a legitimisation function at the wider societal level, and thereby aid in the consolidation of the improvement in Greek-Turkish relations.

SCHOOLBOOKS, EDUCATION, AND ALTERNATIVE HISTORIES

Needless to say, history education is the primary medium through which nationalist ideologies and their concomitant enemy perceptions are propagated to the wider public. Greek-Turkish relations are heavily burdened with official constructions of history under the nationalist paradigm which emphasize the pain, suffering, and injustices suffered in the hands of the Other during the wars of independence. However, there are alternative histories of Greek-Turkish relations which could be told, for example, the history of peaceful, albeit unequal, coexistence during Ottoman rule, the social/cultural history of centuries of contact and exchange between people, the anti-colonialist history of oppression and exploitation at the hands of European powers, or the history of cooperation between the two states from the 1930s to the 50s. A sustainable transformation of Greek-Turkish conflict can only occur with the introduction of such alternative histories into the school curricula. Going further than the removal of negative references to the Other, this would entail a fundamental rethinking of the nationalist and Eurocentric underpinnings of history in the two countries.

Starting with the early 1990s, there have been collaborative efforts among historians in Greece and in Turkey to purge schoolbooks of chauvinistic content and demonising references. Critical Greek, Turkish, and other Southeast European historians have come together several times in symposia and workshops organised by Bogazici University, the Turkish History Foundation, and the Centre for Democracy and Reconciliation in South-eastern Europe. Most recently, historians from Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Romania, and Turkey reviewed primary and secondary-level history books from their countries for the 'Improvement of the Balkan History Textbooks Project', which was initiated by the Turkish History Foundation and funded by UNESCO, the Heinrich Boll Foundation and the Consulate General of the Netherlands in Turkey.

In Greece, while the ongoing reforms succeeded in the removal of negative references to Turks, and in placing a greater emphasis on social/economic history, the school books remain distinctly ethnocentric (Koulouri et al., 2001: 97). The Greek nation is 'presented as an almost natural entity,' possessing an 'uninterrupted continuity since antiquity, a great ability to conserve the main cultural characteristics, and a high cultural homogeneity' (Frangoudaki, 2003: 211). The stereotypes on Turks and other nations operate mostly through omission and silences. For example, while there are no scornful references to the Turkish people, and instead, the policy of the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish republic are criticized (Koulouri et al., 2001), the books solely depict the Ottomans as successful warriors and contain hardly any discussion on the Ottoman society, culture, arts, etc (Frangoudaki, 1995). Also omitted are topics and subjects reflecting the 'bad self'. For example, Greeks in Asia Minor are represented only as liberators and there is no mention of the pain afflicted by Greeks to Turks, as the books describe in detail the pain afflicted by Turks to Greeks (Koulouri et al., 2001).

In Turkish schoolbooks, there has also recently been some progress in the removal of negative depictions regarding the Greeks. However, the general ethnocentric understanding of history has remained the same (Millas, 1995). In Turkish schoolbooks, Turkish history covers 90% of the curriculum. Anatolian history is Turkified, its ethnic and religious diversity is omitted. The Greek elements in the Anatolian Ionian civilizations are denied, and the entire Byzantine civilization is remarkably missing (Kaya et al., 2001). The Greeks, along with other ethnically/religiously diverse elements in Ottoman/modern Turkish society are presented as foreigners who are in collaboration with the enemies. Modern Greeks are only discussed in the context of the 1821 Greek War of Independence and the 1922 Greco-Turkish war, and characterized as inherently hostile towards the Turks. There is hardly any mention of the positive characteristics of the modern Greeks.

For example, a Turkish history textbook approved for 10th graders contends:

'Due to the Greek question, the great powers of Europe acted in concert and attacked the Ottoman state. From then on, as it is the case today, she [Greece] had this expectation in all the issues she had with Turkey.'[1]

A book on the History of Turkish Revolution and Kemalism, taught at 11th grade, states:

'The Greeks and Armenians, who for centuries have benefited from all the opportunities offered by the State, took advantage of the bad condition of the Ottoman Empire, and tried to carve up our territories by collaborating with the occupying forces.'[2]

The impact of the European Union on history education in Greece and Turkey has operated in two contradictory ways. First of all, the EU, through the Stability Pact for South-eastern Europe, has helped expand and develop the ongoing efforts of Greek and Turkish critical historians to purge chauvinistic references from schoolbooks. According to Dr. Halil Berktay, a prominent Turkish historian and a vice-chair of the History Education Committee, the Stability Pact has multiplied the contexts within which critical historians from the region are able to meet and provided significant funding for their activities.[3] Relatedly, the European Commission monitors the progress that has been made in the case of Turkey in this regard. The 2004 Commission Report notes, for example, that the Turkish history books for the 2003-4 school year still portray minorities as untrustworthy, traitorous, and harmful to the state.

Simultaneously, however, the EU framework helps reinforce the Eurocentric outlook towards history in the two countries. This Eurocentric outlook places the 'Greek' and the 'Turk' in antagonistic positions and militates against the construction of alternative histories between Greece and Turkey. According to Herzfeld (1987), this Eurocentric outlook places Greece in an ambiguous position in the duality between Europe and its

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[1] Koymen, M. A., Oz, M., Ozgedik, M. and M. Anahtarcioglu (2000), *History 2*, Istanbul: Ulke Yayinlari, p. 84, quoted in Kaya et al., 2001.
[2] Palazoglu, A. B. and O. Bircan (1997) *History of Turkish Revolution and Kemalism*, Ankara: BemKoza Yayincilik, p. 40, quoted in Kaya et al., 2001.
[3] Interview, Istanbul, 13 October 2003.

Others. The ideology of Eurocentrism ascribes to Greece the role of the mythic ancestor of all European culture, and in doing so, requires Greece to perceive the 'Turk' – Europe's primary Other – as its natural enemy, and the Turkish elements within its culture as its worst failing. Along similar lines, Frangoudaki (2003:211) argues that

> *'the integration of Greece into the Union has had a powerful ideological effect on the national self-image. [It reproduced and validated] the Eurocentric stereotype of the alleged superiority of the northern and western zone... This Eurocentric stereotype also contains a great admiration for Greek antiquity, whose cultural products are considered of universal value, and an acknowledgement of this antiquity is seen as having shaped European civilization... The acceptance of this Eurocentric stereotype excludes Middle Eastern, Ottoman, Turkish, Sephardic, Arab, and Slav influences on the Greek culture.'*

The Eurocentric outlook towards history, which ascribes to 'Turk' the identity of Europe's Other, also poses problems for the modern Turkey that seeks identification with Europe. The hegemony of Eurocentrism in Turkey manifests itself in reactions that range from complete self-denial and identification with Europe to reciprocating the 'Othered' identity. The Turkish schoolbooks, especially after the 1980s, have gravitated towards the latter form of reaction, constructed a 'Turkish' history that is divorced from European, Greek, and other cultural influences, and adopted a narrative that depicts Europe as the Other. This historical narrative depicts Greeks as completely different from and hostile towards the Turks, and in collaboration with the European powers against the Turks. There is an effort to completely distinguish the modern Greeks from the ancient Greeks and depict the ancestors of modern Greeks as a backward people. An often stated argument is that the Europe generally backs the Greeks because it wrongly thinks that they are descendants of the ancient Greeks.

Regardless of whether this Eurocentric outlook towards history and the roles it ascribes to Greeks and Turks are valid or not, according to Millas (1995: 258-262), the mismatch between European and Turkish representations of Greece is bound to create problems.

'The presentation of Greeks and Greece in Turkish schoolbooks is uniquely different in Europe and completely alien to the Western historical interpretations.' In order to make Turkish students feel that they are a part of European civilization and history, 'the presentation of ancient and modern Greece in schoolbooks has to be compatible with the rest of Europe.' However, I think the problem is more complex because changing the presentations of Greeks and Greece in Turkish schoolbooks would inevitably entail changing the presentation of Europe in conjunction with Ottoman and Turkish history. Constructing an alternative history of Euro-Ottoman/ Euro-Turkish relations is not a task that can be undertaken in Turkey alone; it would necessitate that European states and societies also rethink their Eurocentric outlook towards history.

MEDIA AND JOURNALISTS

In Greek-Turkish relations, the media plays a dual mediating role between the governments and public opinion: it 'manufactures consent' for government policies towards the 'Other; and it plays an important role in shaping the public opinion that leaders have to take into consideration. Until recently, the Greek and Turkish media has exercised this dual influence in a conservative, conflict-enhancing direction. While legitimating the traditional, hardliner policies against the Other, it posed a significant constraint to policymakers who wanted change. Since 1999, with the improvement in Greek-Turkish relations, the influence of the media has turned toward a progressive, conflict-diminishing direction. While legitimising the decisive turns taken in Greek and Turkish foreign policy, the media has begun to shape the public opinion towards long-term support of the rapprochement process.

Many analysts contend that the 1996 Imia/Kardak crisis, which brought Greece and Turkey to the brink of war, was 'triggered and then aggravated' by the Greek and Turkish media (Dimitras, 1998). The actual incident, which later led to the crisis, was a Turkish cargo boat accident near the barren Imia/Kardak islet. The captain refused the help offered by Greek authorities arguing he was in Turkish territorial waters. After the

incident, the Greek and Turkish foreign ministries merely exchanged notes with their contradicting claims of sovereignty and laid the matter to rest, which was indicative of the fact that they considered the matter minor and unworthy of public attention. It was a month after the incident that the Greek media revealed the story and competed with one another in the exaggeration of its significance. According to Dimitras, the trickling of the story to the Greek press was politically motivated, mainly by the opposition's desire to challenge the newly elected Simitis government on its 'soft' Turkey policy. First, the mayor of Greek island Kalymnos rushed to plant the Greek flag on the islet. Afterwards, Turkish journalists followed the Greek mayor and went to the islet with TV cameras to remove the flag and replace it with the Turkish flag. The entire expedition was broadcast live on Greek and Turkish TV channels. The next day, the Turkish newspaper *Hurriyet* 'explained' this behaviour in the following manner:

> *'Our friends photographed the Greek flag on Turkish territory. This was their duty as journalists. Then they planted the flag of the owners of this territory in place of this foreign flag…We believe that people do not lose their civic feelings upon becoming journalists just as they do not lose their human feelings.'[4]*

The connections made in this 'explanation' between journalism, nationalism, and civic duty clearly show the legitimising mind-set behind the conflict-enhancing role of the media. According to Ozgunes and Terzis (2000), many factors contribute to the sustenance of this nationalistic and conflict-enhancing media culture in Greece and Turkey. The deregulation of the media sector in Turkey and Greece in the 1990s led to fierce competition among the new media and nationalist reporting helped to keep the ratings up. The ownership of media by large business conglomerates in the two countries constrained the independence of editors and journalists from the interlocking interests between the media, politicians, and the business sector. In reporting on Greek-Turkish issues, journalists remain dependent on official sources. New media technologies require instant reporting and allow little time for in-depth investigation; therefore encourages reliance on stereotypes and catch-phrases. In addition to these institutional constraints,

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[4] *Hurriyet*, 2 February 1996. Quoted in Kentel, 1998.

the prevalent nationalistic ideologies in the two countries are constitutive of the identities of journalists, and leave little room let alone incentive for alternative reporting. As one Turkish journalist puts it:

'I am always thinking of our national interest and the interest of my newspaper when I am reporting Greek-Turkish affairs. At the end of the day, I do not want to criticize my government because my "objective" reporting might be used wrongly by the other side.'[5]

According to Birand (2004: 71), a prominent Turkish journalist, the Imia/Kardak crisis was a wake-up call for media professionals in Turkey. Confronted with criticism and faced with the gravity of the military crisis that ensued, the Turkish press began to question as to what extent it was correct: 'Some columnists and TV producers underlined that our arguments, set forth by the government may not be as strong as they seemed.' Birand (2004) argues that the transformation in the attitudes of Greek journalists began with the Ocalan affair. When it was disclosed that the Greek embassy in Kenya was hosting the PKK leaders, some writers criticized such adventurism.

However, in the summer of 1999, the Greek and Turkish media played a crucial and independent role in shaping public opinion through its coverage of the deadly earthquakes first in Izmit, Turkey and later in Athens. The media focused on the humanitarian crisis, ran headlines in each other's language, and steered the popular feelings of empathy towards a criticism of past government policies towards the Other. For example, Turkish journalist Stelyo Berberakis commented in the Turkish daily Sabah that:

'If the leaders on both sides of the Aegean can leave their political interests aside for a moment, and act according to the real feelings of the people, then maybe the painful experiences can be left under the rubbles' (Kentel, 2000 quoted in Rumelili, 2003: 238).

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[5] Quoted in Ozgunes and Terzis (2000), p. 416.

Similarly, the following commentary by Anna Stergiou was published in the Greek newspaper *Eleftherotypia*:

> *'We have been spending millions of drachmas for armaments and now we are feeling something we never felt before. The great pains of these people did not make us happy. The pains of these people left a sour taste and a lump in our throats' (Gundogdu, 2001, quoted in Rumelili, 2003: 238)*

The coverage of the earthquakes preceded any substantive initiative towards rapprochement at the political level, therefore the Greek and Turkish media can safely be credited with playing an independent conflict-diminishing role. Afterwards, the Greek and Turkish media professionals initiated contacts as to how they may further their role in conflict resolution. The first Greek-Turkish media conference convened in Athens in February 2000. The follow-up meeting in Istanbul took place in October 2000. A third meeting has recently taken place in Athens in February 2005.

Since the earthquakes, Greek and Turkish media have followed a line that supports the official process of improving relations between the two countries. For example, in Greece, the media has promoted the policy of supporting Turkey's European orientation as the new national strategy. Though there are important differences among columnists – as there are between parties – on the extent to which Turkey's EU membership process should be tied to conditions on Greek-Turkish issues and subjected to EU monitoring, the policy of encouraging Turkey's Europeanisation has been legitimised as the official line. In Turkey, the media has played a similarly conducive role in preparing the public opinion for the change of policy in Cyprus. It has aired alternative views on the Cyprus issue, informed the Turkish public opinion about the different views among the Turkish-Cypriots, questioned the economic and diplomatic burden of maintaining the status quo on the island. In general, both the Greek and Turkish media are making an effort to move beyond official sources. The newspapers are publishing more stories on culture, economy, daily life, that are oriented towards presenting a more diversified image of the Other. One notable exception to this, however, is the media's coverage of the Aegean border disputes. By the very nature of these issues, the Greek and Turkish media are very

dependent on military and official sources; for example, with the Greek media running defence ministry reports of airspace violations, and Turkish media publishing official denials of these 'allegations.'

The question of whether and how the EU impacts the wider societal level through its effects on the media needs to be discussed at several levels. First of all, the EU has not had a noteworthy impact in motivating the initial change that was manifested in the Greek and Turkish media's coverage of the earthquakes. Rather, the motivating factors were domestic and the exogenous shock of the earthquakes. Secondly, the EU has played a supplemental role in fostering contacts between the journalists of the two countries. The aforementioned meetings between Greek and Turkish journalists have been funded by the media organizations themselves, others by UNESCO; the EU has funded a media cooperation project organized by the European Centre for Common Ground (ECCG) from its Civil Society Development Program in Turkey. Thirdly, the EU can potentially have a longer-term impact in ameliorating the structural constraints faced by journalists that were discussed earlier, especially, in the removal of restrictions in the freedom of speech, and through its regulatory effects on the concentration in the media industry and the links between the media conglomerates and the business sector and the state. It is interesting to note in this regard that the media cooperation project run by the ECCG aims to directly tackle some of these structural constraints by organizing high-level meetings between media owners and executives, and training journalists from regional and local media.

Fourthly, the EU has had a constructive influence on the overall discourse on Greek-Turkish relations. By discourse on Greek-Turkish relations, I am referring to the taken-for-granted understandings and representations of the conflict, of self and other, and the role of the EU in relation to the conflict. The media has been a prominent site of the reproduction of these overall understandings and representations. Therefore, the EU's impact on the media discourse cannot be analysed independently of the EU's effects on the overall discourse. Therefore, the observations made in the following discussion with

regard to the EU influence on media discourse also apply to other sites of reproduction, and will be elaborated more fully in the following working paper in this Series.

By virtue of the high symbolic value that 'Europe' carries in Greece and Turkey, the EU, as an institution claiming to represent a European collectivity, has always figured prominently in the discourses on national and state identity in Turkey and Greece, and consequently in the Greek and Turkish discourses on the Greek-Turkish conflict. Yet, how the EU figures in these discourses has varied depending on how the EU discourse positions Greek and Turkish identities in relation to 'Europe' and on how closely Greek and Turkish discourses identify with the EU. By shaping these two conditions, the EU's December 1999 decision to grant Turkey membership candidacy status has affected the direction of the EU's constructive influence on the Greek-Turkish conflict. While, prior to 1999, the discourse of 'Europe' figured in Greek and Turkish discourses in a way that underscores irreconcilable differences and threat perceptions, after 1999, 'Europe' began to be invoked to symbolize common identities and shared interests.[6]

How the EU's constructive influence was channelled in such a negative and conflict-enhancing direction can be seen in the media of the two countries. For example, following the Imia/Kardak crisis, the Greek nationalist daily *Adesmeftos Typos* declared: 'To the Asian barbarism of Turkey, we must on our own again, answer with new Thermopylae, Marathons, and Salamines' (Rumelili, 2003: 232). The Turkish daily *Sabah* responded in a disparaging tone: 'Crises have always been to the benefit of the spoilt child of the West. Athens is secretly plotting a new crisis, and hoping to benefit from it' (ibid.)

On the other hand, after 1999, the Greek media discourse began to reflect a process of identity and interest re-definition in relation to Turkey. A pluralistic perception of Turkey emerged, as 'a complicated and rapidly changing reality with a variety of constituencies' (Keridis, 2001:14). How the discourse of 'Europe' promoted the realization of common

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[6] For a full elaboration of this argument, see Rumelili, 2003a and 2003b.

identities and interests that cut across national lines can be clearly seen in the following quote:

> *'People, who are pro-Europe in Greece are probably more like people who are pro-Europe in Turkey than they are with their compatriots who might subscribe to some outlandish beliefs and conspiracy theories' (Konstandaras, 2002).*

MINORITIES

The Greek-Turkish conflicts are bred by strong nationalistic discourses in both countries that construct the Other as anti-self. In many ways, the Rum-Greek minority in Turkey and the Muslim-Turkish minority in Greece hold the key to surpassing these dualistic and antagonistic constructions of Greek/Turkish identities. Both minority groups represent hybrid identities that are neither wholly 'Greek' nor wholly 'Turkish'.[7] They serve as reminders to the long shared history between the Greeks and Turks, which contains bittersweet memories of coexistence as well as of conflict, injustice, and loss.

In the beginning of the 1900s, approximately two million Orthodox Rum-Greek lived in the present day territories of the Turkish republic, and many Muslims in the present day territories of Greece. The first wave of *voluntary* migrations occurred during the Balkan Wars and the First World War. The 1923 Lausanne Treaty, which ended the Greco-Turkish war of 1919-22, also stipulated the forced exchange of Muslims in Greece with Orthodox Greeks in Turkey, except for the Muslims resident in Western Thrace, and the Orthodox Greeks resident in Istanbul, Bozcaada, and Gokceada. Approximately, 1,700,000 people (1,200,000 Orthodox Greeks and 500,000 Muslims) were subjected to

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[7] It is interesting how a member of the Rum-Greek minority in Istanbul distinguishes the Anatolian 'Rum's from the Greeks: 'As the Anatolian civilizations explored the space, the Greeks were still hunting and gathering. Then, they took advantage of a weak moment, and took over the advanced Anatolian civilizations. Ataturk knew this fact. That is why, after the Great Assault [victory over Greeks, 1922], he said that he took the revenge of the Trojans. We, just like you, are the genuine children of this land.' Dimitri Karayani, quoted in *Hurriyet*, 30 January 2005, p.11.

the Exchange. People were ascribed identities as either Greek or Turkish solely on the basis of religion, and in the process, the cross-cutting ethnic/linguistic/religious identifications were overlooked. For example, the Turkish speaking Orthodox Christians (Karamanlis) in the Kayseri region were classified as Greek and sent to Greece, even though they did not speak any Greek. Similarly, the Greek-speaking Muslims of Crete were classified as Turkish and sent to Turkey. After the population exchange, around 180,000 Rum were left in Turkey, and 106,000 Muslims in Greece.

After the Exchange, both the émigrés and the minorities left in Greece and Turkey continued to be the victims of nation-building projects and the Greek-Turkish conflicts. Both states sought to assimilate the émigrés, and undertook various measures in order to disempower and constrain the citizenship rights of the minorities left within their countries. With a 1936 decree, the Turkish government banned the Rum-Greek Foundations from receiving new donations. The controversial Estate Tax Law adopted during the Second World War targeted the minorities, and put many Rum-Greeks under severe financial strain. On 6-7 September 1955, Turkish nationalist groups, galvanized by the false news that Greeks have bombed Ataturk's house in Thessalonica, looted and burned around 4,000 Rum-Greek homes and businesses. In reaction to the atrocities committed against the Turkish Cypriots in Cyprus, the Turkish government deported the 12,000 Greek citizens living in Istanbul in 1964. After each of these developments, more and more Rum-Greeks left Istanbul for Greece. The final wave of mass migration occurred following Turkey's 1974 military operation to Cyprus. Currently, the numbers of the Rum-Greek minority in Turkey have dwindled down to 1,244. Seventy percent of these are over the age of sixty.

The Muslim-Turkish minority left in Greece has suffered from the discriminatory practices of the Greek citizenship regime and the refusal of Greek authorities to recognize the minority's self-identification as Turkish. According to the Greek Helsinki Monitor, there are currently 90,000 Muslims in Greece, of whom some 50,000 have Turkish as a mother tongue, 30,000 Pomak and 10,000 Romans. Nevertheless, the very large majority of all Muslims, including Pomaks and Roma, 'have a Turkish national identity.' While

initially the Greek minority policy promoted a Turkish identity, which contributed significantly to the assimilation of most Pomaks and Gypsies by the Turkish dominant element in the Muslim minority, since the 1980s, Greek authorities been denying the Turkish identity and prosecuting claims to it (Demetriou, 2004). Several Muslim-Turkish activists have been convicted and civic organizations have been dissolved for using the term Turkish. Recently, in January 2005, the Greek Supreme Court has dissolved the Turkish Union of Xanthi for the same reason.

The minority rights accorded to the Muslim-Turkish minority left in Greece and the Rum-Greek minority left in Turkey under the 1923 Lausanne Treaty were based on the Ottoman *millet* system. This has led to the paradoxical situation where the intracommunal affairs of the Muslim-Turkish minority in Greece continued to be governed by Islamic law whereas Turkey adopted a secular Civil Law in 1926. Most recently, this paradox received international press attention, when the German authorities annulled a Muslim Greek migrant couple's marriage because the 'woman' was only eleven years old. Turkey has subjected its Rum-Greek minority to the secular civil law. It is quite puzzling and interesting how and why Greece maintains this outdated citizenship regime and the otherwise staunchly secular Turkey turns a blind eye to it.

Another discriminatory aspect of the Greek citizenship regime for the Muslim-Turkish minority was the Article 19 of the Greek citizenship code (abolished in 1998), which stipulated that Greek citizens, born of non-ethnic Greek parents, could be stripped of their citizenship rights if they settled abroad. According to the Greek Helsinki Monitor, the bulk of the 60,000 people who have lost their citizenship due to this article between 1955 and 1998 belonged to the Muslim minority.

As I argued previously, promoting the visibility of the minorities, the recognition of their cultural heritage, and the full protection of their rights can significantly contribute to the transformation of the Greek-Turkish conflicts as it would help undermine the homogenizing and oppositional constructions of the Greek and Turkish identities. In recognition of this fact, the forced population exchange and the minority issue have been

a primary focus of recent Greek-Turkish cooperation activities directed at the wider societal level. The Foundation of Lausanne Treaty Immigrants was established in Istanbul in 2001, with the aim of conducting research into the recent history, and protecting the unique cultural heritage of the émigrés. Since then, the Foundation has organized a number of visits for its members to their 'lost' homelands, hosted visiting Greek immigrant associations, established a documentation centre, and organized numerous panels and academic conferences. According to Paschalis Kitromilidis, the objective of such activities is to 'rejuvenate the multiculturalism of our societies…by teaching the multiculturalism of our past.'[8]

The EU has an influence on the minority issues in Turkey and Greece in three ways. First of all, the EU has applied the standards on minority protection set by the Council of Europe in the two countries, and more explicitly enforced them as conditions in Turkey's membership bid. Tsitselikis (2004) notes that there is no clear obligation for member states of the EU on minority protection, apart from the Article 22 of the Charter on Fundamental Rights of the EU, which puts respect for the religious, cultural, and linguistic diversity of Europe as an issue of major concern. However, Tsitselikis argues that the alignment of Greece's general policies, economy, and law with the EU standards brought changes in the broader political environment regarding minority questions. The abolition of Art. 19 of the citizenship code, the abolition of the restriction zone in the northern borderline of Thrace, and the gradual lifting of the administrative discriminatory practices against the Turkish-Muslim minority of Thrace by the early 1990s are cases in point. In 1995, a measure of affirmative action has been introduced, instituting a 0.5% university quota for students from the "Muslim minority." In the primary schools, a settlement has been reached with regard to the hiring of non-Orthodox Greeks as teachers.

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[8] Professor of Political Science, University of Athens; Secretary-General of Center of Asia Minor Studies, speaking at The Compulsory Exchange of Populations Between Greece and Turkey, 80th Anniversary Symposium, Istanbul, 7-8 November 2003. Translation by author.

On the other hand, the treatment of minorities has been an explicit item in the conditions that candidate states have to fulfil in order to join the EU. According to Tsitselikis (2004), the Rum-Greeks, along with other non-Muslim minorities in Turkey,[9] face restrictions in the property rights and management of their wealthy religious foundations left from the Ottoman era. The Directorate General of Foundations is able to disband foundations and seize their properties without a judicial decision. Therefore, non-Muslim minorities face difficulties in sustaining their communities and institutions. The European Commission closely monitors and reports on the problems of the Rum-Greek minority in Turkey in education, training of the clergy, and the management of foundations.

Secondly, the EU has provided funding from its Civil Society Development Program for Greek-Turkish activities related to protecting the cultural heritage and the rights of minorities. Recently, the Foundation for Lausanne Treaty Immigrants has begun a collaborative project with the Minority Groups Research Centre in Greece (KEMO), 'On the Way to Citizenship,' which is funded by the European Commission.

Finally, the EU serves as a model and as a reference point in the activities directed toward improving the status of minorities and the citizenship regimes in the two countries. For example, the President of the FLTI justifies his call for the modernization of the citizenship regimes in Greece and Turkey by reference to the EU:

> *'It is our natural expectation that the governments of EU member Greece and EU candidate Turkey begin to perceive diversity not as a threat but as cultural richness, and take immediate steps to fully realize the concept of multicultural civic citizenship.'[10]*

Similarly, the EU is posited as the model of multicultural citizenship for the future. Halil Berktay, a prominent Turkish historian, argues that the superficial and unequal

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[9] Turkey only officially recognizes non-Muslim minorities.
[10] Umit Isler, speaking at the Conference on Minority Education, 4 December 2004, Komothini. Translation by author.

multiculturalism of the Ottoman period cannot be a guide for the future.[11] Herkul Millas, a dedicated scholar on Greek-Turkish issues, states his belief that 'the EU will once again give us the opportunity of a multi-cultural, multi-lingual, and multi-religious existence.'[12]

ARTS, LITERATURE, AND POPULAR CULTURE

Like education, arts, literature, and popular culture are also important conduits through which negative or positive images of 'Others' are transmitted to future generations and to the wider societal public. Unlike the educational field, where such imagery distinctly serves purposes of nation-building/ re-building, and is directly controlled by authorities; such images in literature, arts, and popular culture are not necessarily purposively placed, and their production and reproduction cannot be directly controlled (except for censure). In fact, artists, authors, and producers, often approach such imagery in their creative works in two ways. Some deliberately choose to promote positive or negative images of 'Others' in order to reflect their political agendas and promote political objectives. In the works of others, such imagery is not there by conscious design and mostly reflects prevalent and taken-for-granted representations in society.

Given these general characteristics of the arts, literature, and popular culture, the EU can make a direct difference in limited ways. Through its compulsory influences, the EU can pressure the governments to remove any restrictions on freedom of speech. It can certainly fund like-minded artists in their production of works that may serve to undermine the construction of the Other as different and antagonistic. It may fund collaborative activities between Greek and Turkish artists and thereby foster networks. However, none of these direct efforts can influence how works produced in this fashion will resonate with the wider public and whether or not they will be able to impact the prevalent construction of identities. In this field, the EU will be able to produce an impact

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[11] Associate Professor of History, Sabanci University, speaking at The Compulsory Exchange of Populations Between Greece and Turkey, 80th Anniversary Symposium, Istanbul, 7-8 November 2003. Translation by author.
[12] Herkul Millas, quoted in *Hurriyet*, 30 January 2005.

at the wider societal level mostly through its constructive influences, through its effects on discourse, which determine how cultural works will be received and understood. As I stated in the introduction, such constructive influences will be the topic of my final working paper for this series.

In a detailed and comprehensive analysis of the images of the Other in Greek and Turkish novels, Millas (2000) finds both to be replete with various discursive practices that include negation, absolutization of differences, and the construction of the Other as physically and morally inferior and backward. In both literatures, such negative representations are deeply connected with the nation-building processes and nationalist ideologies. Before the break-up of the Ottoman Empire, for example, one can hardly encounter negative representations of Greeks among Ottoman/Turkish novelists espousing a multiculturalist Ottomanist ideology. Similarly, Greeks are positively represented as more advanced in class struggle in the leftist Turkish novels of the 1960s. Millas (2000:271) also notes how the perceptions of the West [Europe] in Turkey are directly related to the perceptions of the Greeks: 'When the West is perceived as an enemy, the Greeks are also enemies. When the West is perceived as a model, the Greek becomes a friend.' In contrast, in the Greek literature, Turkey is associated with the East, and hence depicted as inferior and backward, while Greece is identified with the West.

Has there recently been a change in the representations of the 'Greek' and 'Turk' in Greek and Turkish literature, arts, and popular culture? It should be noted that there have always been writers, artists, and filmmakers dedicated to the cause of Greek-Turkish cooperation and brotherhood, such as Sait Faik Abasiyanik (Millas, 2000) in literature, and Zulfu Livaneli and Mikis Theodorakis in music, and their activities have been favorably received by the intelligentsia. What arguably has changed recently is how these cultural products and artistic works are interpreted and approached by the wider public. There are indications of a positive trend: The 2003 Greek movie *Politiki Kouzina* (Kitchen of Istanbul) was a blockbuster hit in Greece, and the prime-time Turkish TV drama series *Yabanci Damat* (Foreign Groom) continues to receive high ratings. Both

challenge the prevalent constructions of Greek and Turkish identities and invite their viewers to critically re-assess their outlooks toward history.

Politiki Kouzina (Kitchen of Istanbul) tells the story of a Rum-Greek family that was deported from Istanbul in 1964. The movie focuses on the family's cooking and love of food to depict their different Istanbul-based identities, the difficulties they faced in adapting to Greek society, and the conformist pressures placed on them by the nationalist ideologies both in Turkey and Greece. *Yabanci Damat* (The Foreign Groom) is a new TV drama series shown on Turkish *Kanal D* television about the love affair between a Turkish woman *Nazli* and a Greek man *Niko*.[13] Niko's family is originally from Istanbul, but they were deported to Greece by the Turkish authorities in 1964. The drama revolves around their developing love affair, and the couple's efforts to convince themselves and their families to move beyond cultural stereotypes and historical prejudices.

Another movie that must be mentioned in this context is *Bulutlari Beklerken* (Waiting for the Clouds), a 2004 movie adapted from a Yorgo Andreadis' novel by the acclaimed Turkish director Yesim Ustaoglu, which depicts the life of Ayse – Eleni her real name. She is the daughter of a Greek family that had to migrate from the Black Sea region of Turkey in 1916. Ayse/Eleni loses most of her family on the way and is adopted by a Turkish family. The movie is about how, years later, after her Turkish family passes away, Ayse/Eleni reclaims her past and begins searching for her lost brother.

In taking a critical stance on the Greek-Turkish conflicts, these cultural products do not generally make explicit references to the EU. However, the most recent episode of *Yabanci Damat* included a conversation where Niko's mother tried to convince Niko's grandmother, who objected to the marriage, by saying: 'But Turkey is going to become a

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[13] It should be noted that this TV drama takes an unprecedented step by depicting a love affair between 'our' woman and the 'Other' man (from the Turkish perspective). Through the particular intertwining of nationalist and patriarchal ideologies in Greek and Turkish societies, such mixed love affairs depicted previously in literature have always been between the 'Other' woman and 'our' man (Millas, 2000).

member of the EU.' To this, the grandmother replied: 'Turkey cannot enter the EU! A Turkish woman cannot enter our family!'

While explicit references to the EU are scarce, it can be argued that the EU has, for example, had significant indirect influences on the production of *Bulutlari Beklerken*. By lifting various restrictions on the freedom of speech, the EU has helped create a conducive environment in Turkey for the adaptation of a novel by Yorgo Andreadis, who was declared a persona non grata by Turkish authorities in 1998 for his writings on the Greek heritage of the Black Sea region. Relatedly, it has encouraged domestic corporate sponsors to finance the production of such a potentially controversial movie. The film's director, Yesim Ustaoglu, has also explicitly underlined the role of the EU in an interview:

> *'I find the EU process significant for the reparation of the malformations of the past. With the Republic, Turkey sought to Westernize by suppressing its various identities and sub-cultures. Some of the reforms that Turkey needs to make in the EU accession process entail the re-articulation of these identities.'*[14]

TRADE, TOURISM, AND INVESTMENT – ACROSS THE EU BORDER

Following the improvement in Greek-Turkish relations since 1999, cross-border interactions between the two countries at the wider societal level have increased and diversified. Cem and Papandreou, the Turkish and Greek foreign ministers at the time, have consciously chosen functional cooperation as their main strategy in improving bilateral relations. In June 1999, Cem wrote a letter to Papandreou, inviting Greece to cooperate with Turkey on the issue of terrorism. Papandreou replied positively and suggested further avenues of cooperation. In many ways, the 1999 Helsinki Council decision, granting Turkey candidacy status followed and consolidated this initiative in bilateral relations. Since then, the two states have signed cooperation agreements on tourism, incentives for joint investment, environmental protection, fight against terrorism,

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[14] *Radikal*, 8 January 2005, Ustaoglu'nun Derdi Cesitlilik, Okan Ozyurt

organized crime, and illegal migration, economic cooperation, scientific and technological cooperation, customs services, maritime transport, culture, species protection, agriculture, and the agreement on the exemption from double-taxation.

According to my interviews, policymakers in Greece and Turkey perceive this developing functional cooperation as the 'European path to cooperation' par excellence, modelled after the European integration experience. I was cautioned against viewing these cooperation efforts at the bilateral level as distinct from other EU conflict resolution mechanisms, such as membership conditionality, because 'it, too, is inspired by the EU'. Therefore, it is apt to consider the EU as having an indirect influence on this developing functional cooperation, by serving as a model and source of inspiration.

However, the nature of the EU border has a more direct influence on such cross-border activities. The 1995 EU-Turkey Customs Union agreement has been a turning point in this regard. The real rise in Greek-Turkish trade, however, occurred after the improvement in bilateral relations. In 1998, the bilateral trade between Greece and Turkey merely amounted to 200 million dollars. Through a fivefold increase, the figure has reached 1.3 billion dollars in 2003. The trade balance is tilted in favour of Turkey; 942 million dollars of the total trade were Turkish exports to Greece.[15] The bilateral agreements on incentives for joint investment (20 January 2000) and on the avoidance of double-taxation (2 December 2003) have spurred investments. Around 77 Greek companies operate in Turkey, mostly in the services sector, and Greek investments constitute approximately 3.2% of total foreign investment in Turkey. Most recently a Turkish brokerage firm has been bought by the Greek bank EFG Eurobank Ergasias for 25 million dollars.[16] On the other hand, only 10 Turkish companies operate in Greece mainly in tourism and logistics sectors.

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[15] The figures are taken from the Greek-Turkish news web-site. URL: http://www.grtrnews.com/tr/publish/article_139.shtml. Also see on this website the interview with the Greek representative of the Turkish-Greek Business Council, Panagiotis Kutsikos (Eleftheros Typos, 6 August 2004).
[16] *Radikal*, 29 March 2005.

Even though with the EU-Turkey Customs Union agreement, the Greek-Turkish border has become more porous for trade and investment flows, the Schengen system constitutes an important impediment to the further development of cross-border links. According to the Turkish Undersecretary of the Prime Minister for Foreign Trade, Tuncer Kayalar:

> *'Our businessmen and exporters report that they face great difficulties in the acquisition of visas to Greece. The visas issued are limited and very short in duration. Especially the technical personnel of our companies need visas of longer duration for the assembly of exported products. None of the Turkish investors in Greece have been able to acquire settlement and work permits. I think that a more simplified and flexible visa regime will be of great benefit to our bilateral economic relations.'[17]*

At the same time, the Schengen border system puts the Greek tourism sector at a disadvantage, and impedes the further development of people-to-people links. The number of Greek tourists visiting Turkey has increased exponentially since 1999, their numbers amounting to 393.397 in 2003. While the number of Turkish tourists visiting Greece have also increased, their numbers are much more limited. The strict visa regime discourages travellers; they have to apply in person at least two weeks in advance at the Greek consulates in Istanbul, Izmir, and Edirne or at the Embassy in Ankara, pay a visa fee amounting to 40 euros plus 2 euros per day for required international health insurance, and have to prepare a long list of documents. It is very difficult for unemployed, self-employed, people below a certain level of monthly income, and people with no previous travel to Schengen countries to get a visa. Recently, the mayors of Lesvos and the Dodecanese islands have filed a petition at the Greek foreign ministry for the relaxation of the visa regime to encourage more travellers from the Turkish mainland to the Greek islands.[18] However, the EU imposed Schengen system does not allow for such flexibility. Two years ago, one-day visits to Greek islands from the Turkish

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[17] Interview (21 July 2004). Published on www.grtrnews.org.
[18] Berin Myisli 'Yunanlı İki Vali'den Dışişleri'ne Vize Uyarısı'18 October 2004, www.grtrnews.org.

coastline without a visa were allowed for a period; however, this policy has since been revoked. During the Turkish Foreign Minister Gul's visit to Athens in October 2003, the then Greek Foreign Minister Papandreou told a press conference that he has raised this issue again with the European Commissioner for Justice and Home Affairs.[19]

CONCLUSION

Noting the importance of the public opinion in consolidating the improved state of political relations between Turkey and Greece, this paper analysed whether and how the EU is able to impact the wider societal level in Greek-Turkish relations. This paper assessed the EU's impact on the wider societal level, through its purposive and/or direct influences on history education, media, the status of minorities, arts, literature, and popular culture, and cross-border trade, investment, and tourism, leaving the analysis of the EU's structural effects on discourse to the following working paper.

It emerges from the empirical analysis that the EU's impact on the wider societal level is much less pronounced and long-term than at the political level. Nevertheless, the EU influences are critical and significant. Through its positive influences on the freedom of speech, and the status of minorities, for example, the EU helps establish a political environment conducive to the articulation of alternative opinions, histories, cultural products, and to the recognition of multiple, cross-cutting identifications. It thereby serves to weaken the hold of prevalent nationalist ideologies and the oppositional constructions of identities in Turkey and Greece. On the other hand, the EU has played only a supplemental role in supporting the activities of individuals and organizations, whose primary audience is the general public. The joint efforts of Greek and Turkish critical historians, journalists, and artists began independently of the EU, and the EU plays only a supplemental role in funding their activities and cultural products. Organizations working on the Greek-Turkish minority and population exchange issues are the ones that more directly benefit from EU funding and support.

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[19] From George Papandreou's personal web-site: www.papandreou.gr

However, the EU figures quite prominently in the ways in which critical historians, artists, and minority rights advocates publicize and legitimise their causes. For example, the issue of minority rights is legitimised in the context of a modern citizenship regime according to EU norms, and changing the representations of ancient and modern Greece in Turkish schoolbooks is justified by the need to make Turkish history narratives more compatible with European history narratives.

The situation of Greek-Turkish relations across the EU border both in institutional and symbolic terms; however, places serious constraints both on cross-border contacts and on the re-imagining of identities and history. While the 1995 EU-Turkey Customs Union Agreement has opened the Greek-Turkish border to trade and investment flows, the Schengen system restricts the ability of Turkish citizens to freely travel to Greece, and disrupts the activities of businessmen, exporters, students, and tourists. Both Greece and Turkey have an interest in making the border regime more flexible; however, they face the fact that this is an external EU border. Similarly, the situation of the 'Greek' and the 'Turk' in oppositional and antagonistic positions by the Eurocentric discourse challenges efforts to reconstruct Greek-Turkish history. To the extent that the EU, as an institution claiming to represent a European collectivity, does not overtly challenge the Eurocentric underpinnings of its identity and history, the close identification of Greece and Turkey with the EU actually militates against the construction of alternative histories. A similar situation affected the political discourse in the two countries until recently, with Greece being an EU member, and Turkey being a non-member. This differentiation in identity terms reinforced the existing sense of difference and perception of threat in the two countries. However, the elevation of Turkey to EU candidate status in 1999 has diminished this differentiation which was reinforced by the EU.

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EUBorderConf working papers are published within the context of the research project "The European Union and Border Conflicts: The Impact of Integration and Association" (EUBorderConf), funded by the European Union's Fifth Framework Programme, with additional funds from the British Academy, and co-ordinated at the Department of Political Science and International Studies (POLSIS), The University of Birmingham. The series may be of interest to anyone engaged with contemporary debates on the EU and border conflicts, including academics, PhD students and people working in the field. For more information please contact Jevgenia Viktorova at j.viktorova@bham.ac.uk, or visit www.euborderconf.bham.ac.uk.

EU Border Conflicts Studies. The European Union and Cultural Change in Greek-Turkish Relations. Bahar Rumelili, Ph.D. Research Fellow. Bogazici University/ University of Birmingham. No. 17 April 2005. Â 1. In the first category are the people in positions of formal authority, dealing with political, economic, and cultural issues between the two countries. 2. Actors not in positions of formal authority, but recognized as influential opinion-makers, such as former politicians, diplomats, think-tanks, researchers. The primary audience of their activities are actors in categories 1 and 2.