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THE IMPACT OF GREEK BUSINESS COMMUNITY, CIVIL SOCIETY AND MEDIA IN SHAPING GREEK PUBLIC OPINION TOWARDS TURKEY'S EUROPEAN ADJUSTMENT

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ABSTRACT

This paper is an attempt to address the role of several actors/stakeholders in Greece in shaping public opinion towards Greek-Turkish relations and Turkey's European adjustment, especially since 1999. Since 1999, Greek-Turkish bilateral relations entered a period of rapprochement in the European Union (EU) context because of changes in the perceptions of Greek policy by the impact of Europeanization of Greek politics (engagement policy) and also, because of Turkey's eagerness towards full membership to the EU. Today, in the tenth year of rapprochement it is clear that the Greek state's and government's policy is for the full accession of Turkey to the EU, but it is not unconditional because of strategic interests, if Turkey can be able to meet all Copenhagen criteria, adopt *acquis* and solve its disputes with Greece and Cyprus before its accession.

Like in all of the member states, also in Greece, in addition to political actors there are also important domestic actors/stakeholders which have a strong say in the Enlargement policy of the EU, especially when Turkey's accession is questioning. Public opinion is one of the significant stakeholders in Greece regarding to Turkish debate because of its impact in shaping politics and perceptions in society and also because of specific historical and cultural perceptions of Greeks towards Turkey since decades. However, since 1999, in shaping public opinion, the role and impact of Greek civil society, media and business community is crucial for the continuation of rapprochement and preservation of Turkey's prospect of full membership to the EU. Therefore, it is needed to be analysed the impact of Greek civil society, media and business community in shaping public opinion in Greece towards Turkey's European adjustment.

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to examine the role of stakeholders in Greece – which is an EU member state, but has specific and different relations with Turkey historically as different than other European Union (EU) member states - in shaping Greek public opinion towards Turkey's European adjustment, by looking at historical background of Greek-Turkish relations, the role of the EU as an anchor in Greek-Turkish relations and the EU integration process of Turkey. Consequently, the role of Greek business community, civil society, mass-culture industry and media, as main actors in shaping Greek public opinion, will be examined to this purpose.

In the EU integration process Turkey has a specific position that the role of stakeholders and public opinion in the EU member states is crucial and going to be much more important for Turkey in reaching the aim of full membership at the end of the EU accession process. In addition to that, when it is looked at their historical evolution, Greece and Turkey have turbulent relations with each other, which increase the role of Greek public opinion and stakeholders towards Turkey's European adjustment in her EU integration process. In that regards, this paper is focused on the impacts of the EU in Greek-Turkish relations and also, analyses the impacts of Greek business community, civil society, mass-culture industry and media over Greek public opinion towards Turkey's EU accession process. Greek business community, civil society and media have started to have significant relations with their Turkish encounters since the positive role of the EU as an anchor between Greece and Turkey.

The main research question of this paper is to what extend the role of Greek business community, civil society, mass-culture industry and media is positively affected in shaping Greek public opinion towards Turkey's European adjustment

since 1999. In that regards, this paper argues that even though the existence of a considerable shift in Greece's foreign policy towards Turkey since 1999, the Turkish debate in Greece is interlinked with the overall perception of Greek identity. Therefore, positive impact of Greek business community, civil society and media in shaping public opinion in Greece towards Turkey's European adjustment, since 1999 cannot be denied. However, because of the continuation of Greece's identity, security and Europeanization dilemma, this positive impact is still limited and seems fragile in Greek public opinion.

The methodology used to answer the above research question is based on three step-process of consisting of, firstly, an analysis of turbulent Greek-Turkish relations since the establishment of both nation states until today, secondly, the examination of Enlargement of the EU and Turkey and finally, the analysis of Greek business community, civil society and media in regards to their relations with Turkey, their impacts on Greek public opinion and the dilemma of Greece towards Turkey's European adjustment.

The sources on which this paper is based are publications such as *"Greeks and Turks in War and Peace"* by Thanos M. Veremis, *"Greek-Turkish Relations in the Era of Globalization"* by Dimitris Keridis and Dimitrios Triantaphyllou, scientific articles such as *"The European Union's Impact on the Greek-Turkish Conflict"* by Bahar Rumelili, "Greece's New Geopolitical Environment," by Ian O. Lesser, reports from think-tanks specialized on international relations, EU-Turkey relations, such as *"Talking Turkey in Europe: Towards a Differentiated Communication Strategy"* by Nathalie Tocci and finally an interview with Umut Özkırımlı, who is Associate Professor of Politics and the Director of the Centre for Turkish-Greek Studies at Istanbul Bilgi University.

This dissertation is organized in the following way. In the first chapter, Greek-Turkish relations are analysed historically, by examining turning points and key political and social events, in three parts. First part is about the period until 1980s, second part is about the period between 1980-1999 and the last part deals with the rapprochement period since 1999 until today and the role of the EU as an anchor in that period. The second chapter examines the Enlargement and the Turkish debate in the EU. The approach of Greece and Greek public opinion towards Enlargement of the EU and the Turkish debate is also analysed in that chapter. In the last chapter, public opinion in Greece towards Turkey's European adjustment is examined by looking at Greek business community, civil society, mass-culture industry and media. This chapter is concluded by figuring out the dilemma of Greece and Greek public opinion towards Turkey's European adjustment because of deep-rooted political and historical traditions, continuing security dilemma regarding to Turkey and because of existing scepticism towards Turkey's ability and willingness in meeting all necessary criteria for full membership to the EU.

I. Historical Background of Greek-Turkish Relations

Greek-Turkish relations can be analysed in three parts according to historical developments until today since the establishment of both nation states. These are, before 1980, between 1980-1999 and since 1999 until today, as a rapprochement period. Because of these countries' domestic politics and interests and also because of international developments, which have also affected their relations, -like Cyprus dispute, end of the Cold War, membership of Greece to the EU- Greek-Turkish relations have faced with several ups and downs until today. Therefore, it is important

and needed to be understood the reasons of these changes and the evolution of history of these two states and societies, and discuss about the perception of today's Turkish and Greek communities' towards each other.

First decades of the twentieth century welcomed the emergence of Greece and Turkey as two nation states and the leaders of this period, both Venizelos and Atatürk aimed to keep bilateral relations peacefully. Aftermath of the Second World War, in the second half of the twentieth century Greek-Turkish relations were like a "Aegean Cold War" because of several political, military and social conflicts between these two states which enabled countries to see themselves as a security "threat" and "enemy" of each other. Then, during the last decades of the twentieth century there has been hardly any peaceful result of any action between Greece and Turkey. Between 1980-1989, Greece's policy towards Turkey may be regarded as conservative while Turkey eager to have negotiations for reconciliation. Following the international system transformation in 1989, the problematic, insecure environment around neighbouring countries in the region and also domestic concerns of the states did not allow any kind of cooperation between Greece and Turkey. However, the year 1999 is considered as the beginning of a new era in Greek-Turkish relations. While considering the post- 1999 period, it is important to emphasize the significant change in states' perceptions towards each other, which have been shaped especially by the role of the European Union.

I. 1. Until 1980s

Turkey and Greece signed Lausanne Treaty on 3 January 1923, which 'put an end to the territorial designs of both Greece and Turkey against each other without,

however, securing the climate of mutual trust between the two countries that was necessary for addressing all the pending issues between them'[1]. After the signature of Lausanne Treaty, the issue of population exchange was the first significant event in Greek-Turkish relations. By population exchange, 585.000 Muslims in Greece would be exchanged for 1.3 million Orthodox Christian Greeks of Anatolia. However, the Greeks of Istanbul, Imvros and Tenedos, who were Turkish subjects and the Muslims of Western Thrace, who were Greek subjects, excluded from population exchange[2]. After the solution of population exchange, another period, which is called as a reconciliation period, emerged between Greece and Turkey, by signing the Greek-Turkish Treaty of Friendship, Stability, Conciliation and Arbitration on 30 October 1930, in Ankara, under Venizelos and Inönü leaderships. 'After the reconciliation of 1930 that seemed to have put an end to the chronic mistrust poisoning the two countries, relations between Greece and Turkey improved'[3]. Then, during the Second World War, Turkey achieved to remain neutral, while Greece sided with the Allies. During the war, Turkish government established a new type of tax to non-Muslims of the country, which is called "property tax" (*varlik vergisi*) that Greeks of Turkey have been affected heavily. About this tax Lewis mentions that 'it soon became apparent that the really important data determining a taxpayer's assessment were his religion and nationality'[4]. Then, by the victory of the Allies in the Second World War, Greece gained the sovereignty of Dodecanese islands from Italy in the Paris Peace Treaty of 1947[5].

[1] Veremis, (2007), p. 110.
[2] Veremis, (2007), pp. 104-5.
[3] Veremis, (2007), pp. 117-19.
[4] Lewis (1968), p. 298.
[5] Veremis (2007), p. 126.

After the Second World War, until 1955 relations between Greece and Turkey continued its rapprochement period, but in a different way than the one during the 1930s. The year 1955 is considered as the explosion of the Cyprus issue that Greece, Turkey and Britain found themselves in the conflict, that its consequences are still on the agenda at the beginning of 21st century. 'On 6 September 1955, under the pretext of a staged bomb attack against the building of the Turkish consulate in Thessaloniki (that once housed Kemal Atatürk himself), Istanbul was shaken by a series of terrible riots'. People protested against the annexation of Cyprus and also against the Greeks of Istanbul by attacking to them, their shops, churches and houses under Menderes government, which was enjoying the exploitation of Cyprus issue 'to divert the attention of the Turkish public from the serious problems that the country was facing'[6]. Cyprus dispute continued with an internal war in the island that Greek Cypriots were demanding enosis with Greece as their right to self-determination and Turkish Cypriots were in favour for the partition of the island[7]. By the involvement of both Greece and Turkey made two nations in the brink of war several times until 1974.

In July 1974, the junta regime of Greece overthrew Makarios in Cyprus and this situation 'gave Turkey the opportunity to invade Cyprus on 19 July'[8]. By a big attack on 14 August, Turkey occupied 38% of the island. Even though, the Turkish population's safety and security were important for Turkey, it was also the importance of the location of the island for crucial political and security developments in the Middle East at that time that caused Turkish occupation in the island[9]. 'The 1974 Cyprus crisis was regarded as the major turning point in post-WWII Greek security

[6] Veremis (2007), p. 141.
[7] Veremis (2007), p. 145.
[8] Veremis (2007), p. 149.
[9] Veremis (2007), p. 150.

considerations. For the vast majority of Greek elites and public opinion the Cyprus crisis was a traumatic experience, but also the basis for "new thinking" in security policy'[10]. It was only one day after the second invasion of Turkey in Cyprus, that 'Greece withdrew from the military structure of NATO in protest against the alliance's failure to prevent the invasion. Another serious development consisted of the Turkish claims to a portion of the Aegean territorial waters, seabed and airspace, extending well to the west of the major eastern Aegean islands'. These developments made Turkey as the prior security threat of Greece, rather than its communist neighbours[11]. By then, the Aegean Sea related, bilateral disputes, which have been the militarisation of the Aegean island, the continental shelf of the Aegean issue, territorial waters and airspace and operational control of the Aegean, continued to be the major problems between Greece and Turkey.

I. 2. Between 1980-1999

Regarding to Greek-Turkish relations, period between 1980-1999 was relatively calm when it is compared to the 1970s in which Cyprus problem and the Aegean Sea related disputes such as airspace and territorial waters took place. But it does not mean that a good cooperation came to happen between Turkey and Greece. In 1980 while Turkey witnessed a coup d'état, Greece became member of the European Community in 1981. Until 1999, Greece used its advantage of being accepted to European Union as a tenth member in 1981 in Turkish-EU relations. As Grigoriadis points that 'even though Turkey applied for membership to European Economic Community in 1959 just one month after the Greece's application, Turkey

[10] Ifantis (2007), p. 60.
[11] Veremis (2007), p. 168.

could not be a member because of unfavourable political developments such as the freezing of relations by Bülent Ecevit in 1978 and especially the existence of military government of 1980'[12].

Military government in Turkey promised bilateral negotiations between Greece and Turkey about the controlling problems of Aegean Sea to remove the veto on Greece for its restitution in the military wing of NATO, but these negotiations never took place[13]. When Andreas Papandreou came to power with its party PASOK, he refused taking part in the establishment of new quarters 6th and 7th Allied Tactical Air Force (ATAF)[14]. Since then, as it was stated in international media, Papandreou cut relations with Turkey in order to protest the military government of Turkey and the military forces, which were in Cyprus[15]. Furthermore, he oriented Greece national strategy on the perceived threat from the East[16]. It is clear that from the very beginning of 1980s, relations between Turkey and Greece would be very problematic because of either having limited contact or constructed prejudice through history to the new initiatives, which stems from the Greek side.

As Greece found place for the first time in EU and resituated itself in NATO, it tried to use these Western powers in the relations with Turkey. While on the one side Greece was trying to 'curtail Turkey's importance for the Alliance'[17], on the other side even though EU announced that it would not be a party to the disputes between Turkey and Greece, Greece benefited the unanimity rule of EU and hardened

[12] Grigoriadis (2003), p. 2.

[13] Gürel (1993), p. 91.
[14] Aydın (2004), p. 38.
[15] Bilge (2000), p. 267.
[16] Ifantis (2004), p. 31.

[17] Aydın, (2004), p. 26.

the membership process of Turkey to the EU[18]. It might be said that the first step for complicating and extending the Turkey's membership process to EU were taken by Greece just after the Turkey's second application to EU in 1987. If Greece would not have exaggerate the threat it perceived from Turkey and thought in the same way as it does today about the Turkey's membership to EU and saw the benefit in it, it would not cause to the prolongation of the process and today's world would be much more different that is dominated by peace and stability.

After military government, in 1983 Özal government as a civilian government came into power in Turkey while there was Papandreou in power in Greece. By "minimizing" the problems Özal tried to achieve "a favourable image" in the eyes of Western powers[19]. Özal generally tried to have good relations with Greece in both economical and political areas. In 1983, Greece and Turkey held talks on trade and tourism, but these were suspended by Greece when Turkey recognized the illegal Turkish-Cypriot declaration of an independent state in northern Cyprus in November 1983. What is more Özal proposed was a kind of negotiation series about disputes between the two countries in 1985. According to Ayman, this initiative, which was taken by Özal was one of the most radical actions of Turkey in relation to Greece for nearly three decades. This initiative had four dimensions all of which aimed at improvement of Turkish-Greek relations in the long run. These dimensions were about a political and security framework for peaceful settlement of disputes. As Ayman explains since Turkey relies on its own capabilities, accepting third parties for resolving the problems was not an ordinary act of Turkey. On the contrary Greece was always trying to include western powers since it has a relatively small size of

[18] Grigoriadis (2003), p. 2.

[19] Aydın, (2004), p. 26.

country, population and military power[20]. Özal considered these kinds of dialogues as pre-negotiation process, which would not bind the parties strictly but narrow the difference between them while forming an atmosphere of understanding[21]. But Papandreou rejected this call. Since he came to power in 1981, Papandreou situated his foreign policy on the Turkish threat and rejected having negotiations about the disputed issues over Aegean Sea. According to him, Greek could enter negotiations with Turkey if Cyprus problem would be solved in the way as if Greece wanted[22].

Another dispute of this period made both sides close to a danger of war in the Aegean Sea in 1987. In February 1987, Canadian-led international North Aegean Petroleum Consortium whose control was taken over by Greece and also Greece National Oil Company started to drill outside Greece's territorial waters. Consequently, Turkey, too, issued permits to the state-owned Turkish Petroleum Company for soil exploration in the disputed regions of Aegean Sea. After this event, 'Papandreou responded by warning that Greek armed forces would teach the Turks a hard lesson. Turkey reacted by declaring that any Greek attempt to harass a Turkish research vessel would meet retaliation'[23]. Before this crisis had turned into a war, Özal and Papandreou agreed on making negotiations for the settlement of the problems at Davos in 1988. According to Bölükbaşı, Davos Summit symbolized a radical change in the Papandreou's foreign policy because until then he did not accept any negotiation with Turkey since he considered the Cyprus dispute as a problem of Turkey's invasion[24]. The reason of this moderate manner which accepted negotiations about Aegean continental shelf dispute by Papandreou is explained by Aydın that

[20] Ayman (2004), pp. 215, 224-25.

[21] Ayman (2004), p. 228.
[22] Gürel (1993), pp. 92-3.
[23] Aydın (2004), p. 31.
[24] Bölükbaşı (1998), p.14.

since enormous burden of defence spending on the balance of payments and the long military service disgraced the PASOK government in the public eye, Papandreou agreed to meet with Özal in Davos[25]. Following the Davos meeting, 'the Memorandum of Understanding on Confidence Building Measures' was signed on 17 May 1988 and 'the guidelines for the prevention of accidents and incidents on the high seas and in international airspace' was formed on 8 September 1988[26]. Aydın points out the "Davos spirit" which gradually lost its momentum due to the increasing domestic pressure on the leaders and emphasizes the dependence on the leaders as the main weakness of this process, which lost its efficiency with the political weakening of the leaders with time[27]. It may be said that people of each country wanted to get quick and concrete solutions from these agreements but as they could not, they lost their belief in Davos process, so Davos spirit was lost. Consequently, Turkey and Greece entered to the post-Cold war era without having any concrete cooperation.

The collapse of USSR and its rule in Eastern Europe and the end of the bipolar structure formed a new security environment that is full of various uncertainties. In other words, the Cold War stability was over and thus the states' foreign policies regarding this period. As a matter of fact, both Greece and Turkey tried to find new strategies to minimize the negative impacts of this system-level transformation. Due to the fact that the threat is over for USA, Turkey started to doubt whether the military and economic assistances could come to an end and whether its geostrategic importance is off topic. Moreover, creation of new states in the Balkans, the modification of the borders along the north and northeastern directions were causes of uncertainty. Turkey was a neighbour of various small states, rather than a big one. On

[25] Aydın (2004), pp. 31-2.
[26] Ayman (2004), p. 228.
[27] Aydın (2004), p. 32.

the other hand, Greece had fears regarding both the disintegration of Yugoslavia and possible regional conflicts in the Balkans. All in all, both of the countries were less confident in this period unlike the previous one. In the eve of this international setting, both of the states were aware of the fact that they would be more vulnerable. Therefore, historical distrust, perceptions of threat and suspicion played also an important role in foreign policy making of the countries towards each other. Negative influence of the regional and international turbulence provided the preservation of oneself, which made cooperation unlikely.

In the post-communist era, the absence of bipolar division made both of these countries compete on gaining regional power in the Balkans. Their military spending regarding this competition was really high. While Turkey's military expenditures percent of GDP is approximately 5.3, Greece's is 4.3[28]. Thus, Turkey is perceived as a powerful country, as a "danger from the east" with its advanced military capabilities. As a matter of fact, both countries may observe each other's actions suspiciously. The creation of Macedonia was not accepted by Greece; it was perceived as a threat to territorial balance; between 1991 and 1995 the Greek Government did not recognize this state at all. By imposing a trade embargo on Macedonia, Greece emphasized its suspicion. Furthermore, Greece had some problems with Albania, due to illegal immigrants coming to Greece. Turkey, on the other hand, had more peaceful acts towards various Balkan states. First of all, Turkey had recognized the four new states of that time, which were Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia. Besides, feelings of kinship and a shared history have been important driving forces behind Turkey's policy, especially towards Bosnia-Herzegovina[29]. Unlike Greece,

[28] Rank Order, Military Expenditures, percent of GDP
http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/rankorder/2034rank.html
[29] Larrabee & Lesser (2002), p. 94.

Turkey had close ties with Albania, especially in terms of military. Turkey helped both Albania and Macedonia modernizing their armed forces[30]. Turkey had also started to maintain good ties with Bulgaria. All in all, Turkey's close ties with various Balkan countries, thus its activist policy were regarded as a threat by Greece. Turkey was feared to create a "Muslim arc" in the Balkans due to its previous actions to protect Turkish and Muslim people in this area. According to Hale, Turkey's initiative was to form alliances while Greece was acting in a reluctant and uncooperative manner. However, even though Greece also had cooperation in the region with Serbia, she could not prevent her being in the losing side as the odd man of NATO[31]. Unfortunately, this situation in the Balkans in 1990s could prevent any cooperation opportunity between Greece and Turkey.

In addition to that, during the 1990s domestic politics of these countries were full of political and economical unrests. Even though Greece has been the member of the EU, she could not prevent budgetary troubles. Moreover, Greece could not take advantage of its membership in the EU, handle with the unemployment problem and benefit from the geostrategic change in the region[32]. What is more, disintegration of Yugoslavia had created sensitive, emotional and exaggerated attitudes towards Balkans and Turkey in Greece. Greek domestic politics had been under the influence of historical perceptions of threat, populist actions and a narrow definition of Greek identity. According to Keridis, Greece's new political agenda started to be shaped with the help of EU, which puts emphasis on stable, action-oriented, cooperative policies[33]. On the other hand, Turkey had also several weak coalitions after the death of Özal in 1993. Eleven governments, including nine coalitions and eleven different

[30] Ibid.
[31] Hale (2000), p. 266.
[32] Keridis & Triantaphyllou (2001), p. 11.
[33] Keridis & Triantaphyllou (2001), p. 17.

foreign ministers held office in Ankara during the 1990s.[34] As a result of this, it was impossible to formulate new agendas regarding policy changes towards Greece.

Importantly, one of the most important Greek-Turkish disputes emerged during that period. Under international law, Greece has right to extend its territorial waters to 12 miles. In 1995 Turkish General Assembly declared that any extension of Greek territorial waters to 12 miles would be regarded as casus belli. Due to the fact that International Sea Law have not been accepted by Turkey, Greece did not chose to act for political reasons. One year later, in 1996 as it is apparent from the Kardak (Imia) crisis, mutual distrust and suspicion were alive, which was also related with domestic instability of both Greece and Turkey during especially the first half of the 1990s. In the context of Aegean territorial waters, both countries possess emotional nationalistic claims to this piece of rock.[35] In other words, a piece of rock draws two NATO members so close to military act.

I. 3. Rapprochement period 1999-2009 and The Role of the EU

After 1999 –when these countries have witnessed the capturing of Abdullah Öcalan in Nairobi in the Greek embassy, the meeting of two foreign ministers, Cem and Papandreou in New York for cooperation in providing humanitarian aid to Kosovo and also in the fields of culture, education, commerce and tourism and finally the two disastrous earthquakes on August 1999 in Izmit and on September 1999 in Athens- it is obvious that the relations between Greece and Turkey have changed in a

[34]Bahcheli (2004), p. 109.

[35] Rumelili (2003), p. 232.

positive and constructive way[36]. The impact of the EU, Turkey's eagerness to be member of the EU and Europeanization of Greek foreign policy and also the changes in both countries' foreign and domestic policies according to the needs of the international system of the time created a base for this kind of reconciliation between Greece and Turkey after 1999.

The EU is one of the common shared institutions for both of the countries. Greece is the member of it since 1981 and Turkey has active ongoing relations for the membership in the EU since 1987. Moreover, today being member of the EU is one of the prior foreign policy aims of Turkey as a negotiating candidate since 2005. However, Rumelili states that 'in the course of the institutional relationships of Greece and Turkey with the EEC/EC/EU until 1999, Greek-Turkish conflicts have fluctuated between identity conflicts and conflicts of subordination in terms of the nature of conflict communications at the elite and societal level'[37]. Until 1999, EU was not the source of cooperation between these two states but after 1999 Helsinki European Council decisions, in which Greece lifted its veto in the process of Turkey's candidacy to the EU and became the supportive of Turkey's EU candidacy, EU has became a common shared political and legitimate base for both countries[38]. Before 1999 Helsinki Summit, Greece was always opposing to the issues for Turkey in the EU. However, Greece started to recognize that this does not work, even this paves the way for much more conflicting Turkey which becomes a greater threat for Greece. Therefore, Greece politics have realized that much more Europeanized, democratic, stable Turkey can serve Greece's interests in the long-run and external balancing in

[36] Bahcheli (2004), p. 95; Ayman (2004), pp. 232-3.
[37] Rumelili (2004), p. 3.
[38] Bahcheli (2004), p.114.

the conflicting issues, such as in the Aegean and Cyprus, can be achieved[39]. Policy change in Greece towards Turkey's EU adjustment continued during December 2002 Copenhagen Summit by her support to Turkish candidacy. Ifantis states that 'by pushing Turkey deeper into the European integration process Greece aimed at successfully linking Turkey's state interests to certain international, that is, European way of behaviour'[40]. Therefore, Turkish state, which is in the process of democratization, will start to think about its civil-military establishment and make a more rational distribution of the country's economic assets by putting pressure on military assets[41]. However, it is important to note that Greek support to Turkey's EU adjustment is not unconditional. For Greek elites and public opinion first of all Turkey should fulfil all the conditions and requirements of EU Negotiating Framework and the Accession Partnership. Therefore, Greece also strongly supports the December 2006's European Council conclusions, which suspend negotiations with Turkey on eight chapters of the *acquis*[42].

What happened since 1999 in Greek policy towards Turkey is the change from its containment strategy to engagement strategy by aiming to increase its social, political and economical interaction with Turkey. By this policy change Greece understood that cooperation between two states under EU umbrella benefits both countries and also the EU as a whole. In any kind of collapse in EU-Turkey relations Greece will face with much more traditional Turkish foreign policy which improves the conflicts in the Aegean, Cyprus and Thrace. Also, if there emerges any conflict between Greece and Turkey, EU will start to look at Greece sceptical in concerning the security of Southeast Europe and Eastern Mediterranean. Moreover, Turkey will

[39] Larrabee (2001), p. 235.
[40] Martini & Keridis (2004), p. 113.
[41] Tsakonas & Dokos (2004), p. 114.
[42] Ifantis (2007), p. 59.

also become apart from its EU dream and become an unstable country in such an important region where both the member states of the EU and the US do not want to see Turkey as a conflicting country.[43]At the end, it is obvious that such a scenario is not desirable and beneficial for both of the parties. Therefore, the establishment of long-run and concrete solutions for the conflicts between Greece-Turkey only possible, if the constructive changes in Greek politics towards Turkey after 1999 continues and if the EU continues its security balancing and democratic, legitimate, economic role modelling to both of the countries.

Europeanization of Greek foreign and domestic policy is also another factor that Greek-Turkish relations have changed since 1999. As Ifantis mentions 'the progressive "Europeanization" of Greece and Greek policy has evolved over time. Almost all of Greece's foreign policy issues, including the strategic relationship with Turkey, have gradually but firmly been placed in a multilateral, European context…This departure from the "Aegean Cold War" of the years between 1970 and 2000 is strategic in nature, and not simply tactical'[44]. For years in Greek politics Turkey seen as a great threat to Greece and Greece had no policy toward Turkey. Greece was always rejecting the dialogue, using the populist, provocative politics and media against Turkey[45]. However, after being the member of the EU in 1981, Greece started to transform and develop its domestic and foreign policy day by day by realizing its political and economic importance in the Balkans and Eastern Mediterranean. Also, there was lacking conditions for the joining of the European Monetary Union in Greece in the late 1990s, so Greece started to look at alternative

[43] Lesser (2005), p. 352.
[44] Ifantis (2007), p. 59.
[45] Keridis & Triantaphyllou (2001), pp. 12-3.

policies with Turkey to reduce its military expenses and be integrated to the EMU[46]. Therefore, the desire of Greece to be an effective and the major power in the region, the need for 'the reduction of the role of the state, for the opening of Greek society to its multicultural origins and the internalization of the economy support the idea that Greece's credible deterrence of Turkey is important but not sufficient and should be supplemented with a new dynamic and proactive policy'. Therefore, Greece prefers a stable, democratic, peaceful Turkey with developed economy, strong cultural ties to Greece, as a partner in the new European, Balkan and Near Eastern order and also in the European political structure[47].

Moreover, during 2000 and 2001 both countries decide to work together for the solution of high-politics conflicts and they decided to have a basis on several Confidence Building Measures (CBMs)[48]. By these CBMs, both countries have created a web of mutually functional transactions that make the use of military force for the conflicts inconceivable. Because of this high cooperation in low-politics any conflict between these two states become costly for both of them, so they immediately look for solutions for their mutual interests. Therefore, both countries' agreements about their domestic policy needs support the reconciliation period after 1999. In addition to these developments and positive approaches in both countries for reconciliation, both communities also have started to support these developments. Both Turks and Greeks desire to live in peace as being friends in collateral geography

[46] Rumelili (2004), p.11.

[47] Keridis & Triantaphyllou (2001), p. 14.

[48] Tsakonas & Dokos (2004), p. 115.

of their countries. These people have wider support for the peace and security more than ever since the Venizelos-Atatürk rapprochement during the 1930s[49].

II. EU Integration

European Union integration process is a long-term and irreversible process of political, legal, economic integration of several states, which meet the definition of being "European", under a EU umbrella. Integration process has several changes, priorities, approaches and conditions until today. While at the beginning the main concern of European integration was economic situation and eligibility of a country to be a part of Europe, today, especially by Copenhagen criteria established in 1993, the level of democratization, respect to human rights and minority rights in a country are also considered as formal entry requirements of the EU. As Verney states, '…adherence to democratic standards has been prioritized over all other criteria for EU membership. Thus, states are required sufficiently to meet the political criteria before opening entry negotiations…This prioritization reflects the fact that democracy is more than a formal entry requirement: it has come to be regarded as a fundamental proof of a state's European identity'[50].

In that situation, Turkish candidacy to the EU and her integration process become so critical and questionable because of country's level of democratization, low human rights records and domestic problems regarding to minorities. Although Turkey's domestic situation have been shaping significantly country's European adjustment for many years, the role of changing Enlargement rules and the change in

[49] Heraclides (2004), p. 85.

[50] Verney (2009), p. 5.

the perception of Turkey on Europeans' eyes are crucially important to understand today EU-Turkey relations and Turkey's long-lasting integration process to Europe. Therefore, it is clear that Turkey's candidacy to the EU is not just dependent to the Copenhagen criteria, there are also EU specific factors that affect significantly EU-Turkey relations and these factors are preferences of member states related with the preferences of their domestic and social groups and public opinion in the EU member states in where Turkey's full membership can be voted by referendum when time comes to decide about Turkey and Europe's future. In that regards, when it is looked at Greek-Turkish relations and the role of the EU, public opinion in Greece towards Turkey's EU adjustment become significantly important and determining for the future of both Turkey, Greece and Europe.

II. 1. The Turkish Debate

Turkey's integration process to the EU has fifty years long history today. The relation between the EU and Turkey, which is one of the recent negotiating candidate countries of the Union, has the longest history of the Enlargement policy and Turkey still continues to stay as a non-member of the Union for decades, while the conditions and geography of European integration change. As Muftuler-Bac states, 'Turkey's relationship with the Union should not be treated as bilateral, but rather should be placed in the larger framework of EU enlargement'[51].

When it is looked at the chapter of Turkey in the European integration story, Turkey's relations with the EC have started in 1963 with Ankara Treaty and in April 1987, Turkey applied for full membership to the EC. In 1989, European Commission

[51] Muftuler-Bac (2002), p. 79.

announced its opinion that Turkey was not meeting the conditions of being EC member and was not ready to be the part of it in the close future. Later on, in 1995 Turkey became the only country, which had Customs Union Agreement with the EU without being a full member. At that time, there was a belief in Turkish public opinion that the membership to the Union is so close. However, things were not the same in the EU side. In 1997 Luxembourg Summit, Turkey was excluded from the enlargement process while other ten potential candidate countries became the official candidates of the EU. However, in 1999 Helsinki Summit Turkey accepted as a candidate country. Muftuler-Bac mentions 'Turkey's ability to meet the criteria did not improve significantly between the Luxembourg Summit of December 1997 and the Helsinki Summit of 1999, when it was included as a candidate country'[52]. Finally, negotiations with Turkey decided to be opened in 2004 and opened in 3 October 2005. Today, Turkey is still a slowly negotiating candidate country, while the EU has doubled its member states since the application of Turkey for full membership.

One of the crucial factors that make Turkey's EU membership prospect longer is the changing attitude of European public towards Turkey. Ifantis mentions that 'the accession talks are taking place against a backdrop of a very skeptical EU public opinion as well as an elite majority that is less tolerant towards Turkey's European prospects'[53]. Ruiz-Jimenez and Torreblanca state that 'the dominant negative mood existing among EU founding member states when it comes to support for enlargement. Europeans show little enthusiasm for enlargement in general, and for Turkey's accession in particular'[54]. Importantly, 'according to Eurobarometer surveys, citizens' support for Turkey's accession to the EU is not only low, but also

[52] Muftuler-Bac (2002), p. 80.
[53] Ifantis (2009), p. 11.
[54] Ruiz-Jimenez & Torreblanca (2008), p. 2.

shrinking'[55]. While Turkey was also one of the candidate countries with the others, which became full members by the fifth enlargement in 2004, at that time Turkey had the lowest level of support from the European public[56]. Main reasons of this public opinion in Europe are old historical prejudices against Turkey and 99% Muslim population of Turkey, which is seen as an Islamic threat by many. According to Muftuler-Bac, the general concerns of Europeans about enlargement are the fear of an alien culture, increasing xenophobia and racism, loss of resources to foreigners, loss of structural funds, by the issue of immigration increasing unemployment, increase in crime and illegal drug trafficking, and costs of enlargement to them, which are also directly related with skepticism towards Turkey[57]. In addition to these, there are also other concerns of European people and states regarding to Turkey. Giannakopoulos mentions that 'in the Turko-skeptic perspective, Turkey emerges as a danger to the European economy, the deepening of European integration, and the future of the Common Foreign and Security Policy. This perspective stresses a negative picture of economic, political, social, geographic, religious and cultural differences, which it is argued, obstruct Turkey's ability to become a full EU member'[58]. Religious and cultural elements, which mentions the existence of Christian values in Europe and dilemma between Islam and democracy; demographic factor that Turkey has a huge population, which creates concerns about immigration; economic reasons related with structural and agricultural policies of the EU; importance of security and stability that some Europeans believe Turkey would create instability and insecurity in the EU, while some Europeans are totally believe the opposite; are the main arguments of

[55] Ruiz-Jimenez & Torreblanca (2008), p. 7.
[56] Muftuler-Bac (2002), p. 88.
[57] Muftuler-Bac (2002), p. 90.
[58] Giannakopoulos (2008), p.1.

European public as against Turkish membership[59]. Özkırımlı argues that in Greece also, 'those who are opposed to Turkey's accession argue that Turkey is not "European", not in a geographical sense but culturally and politically. They usually point to the important role the army plays in Turkish politics and the problems this creates in bilateral relations, in the attitudes towards the minorities, etc. They also share the much more widespread concern about Islam and the implications of having a large Islamic country in the European Union'[60].

However, as it is also mentioned earlier in this paper, Athens has started to support Turkey's EU accession consistently since 1999 Helsinki Summit, in contrast to many other Europeans. Couloumbis mentions that 'Athens has made an important shift towards Turkey based on "conditional rewards" rather than "conditional sanctions"'[61]. It is certain that between 2001-2005, Turkey welcomed several reforms and changes politically, economically and socially. According to Tocci, 'Politically, economically, and socially, successive governments have exposed the country to EU scrutiny, pluralized the regime, and liberalized the country's legal framework'[62]. However, since 2005 this successful and significant reform process has lost its pace and criticism towards Turkey increased from the EU that the term "privileged partnership" came out from the EU side. Additionally, according to Eurobarometer results, public opinion in the EU member states started to show that European people are becoming more and more sceptical towards both Enlargement and Turkey. 'The increasing influence of Europe's public opinion on the Union's decision-making, part of an attempt to reduce the EU 'democratic deficit' and make it 'more relevant' to its

[59] Ruiz-Jimenez & Torreblanca (2008), p. 2.
[60] Özkırımlı (2009) Interview on August 2009. See Appendix
[61] Couloumbis (2003), p. 34.
[62] Tocci (2005), p. 78.

citizens, is part of this story'[63].

When it is looked at Greek public opinion -which is going to be analyzed more detailed in the next chapter of this paper- the results of the polls in regards to Turkey's full–membership are against it, while public opinion in Greece is generally for the enlargement. This situation shows big difference between public opinion and political choice of Greece towards Turkey. Özkırımlı mentions that 'the foreign policy of a country shifts when the perceived 'national interest' shifts, and this was the case in Greek-Turkish relations in the 1990s. Greece (Greek foreign policy makers) realized that a Turkey within EU is less dangerous for Greece's interests than a Turkey without. This was in a way a 'rational' shift prompted by changing national interest perceptions. To the extent that the same perception prevails, Greece will not change its policy vis-àvis Turkey'[64].

When it is looked at the EU-Turkey-Greece relationship, it can be said that if the EU-Turkey relations continue to slow down, there is a risk of losing ties with each other and such a scenario will also cause harm in Greek-Turkish relations, if they are continue to be dependent to EU-Turkey relations[65]. Therefore, as Tsarouhas also strongly emphasizes, even though EU is an important anchor in Greek-Turkish relations, for the continuation of peaceful relations and rapprochement period, Greece should not only dependent to EU-Turkey relations while looking at Turkey. 'The point of diversification would not be to reduce the salience of the EU anchor; that would be costly and self-defeating. It is, however, vital in terms of minimizing the harm done through a potential deterioration in the Turkish vocation towards the Union'[66]. Therefore, the role of other actors, rather than political parties and leaders,

[63] Tsarouhas (2009), p. 50.
[64] Özkırımlı (2009), Interview on August 2009. See Appendix
[65] Tsarouhas (2009), p. 51.
[66] Tsarouhas (2009), p. 51.

is crucial and necessary in Greece towards Turkey's Europeanization and especially, as different than other EU member states, it is also needed for the continuation of positive developments in Greek-Turkish relations to prevent any harm in political, economical and security terms, with or even without the EU anchor.

III. Public Opinion in Greece

Until 1999 the perception of Greece and Greek public opinion towards Turkey was so much in security terms under the shadow of Aegean conflict and Cyprus issue, which was making Turkey the "enemy", "other" or "threat". However, since 1999, even though the importance of security perception has not been changed, the perception of Turkey in Greece has shifted because of the role of the EU and effects of Europeanization in Greece. Ifantis and Fotiou mention that 'Greece thus moved from a "containment" to "engagement" strategy, inserting the bilateral relationship in the context of the European enlargement process'[67]. Importantly Greece became fierce supporter of Turkey's European adjustment and this rapprochement period also has started to be seen in the public by the effect of cooperative approach of Greek business community, media and civil society with their Turkish encounters. Greek-Turkish rapprochement period is significant in political terms but it is also important on the eyes of Greek public towards Turkey. It is important to note that Turkey's willingness to be part of the EU since 1999 Helsinki Summit, her steps towards more democratization in the country and AKP governments' priority to attract foreign direct investment (FDI) since their victory in the elections in 2002, made it easier the creation of positive public opinion towards Turkey in Greece. Therefore, it is worth to

[67] Ifantis & Fotiou (2008), p. 86.

analyse the changes and developments in business community, media sector and civil society in Greece towards Turkey and Turkey's European adjustment.

III. 1. Business Community

Since the beginning of 2000s Turkey has started to have a more stable economy and economic growth by the role of the election of AKP as the only governing party in 2002 elections, increasing ties of Turkey with the EU and its attractiveness of FDI to the country. Grigoriadis and Kamaras state that since 2002-2003 Turkey has attracted USD 50 billion in FDI, that according to Greek businessmen, this is the success of AKP's both political and economic policy, which paved the way for successful accession negotiations with the EU and made Turkey as a credible country for foreign investors easily[68]. This positive situation of Turkish economy is important and noticeable by Greek business sector. Since the beginning of 1999 rapprochement period between Greece and Turkey, Greek businessmen recognized the huge growth of Turkish economy with its rapid modernizing process. Also, it has been clear that Turkish economy's new, Europeanizing and modernizing process is not different than the one in Greece that Greek businessmen have been in familiar with the new investment opportunities in Turkey to take their advantage. 'Moreover, Greek businessmen are certain that Turkey can offer many investment opportunities, with major assets in view of its geographical proximity and ties to the Caucasus and Central Asia'[69].

[68] Grigoriadis & Kamaras (2008), pp. 53-68.

[69] Ifantis & Fotiou (2008), p. 91.

It is important to note that 1999 rapprochement period between Greece and Turkey had begun by the signature of several bilateral agreements in several sectors, such as tourism, trade, shipping, culture, education, commerce, etc. which have increased business ties and the importance of "low politics" between the two countries. In addition to this beginning period, positive developments in the accession process of Turkey to the EU, after Helsinki decision in 1999 as a turning point, made Turkey more attractive for Greek businessmen and investment. It is certain that any step that makes Turkey more close to the EU, also increases the trust towards Turkey's political and economical environment, economic stability in the country that Greek business community can involve joint businesses and investments in Turkey easier than before. Therefore, for Greek business community any scenario, which will freeze Turkey's relations with the EU, seems not beneficial. Even it could be more harmful for ongoing economic cooperation period between Greek and Turkish business sectors. Ifantis and Fotiou state that 'the scenario of a privileged partnership may create turbulence, which businessmen do not like, and will decrease strategic FDIs. A potential suspension of negotiations would be a disastrous scenario because all business activities would freeze and this would have a direct impact on Greek business as well'[70].

Since the beginning of Greek-Turkish rapprochement in 1999, by agreements following the Helsinki decision there have emerged several joint ventures, for the first time in Greek-Turkish history in such a rapid way, between Greek and Turkish business communities. Main areas of these ventures have been tourism, textile, banking and finance, shipping and food which have such significant examples; 'the take-over of Kardalco in Giresun by Cardico; the takeover of two mines for the

[70] Ifantis & Fotiou (2008), pp. 91-92.

extraction of barite by Silver and Baryte Orc Mining Co.; the establishment of hospital units in Turkey by the Medical Centre of Athens', the joint venture between EFG Erurobank and Tekfenbank and also the involvement of Intracom, Intralot, Sarandis, Eurodrip, Spyrou, Kleeman Hellas, Mylonas, Moda Bagno and Crown Hellas into businesses in Turkey[71]. It is important that these joint ventures and businesses encouraged the decrease of prejudices and animosity in Greece towards Turkey both in public and also in politics. As Özkırımlı mentions 'more and more Greek companies invest in Turkey every single day. This had a positive impact on tourism and cultural exchanges as well… Prejudices mostly stem from ignorance. With more and more Greeks coming to Turkey to work, to study, etc. (and vice versa), the two peoples have started getting to know each other; this has in turn decreased mutual fears and suspicions'[72]. The continuation of this positive economic environment, which is beneficial for both of the societies and also Turkey's European adjustment, became foremost aim of Greek business community. Another important development between Greek and Turkish business communities is 'the establishment of the Greek-Turkish Chamber of Commerce, which initiated the "Turkish Aegean Coast and Greek Aegean Islands Economic Summit" that resulted in the establishment of the Aegean Business Bank, a Greek-Turkish joint business venture in 2005'[73].

Investments of Greek banks and financial institutions to Turkey in banking and finance sector are the ones which have significant impact both in Greek business sector's relations with Turkey and in FDI flow in Turkey. In that regards, the most important FDI pouring from Greece to Turkey have been 'the acquisition of 46%

[71] Ifantis & Fotiou (2008), p. 92.
[72] Özkırımlı (2009), Interview on August 2009. See Appendix
[73] Ifantis & Fotiou (2008), p. 92.

stake of Finansbank, Turkey's fifth largest bank, by the National Bank of Greece (NBG) in 2006, which enlarged economic relations both quantitative and qualitative sense'[74]. Recent data proved that the acquisition of Finansbank by NBG was a profitable move for both of the sides. Tsarouhas mentions that 'data announced by the NBG Group for 2008 reported better-than-expected net profits of €423 million (+25% compared to the first quarter of 2007), with Finansbank operations contributing about one-third of overall profits'[75]. It is also significant that NBG deal is the largest FDI flow from Greece to Turkey in the history, which is amounted about $5 billion, while between 1990s and 2004, the total FDI from Greece to Turkey had been amounted only about $500 million[76]. In addition to that, this deal is important as being the pioneer deal to encourage other Greek banks and financial institutions to enter into Turkish market. Later on, it is followed by the acquisition of 70% stake of Tekfenbank by EFG Eurobank in 2006. Regarding to FDIs from Greece to Turkey, it is also needed to mention that the amount of Greek FDIs are ranking third in the period between 2002-2007, according to Undersecretariat of Treasury (Turkey)[77]. In addition to these, it is important to note that Greek and Turkish companies have started to operate in third countries like the $12 billion joint venture of construction companies AKTOR and ENKA to build a town in Oman. Ifantis and Fotiou mention that 'today, 130 Greek businesses have invested in Turkey with 22 of them located in the region of Izmir. The expectation is that the total investment rate will further increase as a result of the recently established Greek-Turkish Bank, which aims at financing Greek-Turkish investments, trade and services'[78].

In addition to increasing Greek investments in banking and finance sector to

[74] Tsarouhas (2009), p. 47.
[75] Tsarouhas (2009), p. 47.
[76] See Table 1
[77] See Table 2
[78] Ifantis & Fotiou (2008), p. 93.

Turkey, bilateral trade relations, transportation, energy and tourism investments also have increased drastically since 1999, especially after 2006. 'Today, 2,200 Greek and Turkish companies are involved in bilateral trade. According to statistics provided by the Greek-Turkish Chamber of Commerce, Greece has increased its trade capacity by 155%, a rise, which has no historical precedent. For Greece, in 2006 Turkey ranked as the sixth most important export market, accounting for 5,1% of Greece's total exports'[79]. Investments to both transport and tourism have also increased relations between Greece and Turkey. By the connection of Greek highway, Egnatia, to Turkish highway and also railway between Thessaloniki and Istanbul, thousands of Greeks and Turks have started to visit each other in increasing levels every year that enabled more interaction between societies and also more economic activity. Another way of transportation and tourism also emerged between Greek islands and main land Turkey that every day from Greek islands, which are close to Turkey, at least two boats have started to operate to Turkey and return. By this way many tourism and boat agencies and companies started to develop their relations with their counterparts in Turkish coastal towns and increased their profits.

While looking at all of these positive developments among Greek business community towards relations with Turkey, it is important to note that this is the first time among Greek business world, after 1999 that they have started to enforce Greek politics to normalize relations with Turkey and support Turkey's European adjustment and EU accession process for the continuation of their interests and economic stability in Turkey. This support and have started to be seen clearly by the stand of several business organizations, institutions and people in Greece, since 1999. 'In April 2000, during an Economist Conference in Athens, the President of the

[79] Ibid.

Turkish Industrial and Business Association and the President of the Greek-Turkish Business Cooperation Council publicly declared that the "the hope and wish of businessmen in both countries is the disengagement of trade and economic relations from the dependence on political conditions"...The higher the investments and the easier it becomes to bear the costs of political crisis. The higher the stakes, the stronger the reasons to support Turkey's EU bid. However, the major contribution of Greek business to the EU-Turkey debate is that it has consolidated the consensus in Greece to support Turkey's accession course'[80].

III. 2. Civil Society and Mass Culture Industry

It is important to consider the role of free and active civil society in democratic and pluralist societies. Also, for the emergence and continuation of this democratic environment, the existence of a pluralist mass culture industry is important. After devastating earthquakes, first in Turkey and just after in Greece, in 1999, two societies became more close to each other by the support of the political consent for rapprochement and also by the role of media as a contributor to mutual understanding and cooperation. This was the period in both of the countries civil society bloomed up to learn about each other, to explore their commonalities and to cooperate for more understanding and peace. It can be argued that since 1999, Greek civil society have started to transform its ethnocentric structure into a cooperative one in regards to Turkey and its Turkish encounters.

First serious interactions between Greek and Turkish civil societies began after the 1999 earthquakes while trying to provide emergency aid to neighbour. In Greece, on TV screens and in the newspapers people saw about the situation in

[80] Ifantis & Fotiou (2008), p. 95.

Turkey and they started to realize that they have many commonalities with each other. When it is looked at this shift in civil society, it is important to consider the emergence of new generations in both of the nations, which are more open minded and able to interact with each other by putting aside the old political disputes that they had listened from their grandparents or parents. The relation of Greek civil society with its Turkish encounters developed by the establishment of several youth organizations. Greek-Turkish Forum, Greek Association for Atlantic and European Cooperation, Greek-Turkish Network (SEESOX), Communication Initiative/Greece-Turkey Programme, European Students Forum (AEGEE), Student Association for International Affairs (SAFIA), Hellenic Youth Council, Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures are the main youth organizations which have increased their interaction with Turkey and Turkish people/youth by having, organizing and participating to several conferences, seminars, events, trips, etc.

As one of the speakers of the seminar called "Turkish-Greek Relations: Learning from our past – welcoming our future", organized by SAFIA on 14 May 2009, in Athens, Hercules Millas stated that 'to gather these young Turkish and Greek students and organize a conference in Athens to talk about Greek-Turkish relations without any fight was impossible fifteen years ago but today we are all together here and some of us are waiting outside the room to join into this crowd'[81]. Every year in Greece, there are several events, conferences, gatherings, etc. related with Greek-Turkish relations or only just about Turkey, Turkish foreign policy or any Turkish cultural event that Greek public, especially Greek youth, become familiar with Turkey and any developments in the country. The increasing role of civil society in both

[81] Millas (2009), notes about his speech in SAFIA event on 14 May 2009, Athens.

domestic and foreign policy also proves the Europeanization of Greek society. In that regards, Greek civil society also supports the European adjustment of Turkey for the continuation of this rapprochement period, democratization, normalization and Europeanization of Turkish politics and society.

The continuation of positive developments towards Turkey and understanding Turkish people also supported by the increasing role of mass culture industry in Greece. Ifantis and Fotiou state that 'in fact, the joint cultural exchange initiatives have not only contributed to the Greek-Turkish rapprochement at the ceremonial level, but have also played an important role in the blooming of a mass culture industry. Joint film productions, TV series featuring the love story between a Turk and a Greek, and thousands of music performances, including the Greek-Turkish Youth Orchestra, have not only helped in getting to know each other, but have also helped creating a new cultural trend, supported by music companies and film enterprises'[82]. Today, when someone enters into a big bookshop in Athens, it is normal to recognize a novel written by a Turkish author – Orhan Pamuk, The Nobel Prize winner in literature in 2006, or Elif Safak – on one of the main shelves of the store. When a Greek television channel is turned on inside a typical Greek house, it is usual to watch a Turkish TV serial, which is about a love between a Greek and a Turk, with Greek subtitles. Additionally, there are a lot of Greek people, who spend money and time to learn how to speak Turkish, who are enthusiastic to learn about the "other". It is becoming popular by Greeks, especially by the ones whose ancestors are from Anatolia or Istanbul, to have their wedding or baptism ceremony in Istanbul. On the other hand, Istanbul is becoming so popular for Greek students as a destination to travel, visit or importantly to study as graduate or exchange students, thanks to private

[82] Ifantis & Fotiou (2008), p. 95.

universities like Istanbul Bilgi University or Sabanci University in Istanbul, which have internationally reputable degrees and warmly welcome Greek students. Additionally, in Greece the number of popular Turkish restaurants, like Tike and Kosebasi; popular shops like Koton, Machka, Ipekyol, Inci Ayakkabi, popular Turkish sportsmen, like Ibrahim Kutluay, who has played in PAOK basketball team, and Tümer Metin, who has played in Larissa football team, increasing day by day and the Greek people welcome warmly all of these developments.

It is clear that improvement of civil society, mass culture industry and Greek-Turkish relations in correlation with each other. When one of them improves, it directly affects the others. Even though, civil society leaders, members or artists, sportsmen, owners of Turkish restaurants or shops are not able to change the direction of Greek foreign policy and its approach to Turkey and Turkey's EU pathway, they can play a significant role in shaping public opinion and in regards to relations with Turkey, they can support the continuation of rapprochement period and Turkey's European adjustment.

III. 3. Media

The role of media in both nations and globally in shaping perceptions, policies and public opinion cannot be denied. Media is one of the crucial and effective tools to have a short-term impact in public about a specific topic, varies from foreign policy to economics. As Thompson mentions 'the press should not be regarded simply as a channel for the circulation and diffusion of symbolic forms, but also as a mechanism which creates new kinds of actions and interactions, and contributes to the establishment of new kinds of social relations'[83]. In countries like Greece and Turkey,

[83] Thomson (1990), p. 265.

the role of media in creating new ways of social interaction, perceptions and also "us" versus the "other" can be decisive. According to Hadjidimos, the role that media plays in Greece and Turkey is more important than the ones in Western Europe because of two reasons, which are the lack of pluralism in media sector and secondly, the lack of facts in reporting[84]. Additionally, she explains that 'The Greek-Turkish conflict carries a special danger of escalation. The reason is that, depending on the atmosphere in public opinion created and controlled by the mass media of both countries, the conflict may at any time get out of hand'[85]. It is also mentioned that hostile statements on the media '…are being eagerly picked up, interpreted and often also misinterpreted by the government and press of the neighbouring country'[86]. For these kind of news pieces Hadjidimos gives these examples below both from Turkish and Greek media; '(alleged) Greek support of Öcalan and the PKK; the Cyprus issue; the Greek government blocking Turkeys' access to the EU; Greece's "siding" with the Serbs during the war in Kosovo or the demilitarization of a number of islands in the Aegean and violations of Greek airspace by Turkish military planes'[87].

When it is looked at the Greek case, Greek media can be figured out as one of the most influential elements of both politics and public opinion in the country and especially, towards Turkey. In Greece, majority of the press has close ties with political parties and politicians. Generally, media sector tends to have partisan lines, be effective in shaping domestic politics and people's thoughts, with a very few exceptions. Therefore, they are usually so much effective in Greek foreign policy and the perception of people of Turkey. 'They are thus capable of exploiting to some

[84] Hadjidimos (1999), p. 6.
[85] Hadjidimos (1999), p. 5.
[86] Ibid.
[87] Ibid.

extent the Greek-Turkish nexus in order to put governments under pressure. Populist and simplistic attitudes are promoted by hawkish but influential groups in the media and this becomes rather evident when one looks at the way representations of Turkey and Turks are transmitted to the public'[88]. This role of Greek media towards Turkey can be noticed easily when it is looked at the headlines and news of crisis periods in Greek-Turkish history. Negative stereotypes, the "other" and "enemy" perception of Turkey, "revisionist" Turkish army image have came out quickly during the 1987 crisis, the 1996 Imia crisis and even in 1999 Helsinki decision. It is important to note that in all of these perceptions, issues between Greece and Turkey have considered as "national issues" by media that this has not gave any chance for criticisms to come out openly and change the direction of public opinion[89]. This situation also creates dilemma between journalists while making their news, whether they are considered as a "bad journalist" or a "bad patriot". 'When facing this dilemma, certain journalistic principles and basic qualities are completely lost'[90]. It is recognizable that in Greek media, the historical perception of Turkey as the "enemy", "revisionist" country continues and also increases the ratings and sales that the media is so much interested in. In that situation, the highly effective role of media in shaping public opinion in Greece towards Turkey and Turkey's perception continues. 'The role of the media is a twofold one: it reflects and feeds public opinion thus creating a vicious circle concerning the perception of "the other"'[91]. Therefore, media relations are still seem as the most problematic area of Greek-Turkish relations[92].

However, Greece's Europeanization process, changing priorities and policies, rapprochement period between Greece and Turkey, Turkey's European adjustment

[88] Ifantis & Fotiou (2008), p. 96.
[89] Panagiotou (2005), p. 15.
[90] Hadjidimos (1999), p. 7.
[91] Hadjidimos (1999), p. 9.
[92] Özkırımlı (2009), Interview on August 2009. See Appendix

process and increasing social interaction between two nations both by commerce, travel and more active civil society, have also affected approach and discourses of media in both countries, especially in Greece. It was the year 1999, when also the sound of some part of Greek media has started to be changed and more moderate towards Turkey by the role of political rapprochement. However, it was not the 1999 Helsinki decision, where Greece signalled for the first time her support to Turkey in country's EU process by not vetoing her, which enabled Greek media to be more moderate towards Turkey. Even, Greek media was not ready for such a political move that it could not soften its tone towards Turkey and Turkey's European adjustment like Greek politics of the time had done. Even after 1999 Helsinki decision, majority of Greek media continued to voice up with the same stereotypes, discourses and negative speeches by mentioning 'the undemocratic structure of the Turkish state, the status of the Turkish military and Turkey's "revisionist" approach…The Greek press continued to reproduce the zero-sum culture and appraised the containment policy as the only feasible and realistic approach to Greek-Turkish relations, condemning Greek governments of appeasement and compromising national interests'[93].

Then, it was 1999 earthquakes, occurred in both of the countries, that the media started to cover Greek-Turkish issue in another perspective, more humane side by emphasizing the sorrow of people in both of the countries and the cooperation of civil society, NGOs and people to each other. At that time negative perception of each other in all of the media coverage gave the way to the images of emergency teams' collaboration that mass media has started to affect public opinion positively that time on the both sides of the Aegean[94]. This positive environment also contributed the establishment of Turkish-Greek Journalists' Forum, which have annual meetings of

[93] Ifantis & Fotiou (2008), p. 98.
[94] Bilgiç & Karatzas (2004), p. 2.

several influential and successful journalists of both Turkey and Greece and also several organizations in a year to create a common sense between two sides of the media. In addition to that, as the biggest media holdings of both sides, Dogan Holding in Turkey and the International Herald Tribune and Kathimerini editions in Greece, have started to have collaborations with each other. These are significant developments in both Greek and Turkish media that in a way these co-operations allow the emergence of positive public opinion in both of the societies. Until that period, in Greece, news related with Turkey were only in political and security terms. Greek people were not aware of any cultural, traditional, humane event of Turks. Until then, in Greece, when a cultural event familiar to Geeks from Turkey, a travel programme which is produced in Turkey, or a news, which mentions about the beneficial acquisition of a Turkish company by the Greek one, occur in the media, they increase positive interaction and understanding of Greeks about Turkey. For example, Ifantis and Fotiou remind that 'the inauguration of the ITGI Pipeline on 18 November 2007 was reported as a success of the "new" Greek foreign policy and as a positive sign for future relations between the two countries'[95].

However, when it is compared the role of business sector and also the civil society in Greece, in regards to their perception of Turkey since 1999 and Turkey's European adjustment, the positive role of Greek media is still so limited and reciprocal. All of these co-operations, meetings and objective news pieces do not constitute the majority of news about Turkey. Oppositely, they remain as minor in Greek media.

III. 4. Greece's Dilemma Towards Turkey

[95] Ifantis & Fotiou (2008), p. 98.

By the end of the Cold War, the significant change in international politics and security has changed also Greece's foreign policy and security perception. Additionally, the membership of Greece to the EU paved the way for the Europeanization of its foreign policy, which totally affected its policy towards Turkey. Europeanization of Greek foreign policy also emerged by the stabilization of relations of Greece in the region and also by taking a European stance in global perspective[96]. A policy of détente with Turkey is also a significant part of this new outlook of Greek foreign policy, since 1999.

As it is also mentioned earlier in this paper, this rapprochement period with Turkey is not only in foreign policy and security related issues and perceptions. The significant steps that Greek business community, civil society and its initiatives and also media sector took for the positive development of relations with Turkey, especially after 1999 earthquakes in both of the countries, should be also considered. Moreover, these acquisitions', initiatives' and cooperations' role in shaping Greek public opinion positively towards Turkey and Turkey's EU accession cannot be denied. However, it is also clear that traditional, historical, security and Europeanization dilemma of Greek public towards Turkey still affect the considerable part of Greek public opinion negatively towards Turkey's European adjustment. Özkırımlı states that 'the perception of Turkey as the "other" or the "enemy" is historically rooted, and will not change overnight. The positive developments of the last decade are still important however as they can be considered as the first step towards the uprooting of deep-seated prejudices and the gradual emergence of a more positive image of Turkey'[97].

[96] Ifantis (2007), p. 58.
[97] Özkırımlı (2009), Interview on August 2009. See Appendix

According to Ifantis, the role of images and mythologized realities during the nation-state formation and identity creation years in Greece, have still a significant impact in Greek public opinion towards the perception of Turkey. These deep-rooted traditions and historical facts of nation-state building period continued during the post-1974 period by creating Greece's national security strategy based on containing the "threat from the East", i.e., the threat from Turkey, which is a country that can never be trusted and the reason of Greece's any political, social and economic lack of development, according to both elite and public opinion of that time[98]. It should be noted that this traditional, historical and security dilemma of Greek public opinion still continues in Greece today. Even though any reform and democratization effort in Turkey for the EU accession, is considered as a positive development for the normalization of Turkish politics and relations with Turkey in Greece, still the perception of Greek public opinion is much more strategic[99]. The framework of the Copenhagen criteria has specific requirements for Greece, in regards to Turkey. Instead of the conditions that the European Commission considers as prior, in Greek public opinion, to accept Turkey's EU accession, there are specific conditions. 'For Greek public opinion, for example, it is inconceivable that the threat of use of force (*casus belli*) against a member state can be employed by a country that aspires to become a full member of the EU. The Greek goal is to reach full normalization of Greek-Turkish relations prior to Turkey's accession. The belief is that the accession context is conducive to that end'[100]. For Greek elites and public opinion, prior to the solution of the Cyprus issue and Aegean disputes, full membership of Turkey to the EU seems impossible, although Turkey could meet all economical, social, democratization criteria. This shows Europeanization dilemma of Greece, when

[98] Ifantis (2005), p. 381.
[99] Ifantis (2007), p. 63.
[100] Couloumbis & Ifantis (2002), p. 12.

Turkey is considered. Because of traditional, historical and security dilemma of Greece towards Turkey for decades, even though the existence of several positive developments in "low politics" and between societies, Greek public opinion remains cautious and sceptical towards Turkey's European adjustment. 'Between 2000 and 2006, Greek support for Turkey's EU bid ranges between 20% and 26% reaching an "unnatural" 40% in 2000, right after the earthquakes. By the end of 2002, public support for Turkey's membership dropped to 20% and has remained stable since. There is no doubt that the Greek security dilemma remains largely unaltered despite the rapprochement of the last decade'[101].

In this situation, it is important to note that Turkey is a dynamic country, which has adopted several reforms in its accession process to the EU, even though the process has slowed down since 2005 and bilateral problems with Greece are still ongoing. It is important to note any failure or change of direction in this process will be also harmful for Greek-Turkish relations. For the benefit of Greece and solution of bilateral problems, ongoing process of reformation, democratization and "Europeanization" of Turkey should continue and the support of both Greek elite and public should continue for Turkey's full membership of the EU. 'In Turkey-EU-Greece triangle, incomplete commitment of each member seems to be loosening their inter-relations, slowing down the resolution of grand disputes and the process of transformation of Turkey on the way of the EU-membership. The EU's potential rejection for Turkey's membership, where one of the main reasons may be the failure of the Constitution due to the recent expansions, would be the worst outcome for the future relations of the members in this triangle'[102].

[101] Ifantis & Fotiou (2008), p. 101.
[102] Bilgic & Karatsaz (2004), p. 9.

CONCLUSION

Greek-Turkish relations have faced significant developments, which are historically and traditionally important and effective for their societies, for decades since the establishment of both nation states. However, majority of these developments have been encouraging the continuation of old, deep-rooted images of the "other", stereotypes of the "enemy", negative perceptions, prejudices and national sentiments of both nations towards each other. It is obvious that, until 1999 Greek-Turkish relations and the perception of societies of each other was limited with politics and foreign policy. The lack of any positive or at least, any progressive interaction, economical, social and cultural exchange has been feeding the problematic continuation of Greek-Turkish relations and importantly, the distance between Turks and Greeks. However, in the year 1999, significantly because of a foreign policy shift in Greek policy towards Turkey by the role of the EU integration and Turkey's eagerness of becoming a full EU member state and also, because of two devastating earthquakes in both Turkey and Greece, Greek-Turkish relations entered a rapprochement period, since then which paved the way for the drastic economical, social and cultural exchange and interaction of societies by the several initiatives of Greek business community, civil society and media, even though the role of media still continues problematic towards Turkey in Greece. In that period, Greece and Turkey started to implement "mutual convergence strategy".

The role of the EU Enlargement process, in where Turkey has been the major candidate, which is also the most problematic one, is also important in shaping Greek public opinion towards Turkey. It is clear that, by the withdrawal of Greek veto towards Turkey's EU accession process in 1999 Helsinki Summit, debates regarding to further Enlargement and Turkish question drastically increased inside the EU and

also in Greece. However, while negative voices have been increasing towards Turkey's European adjustment in the EU member states, oppositely, Greece has been supporting Turkey's EU accession process as a strategic shift in her foreign policy. It was the recognition of a neighbouring Turkey, which is more democratic, economically, politically and socially more developed, less problematic in her domestic affairs, would be more beneficial and less dangerous for Greece. However, still the change in Greek public perception of Turkey and Turkey's EU accession has been limited and fragile especially, because of distinct historical perceptions, beliefs and stereotypes, national sentiments towards Turkey.

The role of domestic actors/stakeholders in the EU member states in shaping public opinion towards EU Enlargement process is becoming highly important today. In that regards, the role of Greek stakeholders in shaping Greek public opinion towards Turkey's European adjustment and Greek-Turkish rapprochement is crucial. Greek business community, especially after 2005, have started to have significant co-operations and relations with their Turkish encounters that proved the importance of economical ties to develop political and social ones. Acquisition of major banks of Turkey by Greek banks, several co-operations in the third countries by Greek and Turkish companies together, significant increase in trade and travel from Greece to Turkey are just some of the examples of this economic interaction. Additionally, in the last decade, Greek civil society have started to step towards their Turkish encounters to co-operate and organize several events, seminars, conferences, to know and listen each other, which is also a significant prove of the Europeanization of Greek civil society. Importantly, although Greek media has always preferred to continue old, negative tone of speech towards Turkey and which has been one of the

most effective tools in shaping public opinion, after 1999 earthquakes even the tone of Greek media has softened towards Turkey for the first time.

In sum, it is obvious that, in addition to strategic political changes in Greece towards Turkey and Turkey's European adjustment since 1999, there is also distinctive change in Greek public opinion towards Turkey first of all, by the impact of politics, but especially by the role of Greek civil society, media and business community, which have increased their interactions with their Turkish encounters since 1999 dramatically because of increased opportunities and interests by Turkey's EU orientation. However, it is also important to note that even though the existence of distinctive positive changes towards Turkey's European adjustment by the impact of low politics agreements, in some sense Greek public opinion continues to stay cautious and sceptical towards Turkey because of deep-rooted political and historical traditions, continuing security and Europeanization dilemma regarding to Turkey and because of existing scepticism towards Turkey's ability and willingness in meeting all necessary criteria for full membership to the EU. It is also needed to be kept in mind that any failure in the EU-Turkish relations, would also led negative developments in Greek-Turkish relations, even though the existence of any positive interaction between the two societies. Therefore, in addition of Turkey's ability to meet the EU requirements and steps towards the solution of disputes with Greece, the support of both Greek politics and public opinion towards Turkey's European adjustment is also crucial to effect the EU-Turkish relations and also to continue this positive spirit in Greek-Turkish relations.

TABLES

Table 1: Number of Greek firms established in Turkey and FDI inflows from Greece to Turkey, 2002–2007 (US$ million)[103].

[103] Tsarouhas (2009), p. 47.

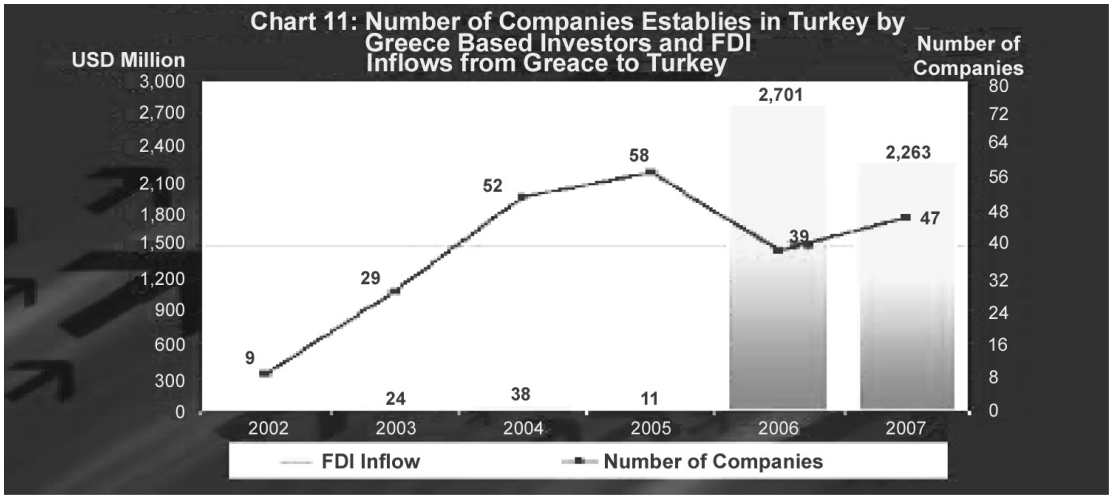

Table 2: FDI in Turkey, 2002–2007 (US$ million)[104].

Rank	Sector	Capital	%
1	Netherlands	11,824	24.6
2	USA	5232	10.9
3	Greece	5127	10.7
4	Belgium	4924	10.3
5	UAE	3194	6.6
6	France	3039	6.3
7	Germany	2053	4.3
8	UK	1756	3.7
9	Russia	1720	3.6
10	Austria	1487	3.1
	Other	7675	16.0
	Total	**48,031**	**100.0**

APPENDIX

[104] Tsarouhas (2009), p. 48.

Transcript of the interview with Umut Özkırımlı who is currently Associate Professor of politics and the Director of the Centre for Turkish-Greek Studies at Istanbul Bilgi University.

Question 1: To what extend Greece is reliable in its positive approach towards Turkey's EU adjustment since 1999? What is the main reason of this significant foreign policy shift of Greece?

Umut Özkırımlı:

Let me first say that I do not find the use of the term 'reliable' appropriate in this context. The foreign policy of a country shifts when the perceived 'national interest' shifts, and this was the case in Greek-Turkish relations in the 1990s. Greece (Greek foreign policy makers) realized that a Turkey within EU is less dangerous for Greece's interests than a Turkey without. This was in a way a 'rational' shift prompted by changing national interest perceptions. To the extent that the same perception prevails, Greece will not change its policy vis-àvis Turkey.

Question 2: Can it be said that these positive developments over the last decade in bilateral relations bring the end of old perceptions of Turkey as an 'enemy', 'threat' by Greek politics and public?

Umut Özkırımlı:

No, they have not. The perception of Turkey as the 'other' or 'the' enemy is historically rooted, and will not change overnight. The positive developments of the last decade are still important however as they can be considered as the first step

towards the uprooting of deep-seated prejudices and the gradual emergence of a more positive image of Turkey.

Question 3: How it is explained the reason of increasing support to Turkey's integration to the EU since 1999 in Greece, while in many EU countries voices against Turkey raise up at the same time?

Umut Özkırımlı:

The answer to this question is pretty straightforward. There was always resistance to Turkey's membership in countries like Austria, Germany and France. It is just that they need not voice their concerns as long as Greece objected to Turkey's membership. Once Greece retrated its threat of veto, voices against Turkey's accession started to be heard. In that sense, there is a direct link between Greece's retraction of the veto and the increase in anti-Turkish sentiments.

Question 4: What are the main concerns of Greek public towards Turkey's membership to the EU? How Greeks perceive Turkey's European adjustment?

Umut Özkırımlı:

Greece is not unique in that respect. Those who are opposed to Turkey's accession argue that Turkey is not 'European', not in a geographical sense but culturally and politically. They usually point to the important role the army plays in Turkish politics and the problems this creates in bilateral relations, in the attitudes towards the minorities, etc. They also share the much more widespread concern about Islam and the implications of having a large Islamic country in the European Union.

Question 5: Who are the main actors, stakeholders that are important and effective in Greek public opinion towards Turkey? How influential are these actors?

Umut Özkırımlı:

I would say that the main actors are the politicians and the Church. The latter creates more problems than the former, first, because politicians generally follow public opinion rather than guide it, and second, they are much more pragmatic than the Church. The Church does not feel the pressures of day-to-day politics; its prejudices against Turkey are much more entrenched (historically and culturally) than those of politicians. Luckily, the Church's role in the political life of Greece is not as important as in the past.

Question 6: When it is looked at economic relations between Greece and Turkey since 1999, what are the main developments? What is the general impact of them in Greek public opinion towards Turkey and Turkey's European adjustment?

Umut Özkırımlı:

Bilateral economic relations between Greece and Turkey have improved drastically since the onset of rapprochement. Greek banks are the major stakeholders in many Turkish banks today and more and more Greek companies invest in Turkey every single day. This had a positive impact on tourism and cultural exchanges as well. I guess the combined effect of this is very positive on Turkish-Greek relations. Prejudices mostly stem from ignorance. With more and more Greeks coming to Turkey to work, to study, etc. (and vice versa), the two peoples have started getting to know each other; this has in turn decreased mutual fears and suspicions.

Question 7: Are increasing economic relations and dependence enough and effective to change the perception of Turkey in Greek public opinion?

Umut Özkırımlı:

See above

Question 8: What do you think about the role and impact of media in Greece, in changing perceptions towards Turkey, since 1999? Can we say that Greek media is objective towards Turkey? Is this possible?

Umut Özkırımlı:

I guess this is still the most problematic area of Turkish-Greek relations. The media in the past have brought both countries to the brink of war (remember the Imia/Kardak crisis of 1996). Things have not much changed since then, though the role of media in stirring public opinion is not as great as in the past. Neither the Greek nor the Turkish media are objective against each other and there are no indications that this will change in the near future.

Question 9: What are your opinions about the role and impact of civil society, NGOs and mass culture industry in Greece, in changing perceptions towards Turkey, since 1999?

Umut Özkırımlı:

I do not know much about civil society in Greece.

Question 10: Can it be said that, even though the existence of positive developments in Greek public opinion towards Turkey's European adjustment since 1999, this is still limited and fragile in Greek society? Why?

Umut Özkırımlı:

It is limited and fragile but this is normal! We cannot get rid of deep-rooted prejudices and animosities overnight. What has been achieved at the symbolic level

may not have been reflected into politics yet but this does not mean that the symbolic is not important. On the contrary, I believe most changes start at the symbolic level. Do not forget that nobody has foreseen the end of the Cold War at the beginning of the 1980s. In a matter of years, we started to live in a whole new world. Who can say that the same will not happen in Turkish-Greek relations, say ten years from now?

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