

The Muslim community of Cyprus during the first period of the British administration late 19th century, early 20th: a traditional religious community in neoteric perspective.

The topic of my presentation will be the depiction in general terms, of the changes that the early years of British administration, brought to the mentality and structure of the Muslim community of Cyprus. There will be an attempt to analyze the gradual integration of Ottoman – Muslim community norms into the British neoteric – colonial state structure. To depict the transition of the community from the Ottoman era, when it functioned as the ruling class of the island, to the British period, during which the community gradually lost reference to the Ottoman Empire and a search for new codes of national identification began.

The Berlin Pact (12 July 1878) confirmed the national movements of the Christian populations that lived until then in the Balkan provinces of the empire. It came as a result of the gradual decline of the empire (17th century) and its defeat in the (Russo-Turkish) war. During the negotiations and as a side effect, the pact of Cyprus was signed, between the governments of the Empire and Britain. The island passed to the administrative authority of the British, under the suzerainty of the Sultan, along with the obligation of the British government to pay a fixed tax per year, thus verifying the suzerainty of the Ottoman Porte.

The transition from one regime to the other was difficult and full of contradictions. One of its main characteristics was the lack of preparation by both Ottoman and British administration of the state that was going to be established. Also the lack of knowledge and information provided to the two larger in the aspect of population communities, for the changes that the future held for them.

Initially the Porte seemed to withdraw from the administrative affairs concerning the Greek Orthodox community, and left the matter in the hands of the British, as a Christian power. By maintaining the old Ottoman administrative organization of millet that divided the populations along religious communities, the Porte attempted to secure the rights of the Moslem community. The ottoman government had the right and also the obligation to look after the Moslem community alone. The main connection between the Muslim population and the empire was indeed the millet

norm, which depicted the connection to the land, the leading community of the island and of course the Moslem religion.

The request of the ottoman negotiating delegation was that the transition to the new regime would result to the least possible effect on the administrative and legal structures that applied to the Muslim population of Cyprus. In that perspective, the Sublime Porte retained the right to appoint the muftü [chief religious figure] as well as the chief kadı [chief religious judge] and the inspector of the community's education. By the initial agreements, the retention of the mehkemei Sheri tribunals [courts administering justice according to the shariat or saria- the religious laws who had also the jurisdiction to decide upon matters of family law (divorces, dowry and inheritance matters, etc)] were decided. Finally, the Ottoman central government retained the right to appoint a Moslem Cypriot as one of the two delegates to the Cypriot Evkaf (the other one would be an English officer appointed by the British).

The Ottoman attempt to preserve all Moslem institutions functioning within the British regime, intended to safeguard the position of the Moslem community in the new situation where the Moslems, the former leading class of the island, would have to be governed by a Christian power. However, by ensuring that the structure of the religious community would remain intact for the Moslems of the island even though they were stripped of their predominant position as the ruling class, the Ottoman Government deprived them of a more active role in the affairs of the colony, and subdued them to the status of a minority millet, a lesser role than the one they held prior to the arrival of the british.

Before analyzing the part that the British administration played in the transition period from the Ottoman imperial power to the British colonial administration, it is important to analyze the basic legal and religious norms that administered the internal affairs of the community, and the form they assumed after the arrival of the new administration.

The British aimed to establish a secular colonial administrative mechanism, upon their arrival to Cyprus. However, due to the fact that they needed to ensure the natives' consent in order to rule the island and partly due to the fact that the Cyprus Pact determined so, they did not attempt to modify the basis of the administrative pyramid,

which remained in community terms, and religious parameters, for both communities, Christian and Mohammedan. The central colonial government was secular, but the basis of the society went on dealing with their affairs in the same religious and bicomunal way as before.

Following a practice applied in other colonies before Cyprus, the British established a Legislative Council, as a link between the native population and the government. It consisted of elected members of the two main communities of the island, nine Christian and three Mohammedan, as well as six appointed British members deriving from the colonial government. The High Commissioner had the final vote and could veto the council's decisions. The role of the council was meant to be mainly advisory, and to function as a sphygmometer of the public sentiment. Every community had to elect its own members for the council, thus underlining the bicomunal character of the colony, leaving space for the government to exploit the mutual suspicion. Especially the Moslem community, whose connection to the state and the government was essential, since it appeared as the lawful successor of the ottoman administration, was more susceptible to the British influence. The British government appeared as the lawful guard of the Moslems' position in the island.

However, despite the British pressure, the native council members showed their opposition to the new status quo from the first years of its establishment. And in those declarations they stood united, to the astonishment of the British government. The Cyprus Pact declared that an annual sum, the so called tribute [a sum of about 92,799 pounds] was to be paid to the ottoman government in acknowledgement of its suzerainty over Cyprus. The amount came through heavy taxation on the island. The first resolutions that the Christian members initiated and were unanimously passed through the native members of the council, declared that the sum should be paid by the british treasury and not the native population. They stated that Britain occupied Cyprus for its own purposes and thus the British government should pay for any obligation derived form the Cyprus occupation.

The High commissioner tried to emphasize on the fact that since Cyprus still remained under ottoman suzerainty, the British could not deprive the ottoman government of their lawful rights over Cyprus, which should be exercised as before.

This statement served as a warning towards the Moslems of the council; if the natives' obligations towards the Porte were waived, gradually so would the ottoman claims over the island. The British pressure on the Moslem members of the council did not have any results. The resolutions on the matter were periodical and more intense as years passed, and appeared as early as 1886.

Generally the pressure of the new administration during the first years of its presence on the island fell mainly on the Muslim community. The fact that the occupation of Cyprus was the outcome of negotiation and not of war, gave the British the negotiating advantage to appear as the successors and yet the safe keepers of the ottoman power in Cyprus. Moreover, through the Cyprus Pact the new government, though secular, had every right to infiltrate the main religious and legal norms that regulated the social, economical and religious life of the community. The most prominent paradigm of this intervention is the case of the Cyprus Evkaf.

By its creators it was defined as: "department of land and property administered by the religious foundations of Cyprus". Due to the way that the Muslim community was organized, the Evkaf regulated almost all financial, social and religious life of the community. During the ottoman period, all land and property belonged to the Sultan, the state, and every ottoman subject, who by an imperial order [*firman*], acquired the right to cultivate a piece of land or the use of a specific property, did not have the right to pass it on to his heirs. By declaring the property or land as a donation *vaqf* to a pious foundation or monastery, any subject had the right to appoint his/ her heirs as *mutevellis* that is delegates of the property, with an annual or monthly salary.

Through the *vakf* properties, ottomans found the only way to leave a percentage of their property to their families and heirs, and more significantly, established a pattern through which the economical life of their communities evolved around religious foundations, sacred laws and state financing. When the british took over the administration of Cyprus, the majority of the moslems cultivated the land and received numerous small wages acting as *mutevellis* in numerous portions of *vaqf* properties they had received over the years by family and relatives. They were strongly connected to the ottoman state by the belief that it was their main employer and provider of prosperity. The right to inherit property and to manage it in the name

of islam and the state gave also to the community its identity as the rulling community of the island.

The new administration soon after their arrival to Cyprus, realized the importance of Evkaf for the moslem community. The local government appointed both the british and the moslem delegate, even from the first appointments in 1879, placing the foundation under direct british control. By doing so, they appeared as the lawful successors of the ottoman power. Gradually and drastically, the british began to secularize the Evkaf, by diminishing the role of the religious tribunals and placing Evkaf matters under the jurisdiction of civil courts. Furthermore, to simplify its function and cut on unnecessary expences, many small vaqf properties were abolished, their mutevellis were compensated with a fixed sum and dismissed.

The community's reaction to the british infiltration of its main socioeconomical norms was subtle but steady and persistant, and began almost right after the arrival of the british. The first reactions came from the former ottoman officials, members of the muslim hierarchy, that felt alienated and stripped of their authorities in the new secular environment. Gradually, during a small period of time, both the members of the legislative council and the moslem newspapers began to ask for the return of the Evkaf to the control of the community, and for reforms. The conservative – religious part of the community asked for desecularization of the foundation, while the progressive part of the community that slowly had started to emerge and state its views through the papers, asked for the return of the control of the muslim foundations to the community, and for less british intervention to its internal affairs.

The British, in their effort to increase their influence over the community and diminish internal reactions, kept supporting the role and power of the moslem delegate of Evkaf. All delegates, and especially Musa Irfan Eff., gathered power and were appointed in various posts, working as an advocate for the colonial government. The first sentiments of anticolonialism, were evident by 1913 – 1914 in the moslem community, especially by the conservative, pro-religious group of moslems. Systematically reactions appeared by community newspapers at the same time, critisizing the new practices in the Evkaf.

Finally, when, after the beginning of the 1st World War, the british government started systematically abolishing small and unprofitable vaqfs and dismissing their mutevellis, the public opinion of the community shifted. The traditional belief to the state and overall power remained, but the public ceased identifying with the british government. And that is because the community was deprived by a right acknowledged and retained for centuries, a prerogative interwooven with their position as rulling class of the island.

The increasing british intervention to community affairs and the general dissapointment that derived from it, the equally increasing voices in the christian community demanding unification with Greece, and especially the new messages coming form the areas of the former Ottoman Empire, resulted to an even more active moslem community after the end of the First World War. After the end of it, the ties between the ottaman regime and the British were severed and the impact to the moslems of Cyprus was significant.

The community finally was ready to critisize and tried to improve the reality of the administration they lived in, that is the reality of a british colony, but also ready to identify with a power that did not reach Cyprus at that time, and occupied only a small fraction of what formerly consisted the ottoman empire, that is the modern state of Turkey.

Paper for the 3rd Symposium – Hellenic Observatory – 14th & 15th June 2007

By Foteini Kalantzi

Topic: *Multiculturalism in Greece: A theoretical approach on the cultural particularities of the different ethnic groups in the framework of social constructivism and national identity argumentation*

I. INTRODUCTION

The importance of the multiculturalism issue is obvious in many of the current societies and this is outright manifested in all life sectors, especially in the Western societies. The topics that concern immigration policies, which are very high on the governmental agendas, the position of the mass media towards the cultural differences, the conditions created after September 11th globally, and of course globalisation as an evolutionary process declare the critical stance that we have to take towards the issues of multiculturalism within a country. The difficulty to analyze the multiculturalism issue stems from the fact that every society captures and reacts differently to the potential of differentiating towards a more multicultural character.

My study is going to concentrate on the deliberation of the phenomenon in the Hellenic state (general framework), highlighting the parameter of the cultural differences between the population groups with diverse ethnical background that can be a match and osmosis, instead of a friction point. This would contribute to the preservation of smooth diplomatic relations (between Greece and the origin countries of immigrants), to the peaceful cohabitation of diverse ethnic groups inside the country and also to the constructive interaction between different cultures. Further on the study emphasis will be laid on the significant role of cultural agents to the elimination of friction points.

It would be useful to start by analyzing in few words the meaning of culture for the **human being** specifically and for the **society** in general.

One of the greatest manifestations of the human need for interaction and communization is Culture. It is a psychological imperative at first place and therefore it becomes an easy target for its conceptualization and the exploitation of its expressions. Except that the production of Culture itself is part of an answer towards behaviorist and Freudian theories about human needs, it also declares the internal human need to find an answer on his existence. Erich Fromm's opinion that relates partly with the parameters of culture (e.g: custom) and with the above, is a very important aspect. 'Religion, nationalism, every custom and belief may seem ridiculous and small; however since they connect the human being with others, they are a refuge in front of what he is afraid of: loneliness'¹

Moving on from the unity (human being) to the social environment, it is essential to underline the reasons that make Culture the cornerstone for the development of societies. In specific, cultural identity of a nation gains special importance in a globalised reality. Additionally, it is central to analysis relating to its precarious position because of the increased multiculturalism within states (which continue to be considered and called according to realistic principles, nation-states) and also because of the popularized and simplistic theories on 'clash of civilizations' (which of course is lighten up by the controversial and ambiguous governmental and media positions after the international circumstance of the 11th September).

It is important for the particular study to prove the importance of Culture as it is expressed (from the day-by-day opinion exchange up to the creation of great works of artistic and historical interest) in the evolution of the Greek society and its stance towards socio-political issues that involve immigration, discussion on the preservation of national identity, etc. It would be therefore imperative to quote a definition-framework for the meaning of Culture in Greek, which is *Politismos*. 'In its etymological background the term the outcome of *polis*, the result and the consequences that the political *vios* (life) has, the belonging of the *polites* (citizens) in collective co-existence and their contribution to the set-up of the polis

¹ Fromm, Erich 'Fear of Freedom', Boukoumani, 1971, pg. 35

event/reality/procedure...Culture is simply and realistically a way of life – *tropos viou*²

More specifically, ‘Culture or more accurately the Cultures embrace the whole spectrum of values, mentalities and way of life of human groups that they represent, whereas in a greater degree, they comprise the memory and heritage that connects them unbreakably with past and history. Cultures are not settled schemes, but procedures, in constant co-action with the social givens creating them and at the same time exposed in external influences, usually violent.’³

II. THE STUDY MATTER OR RESEARCH TARGET

A. Research Assumptions

It would be useful to mention the assumptions on which the current study is going to be based and which are going to be proven.

The **first** is that the so-called clash of civilizations is a product of conceptualising cultural differences and concentrating on their polarised aspects, something that perforce leads to conflicting and antagonistic views.

We have to consider as a precondition that cultural differences occur within a host country, like Greece; however all cultures that are represented by different ethnic groups do not have the same position and representation within the state. As Parekh says ‘...cultures are not equally rich and do not deserve equal respect...but no culture is wholly worthless, it deserves at least some respect because of what it means to its members and the creative energy it displays...No culture is perfect and has not a right to impose itself on others...’⁴

Understanding the differences between cultures is essential and it is the first step towards really embracing cultural diversity in a single society. We don’t need to claim that there is no difference and that we have to create uniformity in a society in order to survive. We need to conceive that a genuine verification of diversity leads to useful

² Yiannaras, Ch. ‘Cultural Diplomacy’, Ikaros 2001, pg.14-16

³ Tzoumaka, E. ‘Cultural Diplomacy: International Givens and Greek Perspectives’, I.Sideris, 2005, pg. 70

⁴ Parekh, B. ‘Rethinking Multiculturalism’, Palgrave, Macmillan, 2006, pg.337

political decisions and effective policies for the co-existence of local groups and migrants. For example society needs to take steps for immigrants of another religion, in order to avoid alienation between groups. It is imperative that ‘society deals with the ‘other’ in a democratic way, provides them the possibility of political integration and take care that human and social rights/duties and liberties apply equally and fairly both to the native and the immigrant’⁵

Moving on, ‘Given the identification process based on self/other dichotomy, one can easily see the presence of potentiality of clashes between civilisations identifying themselves against one another. According to the self/other dichotomy, each civilisation is identified against others on the basis of the existence of differences among themselves. Yet, there seems to be no direct determinism, at least in practice, that these differences would ultimately lead to clashes among civilisations’⁶

The **second** useful assumption for our argumentation is the interdependence between the cultural aspects of a society and the idiosyncrasy/psychology of people/nation, a condition easily exploitable by interest groups and governments.

[What I mean by that is that] For example Greek people feel very close to their inherited cultural characteristics, which are a part of their everyday life. Eagleton writes that people are more likely to go on a demonstration for cultural and material rather than purely political issues – the cultural being is interested for his/her spiritual identity, whereas the material for his/her physical identity.⁷ This is known to the agents that contribute to the formation of the domestic political reality, especially nowadays that there is a spread fear of the ‘other’.

The **third** theoretical assumption is the evolutionary character of societies’ cultural aspects (culture → evolutional, critical aspect with ‘transformative potential’ based on constructivist principles).

It has been observed and proven in history that very important cultural products can be delivered through interaction between civilizations.

⁵ Kotzias N. ‘Comparing integration policies’, Bridge, www.bridge-mag.com, pg.100-101

⁶ Ulusoy Hasan. ‘The Importance of Identity Building in Avoiding the Clash of Civilizations in the Age of globalisation (Some Reflections on Turkey – EU Relations’, Perceptions, Autumn 2004, pp. 98

⁷ Eagleton, T. ‘The Idea of Culture’, Polis, 2003, pg.118

Eliot underlines the uniqueness of a country's culture, but also the imperativeness for its relation and interaction with other cultures.⁸ This gains more importance in the light of the social transformations in the Greek society after the large waves of immigration and builds the positive argumentation towards multiculturalism inside a nation-state. A culture that is able to embrace other cultures and consequently their people who happen to live outside their country and is able to convey its maturity and wisdom has bigger potentials of improving and enriching itself. As Terry Eagleton writes 'Culture has a constructivist dimension because the physical material has to fall under processing, in order to gain a humane meaning.'⁹ Additionally, Culture needs diversity in order to flourish, to be the real expression of all the social groups and to be the match-point of several teams. 'Uniformity in a society and in a culture can be calamitous, whereas friction between its members or its elements that are part of it is essential'.¹⁰ As for the questions that arise on a common culture and the cultural coherence that stems from it, it would be useful to quote that 'the discussion on a common culture may be at the end a pseudo-problem because the meaning of culture is by definition collective, and that the real problem lies upon the way that the cultural singularity of a community coexists with the excess of its cultural boundaries'.¹¹

B. Argument of the paper

Taking as a basis the above assumptions and reversing the arguments, cultural particularities of different ethnic groups in Greece have good potentiality of being a **foundation for harmonious co-existing and collaboration inside the country, the healthy progress of the domestic culture and civilization, and the preservation of friendly diplomatic relations (between Greece and the immigrants' country of origin).**

This would not be something unachievable in practical terms, as it has been proven to function, if we look back at multicultural societies, in particular multicultural cities, such as Alexandria, Smyrni, Constantinople and of course Salonica. Mark Mazower in his excellent book 'Salonica: City of Ghosts' shows vividly the peaceful co-

⁸ T.S. Eliot. 'The Unity of European Culture' in Notes towards the Definition of Culture, London, Faber&Faber 1962 [1948],pg. 119

⁹ Eagleton, T. 'The Idea of Culture', Polis, 2003, pg.37

¹⁰ Tziovas Dimitris, Introduction in Eagleton's 'The Idea of Culture', Polis, 2003, pg.26

¹¹ Tziovas Dimitris, Introduction in Eagleton's 'The Idea of Culture', Polis, 2003, pg.28

existence of diverse communities (Christians, Jews and Muslims) for long time in the same city. Themelis also refers to a similar case, Smyrni by writing that ‘...the charm of the city was the co-existence and understanding between so many cultures in a space of prosperity, healthy competition without dogmatisms that could create beliefs, ideologies and perceptions’,¹²

C. Case study: Greece

It is not random that Greece has been chosen as a case study. The reasons of choosing it are the following:

- It is an interesting case because Greece is a country that faces the phenomenon of multiculturalism in approximately the last decade; therefore it is an on-going situation.
- The issue of multiculturalism finds Greek society divided (a matter that derives from the media role among others) and governments unprepared to deal with particular situation. Therefore it is a case that requires consideration, analysis and dialogue.
- Finally, Greece as a country connected with the classical ancient-Greek culture and as a carrier of a cultural suggestion to other countries is a unique and special case on the multiculturalism discussion.

Answers for possible solutions/suggestions that might result from the particular research involve the potential role of the cultural bodies of Greece (e.g. Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Education, ecumenical Patriarchate, etc) that can be useful to the reconciliation of the Greek people with the increasing tension there is people from different ethnical backgrounds to be integrated in the social environment (because of population movements mainly because of financial reasons – job hunting, free markets, capital mobility, international political condition, such as the fall of the Eastern block, etc.) and to the understanding of the dynamics of the evolutionary course of the local culture in an internationally globalised environment.

¹² Alivizatos Nikos ‘The page has started to be turned’ on the book of N. Themelis ‘I Anazitisi’. Ta Nea, Vivliodromio, 20-21 January 2007, pg.31/7

III. SPECIAL CONTEXT / PARAMETERS

A. National/Cultural Identity and Multiculturalism

One of the parameters that have to be examined is the issue of national/cultural identity (the two terms have to be distinguished, contributing to the research) because a theory of multiculturalism is integrally connected with a theory of identity.

‘Identities are particularly important because they function as the lenses through which peoples see and perceive the outside (material) world. In other words, as argued by constructivism, peoples on the basis of their identities construct their understanding of the outside world.’¹³

Moreover, national identity preservation is not per se offended by multiculturalism inside a country. As professor Parekh in his comprehensive book ‘Rethinking Multiculturalism’ concludes ‘During nearly four hundred years of its history, western modernity has defined identity in terms of rigid and aggressively guarded boundaries, a closure around centre...We need to reconsider this dubious, dangerous and increasingly outdated view of identity if the kind of creative and interactive multiculturalism...is to flourish’.¹⁴

Additionally, the fear of a Greece losing their national identity because of multiculturalism is not really a pragmatic one, but one created to people by exogenous factors, like media propaganda or mass manipulation by political interests. The paradox with the identity is that we need an identity, in order to be able to get rid of it.¹⁵ Somebody is free when there is no need to deal with who he is.

Furthermore, as there is aptly has been observed on the theories on ‘clash of civilizations’, Huntington discusses a modern topic (identities) with old materials. Today only few sociology and history scientists would agree with his narrow

¹³ Ulusoy Hasan. ‘The Importance of Identity Building in Avoiding the Clash of Civilizations in the Age of globalisation (Some Reflections on Turkey – EU Relations’, *Perceptions*, Autumn 2004, pp. 98

¹⁴ Parekh, B. ‘Rethinking Multiculturalism’, Palgrave, Macmillan, 2006, pg.372

¹⁵ Eagleton, T. ‘The Idea of Culture’, *Polis*, 2003, pg. 125

approach of what national identities are, as these are considered to be constructed and re-constructed constantly by people, social groups and population categories'.¹⁶

B. Social Constructivism as a tool

The particular study is about a current and evolving issue; therefore it requires in different points the usage of several social, international and psychological theories. However, the theoretical approach adopted in this paper is primarily based on hypotheses generated by the social **constructivist school** of thought.

- The constructivist theory will clarify the evolutionary character of a nation's culture, which adjusts in every case and it is the result of the interactive contribution of the citizens. Specifically, social constructivism emphasises the importance of the human agent in constructing and reproducing social reality; it argues that these agents exist in interdependence with the social environment and the collectively shared system of meanings within that. Human agency creates, reproduces and changes culture through our daily practices. Therefore, according to the constructivist hypothesis, it is possible to claim that collectively shared systems of meanings are susceptible to change through the effects of human agency. It '... basically claims that the world is a product of social construct in the sense that there is material world out there but actors see and perceive this world differently due to their identities that are constructed through their socio-cultural norms, values, experiences, etc.'¹⁷
- Under this spectrum, the particular theory will be a tool to also understand the way that false/distorted opinions on cultural diversity or loss of identity are formed and the way that a common social feeling in a host country (as Greece is mostly since 1990) that will respect the cultures that are represented from migrants.

Also, for the sake of supporting the arguments of the study, I will try to counter-argue on theories of clash of civilizations that continue to be popular (especially in the last

¹⁶ Sotiropoulos, D. 'American homeland', To VimaOnline, Vivlia. 12/1/2007

¹⁷ Ulusoy Hasan. 'The Importance of Identity Building in Avoiding the Clash of Civilizations in the Age of globalisation (Some Reflections on Turkey – EU Relations', Perceptions, Autumn 2004, pp. 98

six years during which USA exercises a particular kind of policy in the Middle Eastern countries and the hostile attitudes and opinions on the differences between East and West). According to Huntington the most important differences between nations are not ideological, political and economical; they are cultural differences and the potential greatest hostility develops along the borderline of the biggest civilizations of the world.¹⁸

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Undoubtedly there are technical difficulties that accompany migration issues; however it is essential to understand that multiculturalism might be at a great degree beneficial for the host country, especially for its vital part called culture.

Rebutting all the points showing that multiculturalism can be a problem for social coherence and that there are inbred problems in the interaction of cultures worldwide, and more specifically in a country, we can have clear answers about the importance of multiculturalism in Greece which can be proved to be an accelerator for the evolution of society and culture. One of the ways to realise the gains from these transformations is to use cultural agents to promote these ideas to the wider public and assist with the implementation of those. Additionally, the Greek government is obliged to face the new givens, compromise with the current situation and undertake modern measures that reflect the real needs of society, approach methods that will create an inclusive society and above all make Greek people understand the importance of the multicultural interaction which can boost all life sectors, including culture. It is about time to give culture the appropriate position in the governmental policies and the social targets, as it is not what we experience, but also is what we live for.

¹⁸ Tzoumaka, E. 'Cultural Diplomacy: International Givens and Greek Perspectives'. I.Sideris 2005, pg.104

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Dramatizations of Discourse in Contemporary Greece: Different Valorizations of Sociolinguistic markers

The focus of this project is to analyze what I will refer to as: 'dramatizations' of discourse, regarding the city of Thessaloniki. The aim is to understand discourse employed in hegemonic processes, whereby specific views become the taken for granted aspects of cultural life for society at large (Voloshinov, 1973). The notion of discursive power, in this project, is seen as a political and economic resource used by individuals/interest groups within Greece. These power relations involve, on the one hand, socio-pragmatic strategies by individuals/interest groups in power to attain their objectives, and, on the other hand, the rhetorical skills of those who are powerless to resist that domination. My central theme is that media formulations regarding Thessaloniki make use of various linguistic differences, performing what I will call, an 'exoticization' of Thessaloniki through dramatized and metaphor ridden text. Such language-use in media formulations will be shown to play a critical role in sustaining and exercising power in the context of Greek society.

I will argue my central theme and test the assumptions by incorporating Labov's model of linguistic variation into a critical framework where solidarity and power in language-use are anchored in linguistic difference. Instances of difference in language varieties can be labelled 'markers'. Markers are what, together, constitute an 'accent' (Hodge and Kress, 1988).

Quasi-anthropological observations and descriptions portray the Thessalonikian urbanite as a peculiar exotic primitive (clip-babis o sougias or salonikioi). He is an unreasonable regionalist rogue. Lately he has also been prone to nationalistic fervour or a reactionary backwardness. I will argue that at the base of these perceptions lies linguistic difference. There are a host of local linguistic particularities, too many and too diffused for the scope of this paper. This project aims to relate the present state of linguistic variation to reigning norms and actual power relationships (Foucault's 'different power, different knowledge') without having any pretensions towards elucidating their historicities. I will pick two of the most popular features that in many respects define a 'Thessalonikian' accent as tokens for my analysis. These are the re-known (from popular culture i.e. jokes etc.) heavy 'λάμδα' (L-accent) and the by now, of mythic proportions, με/σε/τον instead of the linguistically higher valued ('sanctioned' by the state) μου/σου/του. I will use Labov's model of linguistic transformation to speculate about the meaning of these linguistic traits. Labov used Chomskyan transformational linguistics, to expand on a Saussurean model for linguistic evolution, describing the sequences of transformation in language with their specific sets of conditions and constraints (Hodge and Kress, 1988). At the first stage, Labov states, there is loose language variation, arising out of indeterminacy in the language system itself (perhaps, at a time when the nation-state's

institutions were not highly centralized allowing for widespread linguistic variation). Then variation becomes systematic and is associated with a particular group. As a result of this association, which initially may have been unconscious, the variation acquires social meaning as a group marker. Any group of any size needs markers of group membership to give it identity and cohesion, and to differentiate it from other groups. The 'λάμδα' (L-accent) and $\mu\epsilon/\sigma\epsilon/\tau\omicron\nu$ have come to be just those kind of linguistic markers. The, by now, conscious markers are systematically developed and generalized, as part of a distinctive phonological patterning, an 'accent'. Markers now have recognized meaning, both for 'Thessalonikians' and for Greek society as a whole. These forms coexist with the 'mainstream' language variety and are comprehensible but what is more, bear meaning, albeit different, for all members of the Greek speech community. In Halliday's terms, a new style, of language, functions as an 'antilanguage', assuring identity and difference (Halliday, 1978). Therefore, 'λάμδα' (L-accent) and $\mu\epsilon/\sigma\epsilon/\tau\omicron\nu$ bear various meanings, and we will propose that their rationale is to express and control social relationships.

In sociolinguistics 'Style', 'accent' and 'grammar' all refer to the same broad semiotic phenomenon, the metasign, whose function is to sustain difference and cohesion. We have made the case that there is social meaning behind the linguistic varieties of 'λάμδα' (L-accent) and $\mu\epsilon/\sigma\epsilon/\tau\omicron\nu$, which can be claimed to be metasigns or markers of social allegiance (solidarity, group identity) or power (difference). The social meaning of markers does not interfere with the mimetic plane (what is referred to), so that they can seem trivial or random, whereas they carry consistent social meanings. A story from the bible, which has been making a comeback in sociolinguistics, might shed some light on the importance of this social meaning of language. It is the story of the Ephraimites who upon attempting to cross the river Jordan after a disastrous defeat at the hands of another tribe of Israelites were asked to utter the word 'shibboleth', which had a strong accentuation in their local dialect. After having failed to 'blend in' and the first recorded language test in history they were promptly slaughtered by their enemies. Today, the differences in the Thessalonikian accent might be thought of as intrinsic to the arbitrary sounds themselves but linguistic markers have directionality-a source and a goal, a social context and purpose.

Voloshinov (1973) proposed that language is the site of competing voices and interests. If we take individual words as linguistic signs, this principle is realized through the existence of different 'accents' applied to the 'same' word. Again, difference is not one of meaning-reality (mimetic) but phonological serving to label the kind of speaker differently. The assumption governing Labov's model is that linguistic change is driven by the desire to express social difference and its other face, solidarity. Labov also argued that users of 'non-prestige forms' continued to use them when there seemed to be rewards for speaking 'correctly', pointing out the role of what he called 'covert prestige forms' in low-status groups. In his view, these strengthen solidarity bonds and act as potent carriers of a counter-meaning. It is easy to assume that the resistance to the $\mu\omicron\nu/\sigma\omicron\nu/\tau\omicron\nu$ 'mainstream' variety in Thessaloniki can be explained in these terms. Arbitrary difference, therefore, will not explain why the 'λάμδα' (L-accent) and $\mu\epsilon/\sigma\epsilon/\tau\omicron\nu$ are not simply given up when there is an incentive to do so. The option that they are invested

with social meaning and hence crucial to group identity seems a more likely explanation. I will now use two examples to show how linguistic variety can be used as a political and economic resource by individuals/interest groups within a solidarity and power paradigm.

To demystify power relations, it is essential to consider a sub-set of linguistic markers which have particularly high visibility within and outside Thessaloniki. I mentioned before the different valorizations of language variety markers that are crucial to solidarity and power in social relationships. In Labov's model a set of variety markers is exaggerated, becoming what we call stereotype or a focus of prejudices from the outside community (Hodge and Kress, 1988). The 'με' and 'λάμδα' (L-accent) local varieties, as well as the slang term 'χαλαρά' (loosely translated to 'take it easy'), which also has the added bonus of containing the 'λάμδα' (L-accent) sound, are signs that 'enjoy' privileged status amongst the other markers or accents. They are 'stereotypes' and a mere mentioning of them draws on a vast archive of meta-discourse or hidden meaning. Namely, I propose, that these markers have become transparent signifiers of a highly 'exoticized' Thessalonikian identity. To demonstrate this point we will refer to an example from a popular Greek TV comedy show (Al-Tsantiri News, 2007). The caption that follows is a woman's account of a robbery to a news crew that is recontextualized by the presenter as part of his show.

- 1 **P:** Πάμε λοιπόν να δω σε παρακαλώ
 1 **P:** *Let's see something would you please*
 2 κάτι που μ' αρέσει πάρα πολύ...
 2 *now that I like a lot...*
 3 ληστεύουν στην Αθήνα...
 3 *there is a robbery in Athens...*
 4 όταν ληστεύουν στην Αθήνα έχεις δει που βγαίνουνε και γίνονται οι ανακοινώσεις
 4 *when there is a robbery in Athens you have seen people making the announcements*
 5 μας λήστεψαν εδώ πέρα μπήκαν με τα όπλα κτλ. πολύ σοβαροί
 5 *we were robbed here they came in with guns etc. very serious*
 6 πάνε στη Θεσσαλονίκη να κλέψουνε
 6 *there is a robbery in Thessaloniki*
 7 βλέπεις την κλέψαν την γυναίκα
 7 *you can see they've robbed this women*
 8 βγαίνει ωραία **χαλαρή**
 8 *she comes round nice and calm (easy)*
 9 άκου δήλωση που θα κάνει
 9 *listen to the statement she made*
 10 άκου άκου άκου άκου...να δεις
 10 *listen listen listen listen...and see*
 11 **W:** Μπαίνει απότομα μέσα (**P:** τι έγινε?)
 11 **W:** *He comes in violently (P: what happened?)*
 12 ανοίγει την πόρτα (ναι...)
 13 *he opens the door (yes...)*
 13 με κράνος με όπλο
 13 *with a helmet and gun*
 14 και με λέειειει...ληστεία!
 14 *and he tells me...this is a stick up!*
 15 και τον λέω πλλάκα **με** κάνεις?
 15 *and I say to him are you kidding?*
 16 (presenter and audience erupts in laughter)
 17 Κόντεψα να πεθάνω χτες που το 'βλεπα
 17 *I nearly died (of laughter) yesterday when I saw it*
 18 ληστεία...πλλάκα **με** κανεις?
 18 *this is a stick up...are you kidding?*

One important difference with stereotypes is that they are an accent of an accent. In our example the 'με', 'λάμδα' (L-accent) and 'χαλαρά' (slang: take it easy) markers are selected, emphasized and read as indexes of a Thessalonikian identity by 'non-members' of the particular accent-community. The event is framed by the presenter when he uses 'χαλαρή' (indicating the blissful nature of Thessalonikians) to introduce us to the woman's narrative drawing on several layers of meaning. The meaning of the caption is supposed to trigger laughter in its viewer. In the case of the presenter/show/audience the deviancy of the accent is funny and central to why the situation is recontextualized as a

joke in a comedy show. By reducing these markers of an accent into something simple, manageable and under the control of individuals/interest groups outside the accent-community their meaning acquires a totally different valorization. Real accent expresses the identity of the community, and excludes all other speakers. The stereotype here effects an ‘exoticization’ of Thessaloniki as a land of blissful (‘χαλαρά’) types whose aloofness evokes laughter. Thus membership of the accent-community is valorized as picturesque or worthless. The distinction between marker and stereotype can be observed when the presenter emphasizes the use of ‘με’ and ‘λάμδα’ (L-accent) by repeating ‘πλλάκα **με** κάνεις’ (locally pronounced ‘are you kidding?’) while the women has also used ‘τον’ instead of ‘του’), which seemingly disappears in the background. Etienne Balibar’s ‘racisme differentialiste’, describes a racism that is based on a relativist rhetoric of cultural difference. In this context, dramatized media formulations arguably create ascriptive categories on the basis of essentialist assumptions. In these instances ‘με’, ‘λάμδα’ (L-accent) and ‘χαλαρά’ can be claimed to constitute transparent signifiers of power in the context of Greek society. In this particular case difference becomes ‘caricature’ or negative other-presentation; the implication being positive self-presentation. The perceived Thessalonikian tendency towards verbosity and antagonistic regionalism (for example, in the city’s sports radio stations) is the opposite of rational behaviour. An emphasized nationalism gripping the city (mainstream media) contrasts sharply with the tolerance and democratic pluralism of Greek society. In these cases, less attention is paid to true characteristics than to what ‘Thessaloniki’ might represent in our frame of reference.

The linguistic difference in Thessaloniki necessitates extensive ethnographic and historical research that is beyond the scope of this paper. What I have sought to highlight though, is that linguistic variety can not be seen as arbitrary. Indeed there is a pattern behind marker meanings, transformations and choices. As has been demonstrated variance at the micro level (accent, style, grammar ensemble, phrase) can be connected to the macro level (ideology, culture) through pervasive socio-linguistic markers. We have looked at an expression of power at the macro level and I will now focus on the projection of solidarity in a particular instance of political language-use from contemporary Greek society. In the following statement to the media (27/04/07-Mega Channel News), Panagiotis Psomiadis, the head of the municipality of Thessaloniki, vouches for a government minister who faces allegations of involvement in embezzling public funds.

- 1 Αν κάποιοι **Αθηναίοι**
- 1 *If some Athenians*
- 2 θέλουν να φαν’, τον **Μακεδόνα** Τσιτουρίδη
- 2 *want to destroy, Tsitouridis, the Macedonian*
- 3 επρέπει να γνωρίζετε
- 3 *you should know*
- 4 ότι και ‘μεις **εδώ** στη **Μακεδονία**
- 4 *that we too here in Macedonia*
- 5 **θέλουμε** ένα **Μακεδόνα** υπουργό
- 5 *want a Macedonian minister*

In his statement, the municipal leader uses the toponym 'Μακεδονία' (Macedonia) extensively, which is a locally very potent identity marker (in Thessaloniki). Although a member of the political establishment, he does not hesitate to vilify it by referring to 'Αθηναίοι' (Athenians). With the same breath he nominates himself defender of the community's interests, professing to speak on behalf of 'the people' (ότι και 'μεις εδώ στη Μακεδονία/ θέλουμε ένα Μακεδόνα υπουργό) and completing his dissociation with the ruling cast. It can be argued that although Panagiotis Psomiadis' message appeared in a national news broadcast it was largely directed towards a Thessalonikian audience. In effect, his message projects solidarity, appealing to the populace's local sense of identity-or what is constructed as their identity-while simultaneously inventing-or rather drawing upon archival knowledge to reaffirm-a scapegoat (Athenians) in a negative other-presentation. The sociolinguistic markers 'Αθηναίοι'/'Μακεδονία' are transparent signifiers of solidarity bearing reciprocity and self-reference to a group to which the municipal leader espouses as his, while in reality pertaining to the political elite that he purports to antagonize. Bringing these signs into his text promises power for his text. They are powerful indexical markers of someone who wishes to gain power by indicating his membership of a particular group. The statement is actually a contradictory message of populist and highly dramatized discourse, projecting a plausible double image of both solidarity and power with the same words and style. As the text of a state-man, engaged in a complex combination of electoral and other public relations ventures, it is simply assembled by drawing, intertextually, on relevant and appropriate discourses in accordance with the demands of the particular instance. Access to these discourses is granted on the particular instance by the markers 'Αθηναίοι'/'Μακεδονία'. Their mere mention suffices to trigger their social-meaning for the Thessalonikian viewer for who they have high validity.

Systems of signifiers of power and solidarity are based on the assumption of both opposition and identity between these dimensions, leading to ambiguous messages and highly redundant ones. The paper has sought to demonstrate the social value of linguistic variety and its markers and to go beyond the problematic valorization of its social forms and processes as either hegemony or resistance. Dominant structures and processes can be naturalized, revealed, and challenged-all at the same time. For example, we have shown that although Greek society proclaims equal rights to speak and be heard, formal patterning often may work in the opposite direction. The dramatized media discourse we have seen indicates that certain local speech styles are burlesque or a cause of parody with no realistic claim to authority. Similarly, we have seen that while some voices may overtly proclaim dissidence, their subtle stylistic or generic subversions may be used to reveal their acquiescence to the powers that be, albeit through disruption of dominant discourses. Such a discussion is particularly relevant currently given the historic re-connection of Thessaloniki with its hinterland by-way-of the entry of Bulgaria and Romania into the EU. It is at this crucial juncture that the city's portrayal as a marginal border-town of mystic tribal feuds, noble savages and vociferous warlords must be questioned.

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Talking about Greek national identity and immigrant integration in Central Northern Greece: The extension of Greekness as the ‘ultimate contract’ for migration?

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The geopolitical changes of 1989 saw the development of multiple forces, of which migration is one. Greece experienced a shift from a traditionally sender country to a main destination country for immigrants from Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Employing a discursive social constructionist approach, this paper presents the ways in which immigrants are ‘nationalized’ in talking about Greekness and migrant integration in Greece. Firstly, it focuses on the construction of migration as inevitable. Secondly, the criteria and conditions of inclusion in the wider national group are presented. Finally, the discursive resources used in the extension of Greekness and the functions of this extension are explored as regards the banal aspects of national identity construction and its dilemmatic nature vis a vis the dilemma of prejudice. This dilemma seems to be managed by the participants of this study by extending Greekness, in order for various ethnic and national groups to be seemingly included in the wider national group, as a ‘contract’ of assimilation and morality.

Keywords

Discursive Social Constructionism, Banal Nationalism, Ideological Dilemmas, Greece, Migration, Assimilation

1. Introduction

The period following the 1990’s has been characterized for calling into question previous understandings of social, economic and political identity in Europe. Greek accounts of national identity seem to be informed by a number of recent forces, of which migration from the Balkans is one. The seeming geopolitical stability in the second half of the 20th century and the tightening of migration regimes in northern Europe saw a relative halt in mass immigration flows, which was interrupted since the 1990s. Greece became a destination country for immigrants from Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. According to a combination of statistical data which derive from the 2001 census (NSSG, 2001), the Migration Policy Institute (Kassimis and Kassimi, 2004) and ELIAMEP (Gropas and Traindafyllidou, 2005) the percentage contribution of immigrants to the indigenous (adjusted) population is estimated to be 10%. Immigrants draw their origin primarily from

Albania, followed by Bulgaria, Romania, Georgia, Pakistan, Ukraine, Poland, Russia¹. Twelve percent of this population has settled in Central Macedonia (Central Northern Greece) and 47.5% in Attica. The percentage contribution of immigrants to the total population is 17% in the Municipality of Athens and 7% in the Municipality of Thessaloniki (Baldwin-Edwards, 2005). It should be noted that immigrants in Central Northern Greece come mainly from the Balkan states, which constitutes the main reason for focusing on this area in studying Greek national identity in the context of the so-called 'new' migration.

The ongoing PhD research aims to explore the ways in which elements of Greek identity have taken on board the presence of 'new' migrant populations from the Balkans in Central Northern Greece.

The focus of this paper in particular is to present the construction of a particular model of assimilation of immigrants in Greece based on a series of 'inevitable' and strategies to function within them; migration, national divisions and change are all constructed as inevitable, while Greekness is extended to include different ethnic groups; with effect from that this paper explores the ways in which the terms of inclusion are constructed and how this manages to resolve moral issues with regards to prejudice.

2. Main Assumptions

Using a discursive social constructionist approach, I draw upon *national identity as a social construct negotiated and reproduced in (interactional) contexts* drawing on historically, socio-culturally and spatio-temporally available discourses (Wetherell and Maybin cited in Stevens, 1996).

Discourses make claims to the 'truth' but are not all equally powerful. Dominant discourses are *normalized* and constitute *common sense ideologies and forms of life*. Discourses on national identity or stereotypes, for instance, establish the norm through a process of contradiction, comparison and differentiation with counter-discourses. The homogeneity or shared social understanding produced is daily lived in the world of nation-states, which resembles Bourdieu's concept of habitus, internalized through national socialization (De Cillia et al, 1999). The process of *normalization/naturalization* is a central assumption of this research as regards creating awareness and sustaining identities. Namely and employing Billig's thesis of Banal Nationalism, nations not only have to be imagined and narrated but they also need to be flagged in everyday life. Nationhood is asserted through universal codes such as particular national labels, flags, identities, anthems, histories (Billig, 1996). In this way, 'we' imagine 'ourselves' and 'foreigners' to be equally ruled by the sociology of nationhood (ibid, p. 3)

In addition, words and utterances (Davies and Harré cited in Wetherell et al, 2001) acquire meaning within contexts or, to use Billig's term, carry an ideological history, in the sense that they are attached to broader discourses. *Ideological discourses* contain tensions or contrary themes and are *dilemmatic*, which according to Billig provides for the premises for common sense to evolve in Western cultures, through discussion or counter-positioning (Edley cited in Wetherell et al, 2001).

Finally, this paper takes on board that individuals make use of *rhetorical strategies* in order to gain legitimacy. Billig argues that all discourse is rhetorical, "it is argumentative and seeks to persuade; as such the activities of criticism and justification are central to rhetorical discourse" (Billig, cited in Wetherell et al, 2001, p. 214)². In this process individuals assume

¹ It should be noted that Albanian immigrants dominated the first wave of migration to Greece, while in the second wave included a wider participation of immigrants from other Balkan states, the former Soviet Republics, Pakistan and India (Kassimis and Kassimi, 2004).

² See Appendix 1 for a brief definition of the main rhetorical strategies

for themselves and make available for others various *subject positions* (Davies and Harré cited in Wetherell et al, 2001).

3. Methodology

The target population of this study is Greek citizens and ethnic Greeks who were born and nurtured in Greece. The parameters which were considered relevant in the sampling process were *locality* and *age*. The age groups selected were: i. 18-21 (*as growing alongside 'new' migration*) and ii. 35-45 (*as recipients of 'new' migration*). As regards locality, a distinction was made between urban and rural areas as it was hypothesized that they would diverge in terms of the percentage concentration, the origin and type of migrants as well as their effect on everyday life. The research area was set in the Prefecture of Central Macedonia (Central Northern Greece) on the grounds that the percentage concentration of immigrants from Balkan states to the total population in the area is significantly high. The municipalities selected were Thessaloniki (6.5% of foreigner³ concentration), Chalkidiki (8.5% of foreigner concentration) and Serres (2.4% of foreigner concentration). Participants were selected using snowball sampling.

Overall, 8 semi-structured focus group sessions were held with 38 participants. Focus groups were conducted in order to obtain a variety of perspectives about the topic through argumentation, positioning and counter-positioning. Discussion in the focus groups was introduced by a paragraph with the intention to position participants in terms of their age group and locality. Participants were then instructed to discuss a set of topics related to the presence of immigrants, contact and relations with immigrants, the meaning of Greekness and the effect of immigrants in their everyday life and place of residence. The role of the researcher was restricted to clarifications in order to retain natural settings. Transcriptions were discourse analysed focusing on the rhetorical strategies used, their functions and dynamics within the context of discussion.

4. The 'contract' for migration: banal nationalism, the psychology of inevitability and the ideological dilemma of prejudice

It appears that participants in this study position themselves as Greek(s), something which is taken for granted whether it constitutes a form of otherness or mere labeling. According to Billig's thesis of Banal Nationalism, this automatic positioning occurs due to the naturalization of nationalism as a penetrating daily ideology and of national identity as a form of talking about self and community and a form of life (Billig, 1996, p. 60).

Apart from naturalization, Greek national identity, as every national identity, has inherited the contrasting ideological dilemmas of liberal ideology traced back to the Enlightenment (Billig et al, 1988). Namely, the liberal principle of individualism and its plea for freedom, individual rights and achievements has been curtailed by the liberal principle of fraternity and its modern embodiment in the form of the nation-state emphasizing collective and particular forms of allegiance (see *ibid*, pp. 34-36).

What is also of extreme relevance here is the dialectic of "prejudice and tolerance" as an ideological dilemma impinging upon liberal ideology (see *ibid*, p. 73). Billig et al. argue that the semantic distinctions between prejudice and tolerance and their assumptions were established by the Enlightenment project. Prejudice was associated with irrationality and was therefore an evaluative concept to be condemned. Gradually the concept was associated with irrational behaviour or views held against 'other' social – racial or national – groups and, ultimately with racism and nationalism. These dilemmas are reproduced in lay discourse by being invoked in talking about 'others', whereby prejudice is regarded as a problem, non-

³ Term used by the National Statistics Service of Greece, 2001.

applicable to rational individuals. Thus, the morally acceptable thing to do is to denounce explicit prejudice as a concept to be condemned while at the same time being framed by collective forms of allegiance which divide social groups into different sets of others. It is in this process that the dilemmatic aspect of prejudice evolves as a reasonable, justifiable and rational form of prejudice, based on external events dissociated from any agency on the part of the prejudiced individual (see *ibid*, pp. 100-123). This is the rhetorical boundary between reasonable prejudice and bigotry and subsequently between reasonable, noble patriotism and unenlightened nationalism. The language of modern prejudice reflects this dilemmatic thinking, since it comprises disclaimer strategies (Wetherell and Potter, 1992) and contrasting themes (Van Dijk, 1984), which indicate ideological divides (Billig et al, 1988, pp. 108-9).

At the same time, otherness seems to be accepted as a given 'fact' by participants in this study. According to cognitive social psychology, the mere presence of members of a different group leads to perceptual biases (Tajfel and Wilkes, 1963; Tajfel and Turner, 1979 cited in Wetherell 1996; see also Billig, 2002). One of the mechanisms to reduce these biases is known as the psychology of inevitability (Aronson, 1999,). Specifically, knowing that the presence of 'others' is inevitable may lead to strategies to reduce dissonance and enable peaceful coexistence. Such strategies may to look for positive characteristics or to reduce the importance of negative characteristics of 'others', as well as to attribute these to external agents beyond one's control, as seems to be the case in the present study.

Finally, participants in this study also position themselves as 'hosts' and use the language and discursive resources related to "the process of settlement, interaction with the host society, and social change that follows immigration" (Favell, 2005, p. 1). Of the models available⁴, participants seem to argue for a form of inclusion of immigrants into the wider Greek national group, which corresponds to a strategy of immigrant assimilation. This is in line with European nation-states' migration policy discourse, which "seeks to 'nationalize' immigrants in relation to host society institutions and norms" (Geddes cited in Spohn and Triandafyllidou, 2002, p. 83). Therefore, the emphasis is placed upon immigrants as individuals whose 'success' or 'failure' is to be measured in terms of host society principles and norms, while rights defined in terms of cultural or ethnic terms are downplayed (*ibid*; see also Favell, 2005).

The focus of this paper is to present how in taking on board national identity and national divisions as given, a case of inclusion based on Greek national norms is suggested. Namely, in talking about national identity and migration in Greece, the participants of this study seem to construct an extended form of Greekness, so as to seemingly include various groups whose exclusion might provoke the charge of prejudice. This is constructed based on particular and conditions and criteria, while the category of a Greek person with Greek ethnic origin, who was born, raised and resides in Greece and feels Greek is retained as the central category. It should be noted that extracts presented below were selected as representative of this strategy used in the majority of the focus group sessions held.

Along these lines, the first extract introduces migration as an inevitable 'problem' on which the necessity of conditional acceptance and solution is constructed in the absence of any other choice. The extract follows a discussion on the meaning of Greekness, as a source of national pride.

Focus Group 3 – Extract 1: The Inevitability of Migration

760 Menelaos: [let me tell you: (..) how we feel (..) I for instance may have been happy
761 when I was younger for being Greek etc (.) but let's say when migrants came here
762 and I saw how we treat them and I say let's say that it cannot be that we are so::
763 negatively prejudiced a:nd that is to say narrow-minded in the sense that ok

⁴ These pertain to integration strategies, assimilation models and multi-cultural approaches.

764 the other had to come here (.) it cannot be (.) we swoop them and send them back (.)
765 they come back (.) it's logical ⁵ (.) it's stupid to say that "yes we will imprison them all"
766 or "yes they are bad send them to the moon" (.) it cannot be (.) that is to say you have
767 to sit down calmly and think and say that we have to find a solution for these people
(18-21, Urban)

Menelaos launches a seemingly critical account of Greeks for being prejudiced against migrants. He positions himself as Greek by default but talks about prejudiced treatment towards immigrants in Greece as a phenomenon external to him, which he observes (lines 760-2). His critical account though is addressed to 'narrow-mindedness of the inevitable'. In other words, he argues that prejudice is pointless since migration is inevitable (lines 763-4). The inevitability of migration is founded on the absence of any other options for immigrants, thus, implying unfavourable circumstances in their countries of origin. In clearly distinct positions of 'us' and 'them', Menelaos continues to construct migration not only as inevitable, but its persistence as 'logical' (lines 764-5). The logical aspect seems to be founded on a non-stated but seemingly shared view of immigrants as people in need. On these grounds, Menelaos is not critical of prejudice and narrow-mindedness as irrational per se but of the irrationality of resort to extreme measures since migration is here to stay. Extreme measures are constructed as irrational and unfeasible using extreme case formulation – 'imprisonment of all immigrants' and 'exile to the moon' – to underline that they are pointless in terms of practical application (lines 765-6). The way that this point is rhetorically constructed and the use of extreme case formulations indicates that migration is commonly seen as a problematic, initially due to mere presence. In the flow of the argument, it is also revealed that 'imprisonment', 'bad' and 'expulsion' are relevant terms in talking about migrants in Greece. Their negotiation as language taken for granted in this context functions to factualize this image of migrants in Greece and, thus, justify the grounds on which migration is constructed as a 'problem'.

In lines 766-767, an explicit appeal is made to a suggestion for dealing with this 'problem'. As this 'problem' was constructed as inevitable, it is shifted as a task for Greeks in general to let justified but pointless steam off and find a solution. Greeks are, therefore, positioned in the category of the 'host', entitled to propose and execute solutions for minority groups. The way towards identifying a solution is through calming down and thinking. While the calming down and thinking are assigned to a generalised 'you', possibly referring to the state and mildly distancing participants from 'agitated' Greeks, the task of the solution is shared.

Therefore, migration is constructed as 'inevitable' and 'problematic', which may partly justify reactions on the part of Greeks but also constructs the requirement for a solution as a practical necessity in the absence of any other choice. Greeks are presented as the category entitled to propose and execute this solution.

In the second extract the inevitability of migration is sustained and a first attempt to talk about the status of immigrants in integration terms is presented. The extract follows a discussion on national identity construction.

Focus Group 2 - Extract 2 Civic Inclusion as Inevitable

452 **Manolis:** people are shaped based on their education and time (.) based on how time
453 passes in relation to their environment (.) that's how people are shaped
454 **Fotis:** it's logical
455 **Manolis:** yeah
456 **Fotis:** yes because the Albanians who were born here and will live here and will partake

⁵ It should be noted that logical in the Greek language and context translates to 'normal', 'expected', 'common sense'.

457 in Greek education let's say
 458 **Manolis:** naturally
 459 **Fotis:** will be completely different to their parents
 460 **Manolis:** certainly (.) sure
 461 **Fotis:** the point is to assimilate them (.) not cast them out (..)
 462 **Manolis:** to assimilate them is a different story
 463 **Fotis:** it's not a different story (.) this is the whole story
 464 **Iraklis:** to integrate them?
 465 **Fotis:** integrate
 466 **Iraklis:** why integrate them, what to do with them?
 467 **Fotis:** what do you mean?
 468 **Manolis:** for them to bake lamb at Easter?
 469 **Makis:** to integrate them into our
 470 **Vaggelis:** when you say integrate in the economy:
 471 **Manolis:** in our society
 472 **Vaggelis:** in our national culture? in our society generally?
 473 **Fotis:** in our society generally (.) guys sometime within then next 10-15 years >I don't
 474 know what time exactly< there will be town councilors, there will be prefects
 475 there will be such things (.) there is no other way
 (35-45, Urban)

In lines 452-3, Manolis presents education, time and environment as the criteria of identity construction generally. Based on these, and the specific criteria of place of birth and residence, second generation Albanian migrants' identity will be 'completely different' to the one of their parents (lines 456-9). 'Their parents', who seem to represent their genealogical origin, comply with a respective set of criteria of a different national context. This set of criteria within particular national contexts normally accounts for national identity construction. However, it seems that origin is added as a critical criterion, without which full nationality is not accomplished. Instead, acquired criteria of Greekness suffice to attribute difference to second generation migrants in Greece with regards to the national category of their parents but not to attribute full Greek nationality. Based on this, participants as the spokespeople of Greeks are presented as the subject of the task of assimilation addressed to this generation of 'different' migrants as the object (line 461). The options rhetorically juxtaposed here are assimilation or rejection, and indicate the language used in talking about migrant integration. This is followed by counter-argumentation on the type and content of assimilation, which is ultimately termed integration (lines 462-6). Counter-argumentation culminates when Manolis uses an extreme case formulation in the form of a rhetorical question to imply a paradox in assimilating immigrants in relation to Greek national norms, principles and traditions (line 468). Namely, he poses the question of whether immigrants in Greece should adopt daily lived practices in the form of maintaining national traditions as religiously and historically constructed. Out of the types of assimilation verbally offered – economic, social, cultural – the ultimate type selected is social assimilation (lines 470-3).

Fotis now appears to shift the argument from assimilation/integration constructed as a task of the category of Greeks as 'hosts' to undertake to assimilation/integration as an inevitable, future course. In the context of talking about second generation migrants, therefore, social assimilation refers to participation in social administration as an inevitable future development/necessity (lines 473-5).

Hence, after extensive argumentation, immigrant assimilation/integration in Greece is restricted to inevitable, civic forms of social inclusion. It is noteworthy that this negotiation is conducted on the basis of constructing second generation immigrants in Greece as different to the national category of their parents on account of complying with a set of acquired criteria in the Greek national context. Consequently, it seems that in order to enter the assimilation/integration debate, immigrants have to meet certain

nationally-oriented terms and conditions. This is in line with assimilation models, which seek to ‘nationalize’ minority groups in relation to host society terms in order to integrate them.

Finally, in the context of conditional inclusion upon the ‘nationalization’ of immigrants in Greece, the extract below presents a seemingly inclusive approach of different groups into the wider national group. Along these lines, tenancy of this group is extended on the basis of rights, origin and national feeling.

Focus Group 6 - Extract 3 ‘Nationalization’

- 359 **ALEX:** what does it mean to you for someone to be Greek? [...]
360 **COSTAS:** they have to feel it
361 **ALEX:** they have to feel it
362 **CHRISTINA:** that’s what we concluded (.) that’s right
363 **ALEX:** regardless of whether he is a migrant regardless if (.) he has to feel Greek (.)
364 to maintain traditions
365 **CHRISTINA:** his parents may not be Greek they may live in Greece for years (.)
366 nevertheless he may feel Greek
367 **DINA:** a child who was born in Greece, who has never left for Albania or Bulgaria
368 or whatever his country is (.) and Greek is his first language
369 **CHRISTINA:** yes
370 **DINA:** who has learned to love Greece, who has learned to think in the Greek
371 mentality >if such a thing exists<
372 **COSTAS:** yes yes
373 **DINA:** how are you going to tell him that “you know you are not Greek” since he
374 doesn’t have relations with his biological homeland (.) it’s like
375 excommunicating him like telling him that “you have no homeland”
376 **ALEX:** he is considered Greek Dina
377 **CHRISTINA:** yes
378 **DINA:** good (.) we agree
379 **ALEX:** more or less all of whom you are talking about now are considered Greek (...)
380 **CHRISTINA:** who? (...)
381 **COSTAS:** those who have been born here
382 **DINA:** yes
383 **CHRISTINA:** you may not have been born here (.) you may have come he may have
384 come when he was little he may live may years (...)
385 **DINA:** it has do though with were you grew up
386 **ALEX:** yes sure (.) it plays an important role (.) but also the one who didn’t grow up
387 here and his father and his mother were here and left is considered Greek (.) he will
388 come he will do this that
389 **CHRISTINA:** with a different meaning
390 **ALEX:** yes with a different meaning
(18-21, Rural)

The conclusion of an extensive negotiation of Greekness which preceded the extract is that feeling Greek is the most important criterion of Greekness (lines 360-2). Based on this criterion and the addition of Greekness as a daily lived practice in the form of ‘maintaining traditions’ (line 364), participants construct a subcategory of Greeks, where they position migrants generally. In the flow of argument (lines 367-372), the criteria of place of birth and permanent residence in Greece, Greek language as the first language, love for Greece and Greek mentality are presented as rational criteria of inclusion of second generation migrants in the wider national group. While these criteria are presented as normal and rational, their combination underlines the strictness in which this extension of Greekness is conducted. Speaking from the position of the central category of Greeks entitled to classify the Greekness

of others (line 376 – ‘considered’), participants claim that if these criteria are met, the inclusion of migrants in the wider national group is a right with which migrants should be endowed (lines 367-375). At the same time participants do not argue for full conversion, as the full inclusion of these categories is mitigated by ‘biological’ belonging, explicitly not neglected in this line of argumentation (line 374).

It is, thus, revealed that the seeming extension of Greekness is negotiated for moral reasons. The context of extension as a right, also includes first generation migrants on the condition that they were nurtured in Greece (lines 383-385). In this negotiation of immigrant inclusion in the wider national group, the criterion of place of nurture and upbringing combined with the previous acquired criteria, implicitly excludes Greek emigrants abroad from the national group. In the flow of argument though, and with the addition of origin and contact with Greece as criteria, a subcategory of Greeks is constructed “with a different meaning” for Greek emigrants abroad (lines 386-390).

This negotiation indicates a seeming readiness on the part of participants to ‘nationalize’ ‘others’ on the basis of complying with particular sets of criteria. Nationalization is negotiated along an outward hierarchy in the categories of Greeks, sustaining the category of Greeks, who comply with of all the criteria of Greekness presented, as the central category. This initially functions to reveal the ‘contract’ suggested for migration in Greece. Namely, the strategy suggested is one of integration through nationalizing immigrants in relation to Greek norms and expectations, which corresponds to a strategy of assimilation. Nevertheless, this nationalization is both conditional and hierarchical and does not imply a supercategory of Greeks but a split into different peripheral categories by extending the meaning of Greekness. These categories are included into the wider national group but are excluded from the central category of Greeks.

5. Conclusions

One of the main conclusions of this study is that migration is constructed as ‘inevitable’ and ‘problematic’. This seems to provoke the requirement for a solution as a practical necessity in the absence of any other choice. Greeks are presented as the category entitled to propose and execute this solution of coexistence. This is commonly defined in terms of assimilation or integration. It seems that in order to enter the assimilation/integration debate, though immigrants have to meet certain nationally-oriented terms and conditions. This is more in line with **assimilation** models, which seek to ‘nationalize’ minority groups in relation to host society terms in order to integrate them.

Namely, the strategy suggested here is one of integration through nationalizing immigrants in relation to Greek norms and expectations. Initially, inclusion into the wider national group seems to manage the dilemma of prejudice. Nevertheless, the nationalization negotiated is both conditional and hierarchical and does not imply a supercategory of Greeks but a split into different peripheral categories by extending the meaning of Greekness. These categories are included into the wider national group but are excluded from the central category of Greeks, of Greek origin who were born, raised and reside in Greece and feel Greek.

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Appendix 1

Rhetorical Strategies: Definition

The first rhetorical strategy to be presented is participants' *appeal to Personal Experience*, which constitutes an example on how further coding will proceed in the following rhetorical strategies in the process of mapping strategies to themes and discourses.

Appeal to Personal experience is a common form of argument legitimation. It refers to a narrative of active or passive experience of events which are offered by participants in support or evidence of an unfolding view or argument (see Tusting et al, 2002).

The second rhetorical strategy presented is *Impersonal Structures*. Impersonal Structures consist words, phrases, idioms, sayings, grammar, syntax and hedges which enable the expression of a view or argument in an objective manner. A commonly repeated example is the use of passive voice. This functions to blur agency and disavow accountability by using 'out-there' structures which are not immediately identifiable with the speaker or which exist independently of the speaker. Socially, impersonal structures as explicit mitigators "offer an almost transparent mask of 'political correctness'" (Galasinska and Galasinski, 2003, p. 853).

The third rhetorical strategy presented is *Extreme Case Formulations*. Extreme case formulations consists of referring to examples or making statements which are not mainstream and are stronger than normally expected because they are made in an extreme form. Extreme case formulations are encouraged in focus groups due to the preference for intersubjective agreement which is not as often the case in one-to-one interactions (see Tusting et al, 2002).

The fourth rhetorical strategy presented is *Comparison*. Comparison is a common discursive practice used to understand and classify others based on one's own experience – that being personal and/or social. Beyond the notion of comparison of Social Identity theory⁶, it seems useful to note that comparison becomes analytically relevant in how and when it is being used.

The fifth rhetorical strategy presented is Disclaimer. Disclaimers consist phrases used to disavow agency or mitigate/disclaim or claim objectivity on the position assumed on a point preceding or following.

Finally, *Humor* in the first coding of the transcripts appears to occur to 1. voice strong/extreme views, 2. avoid agreement when a counter position triumphs and 3. to lighten up previously loaded discussion(s).

⁶ In social identity theory, a social identity is a person's knowledge that he or she belongs to a social category or group (Stets and Burke, 2000). Through a social comparison process, persons who are similar to the self are categorized with the self and are classified as the in-group. Similarly, persons who are different from the self are categorized as different and are classified as the out-group. Categorization, comparison and classification (identification) are recurrent processes of social identity.