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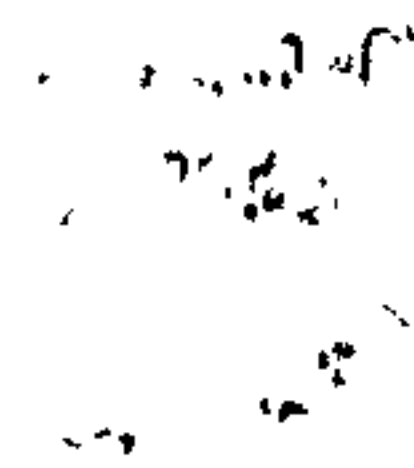
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**International Crisis and Peace Processes as
Autopoietic Systems in World Society: Examples
from Greek-Turkish Relations**

by

Eugenia Vathakou



**Submitted to the University of Kent at Canterbury for the Degree of Doctor of
Philosophy
March 2003**

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Stefan Rossbach, for introducing me to and guiding me in the imaginative and creative ‘world’ of Niklas Luhmann's theory and for his attentive supervision. I am especially indebted to Frango Karaoglan, George Spanos, and Dr. Keith Webb for reading drafts of the chapters of the thesis and making valuable comments. I would like to thank Dr. Gülnur Aybet in particular, for reading the whole thesis and the valuable comments that she made. My thanks are also due to all those people from both sides of the Aegean who made time to discuss with me the ‘paradoxes’ of Greek-Turkish crises and peace processes and also helped my research in a variety of other ways such as suggesting material that I should look at and facilitating my access to people and institutions.

It is gratefully acknowledged that this project would not have been realized without the scholarship I was granted from the Greek State Scholarships Foundation.

ABSTRACT

The subject of this thesis is the emergence and development of crisis and peace processes in modern society. It examines two Greek-Turkish crises and several peace processes undertaken in their aftermath as well as what is described here as a system of co-operation that emerged after a devastating earthquake in Turkey. Mainstream theory of crisis and peace processes has adopted an instrumental approach to crisis and peace processes conceptualizing them as the means to achieve specific aims. Nevertheless, this approach recognizes the difficulty it has to integrate different levels of analysis and explain the dynamics of the complexity involved in these phenomena.

This thesis employs Niklas Luhmann's theory of social autopoiesis as an analytical tool in the research and analysis of crisis and peace processes. Luhmann's theory is a radical constructivist approach, which focuses on multiple causality, complexity and contingency. The main argument of the thesis is that in modern society, which is functionally, not hierarchically, differentiated, crisis and peace processes are autopoietic that is self-reproduced social systems which are constituted through communication. The findings of this thesis demonstrate that crisis and peace processes involve not only segments of the society like leaders and elites but they are selections made by the whole of modern society in the course of its blind evolution which is based on the variation and selection of communication. Society consists of autonomous but interconnected function systems like politics, media, the military and civil society organizations, which operate guided by already established social structures such as expectations, values, social practices, institutions, roles and persons. Social systems increase complexity and contingency in society through their normal operations. Given the appropriate conditioning, increased complexity can enforce the emergence of crisis or peace processes as combined selectivity towards the direction of conflict or co-operation.

This thesis demonstrates that in a self-organizing society crisis and peace processes cannot be reduced to a particular reason or rationale like the protection of national interests or the desire for peace. Their dynamics depend on the connectivity and selectivity of communication about crisis/conflict and peace/co-operation. Thus, these processes are neither necessary nor impossible; they are contingent.

This thesis demonstrates that Luhmann's theory provides us with sophisticated tools to explore the processes and the mechanisms involved in the emergence and development of crisis and peace processes. The project is based on fieldwork conducted from 1999 to 2002 in both Turkey and Greece and which involved the collection of primary source material gathered from more than 80 interviews with Greek and Turkish politicians, diplomats, journalists, academics, civil society representatives and military officers. It also covers an extensive range of theoretical and empirical secondary source literature.

INTERNATIONAL CRISIS AND PEACE PROCESSES AS AUTOPOIETIC SYSTEMS IN WORLD SOCIETY: EXAMPLES FROM GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS

By

Eugenia Vathakou

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CHAPTER I

THE LIMITS OF CRISIS AND PEACE PROCESSES THEORY: THE DYNAMICS OF COMPLEXITY

Crises can arise and escalate suddenly in interstate relations and their dynamics can unfold quickly within or outside a protracted conflict. They can be recurring in the relations between two states and they can spread in a crazy-quilt fashion, and culminate in violence or 'wind down'. The road to peace on the other hand can be short and abrupt with unexpected turnings or it can be long and drag on for years with sticking points. Often crisis and peace processes alternate in the relations between two states in conflict.

The crying need to deal with international conflict through peaceful means - especially during the nuclear era - and the potential of a crisis to lead to violence explains the increased interest in the research and analysis of these phenomena. More often than not, crisis and peace processes are examined separately. In this thesis, however, it is argued that by studying them in parallel we will be able to draw some conclusions about common traits in their emergence and development that will help us to improve our understanding of their nature.

The first chapter, in particular, is divided into four main sections. The first two sections present a review of the theory of crisis and peace processes seeking to highlight the uses and limits of existing approaches. Furthermore, they define the problem that various theories of crisis and peace processes have to deal with, in relation to the dynamics of complexity of modern society. It is demonstrated that there are various theoretical approaches, which have explored certain aspects of the emergence and development of crisis and peace processes. Nevertheless, these sections demonstrate that it is impossible to create a comprehensive framework by amalgamating these different approaches. The third section concerns the analytical tools Greek and Turkish academics employ in order to explain the Greek-Turkish crises and peace processes. The fourth section revisits crisis and peace processes theories in general to discuss their 'blind spots' that is problems in their method of research which, however, they cannot 'see' and consequently they cannot discuss the paradoxes their application generates. This discussion concludes by putting forth two correctives: First, crisis and peace processes involve society as a whole and thus their theories should not be confined in the description of crisis or peace processes as something out of society. Second, theories themselves should be considered an object

among the objects of their analysis because they too, make part of the dynamics of the complexity of modern society.

This discussion will prepare the ground for the presentation of Luhmann's theory of social autopoiesis, which follows in the second chapter.

1. Theories of Crisis Processes

The standard definition of international crisis describes it as a situation, which includes three perceptions of the decision-makers of the states involved in the crisis: the perception of a threat to important interests, the perception of time pressure and the perception of high risk of war.¹ Elements that some scholars add to this definition are the increase of stress, which impairs the quality of decision making, and - especially in systemic approaches - the increase of interactions.

In what follows, the main theoretical approaches to crisis are outlined. It is demonstrated that each of them places the emphasis on different elements of this definition. Rational approaches see crisis as an instrument in a bargaining process where one state is looking to extract some advantage and the other perceives this as a threat and a challenge which it resists, even with the means of war. Psychological approaches look at how factors like stress and tension may affect crisis decision-making. Cognitive approaches to crisis explore the cognitive processes involved in the formation of the above three perceptions. Organizational models describe the way institutionalised patterns of behaviour incorporated in organizational practices may determine crisis decision-making. Systemic approaches explore parameters related to the broader environment, the international system, within which a crisis escalates. Finally, it is shown that the dynamics of a crisis emerge through the interaction among all these parameters.

1.1. Bargaining Approaches to Crisis Processes

Crises have been conceptualised as bargaining processes where one side tries to extract an advantage by the skilful use of techniques of coercion while the other resists it. It is considered to be one of the viable influential tactics that states have at their disposal. This approach is based on the conceptualisation of interstate relations as a struggle for power, a zero-sum game, with one loser and one winner. It further

assumes that “conflict is ubiquitous due either to the drive to dominate or the security dilemma of an anarchical society”.² This approach is also known as the rational actor model, because the unit of analysis here is states/governments, which are taken to be unitary rational actors who pursue the maximisation of profits and the minimisation of costs. The most important assumptions of this perspective are encapsulated in strategic theories of deterrence.

The basic idea of deterrence theories is that a status quo state should display its determination and capability against a potential aggressor.³ The latter will attempt to test the first's resolve. So, “[I]f the status quo powers retreat, they will not only lose the specific value at stake but, more important in the long run, will encourage the aggressor to press harder”.⁴ Snyder and Diesing argue that bargaining power becomes “a function of perceived comparative resolve”.⁵

Strategists like Schelling, define escalation as a form of brinkmanship that is “the deliberate creation of a recognisable risk of war, a risk that one does not completely control... It means harassing and intimidating an adversary by exposing him to a shared risk, or deterring him by showing that if he makes a contrary move he may disturb us so that we slip over the brink whether we want to or not, carrying him with us”.⁶ Kahn argues that crisis bargaining is “a competition in risk taking”.⁷ Bueno de Mesquita offers a sophisticated and more recent version of the rational model. Based on the assumption that decision-makers are rational, and therefore are expected to be utility maximising actors, he argues that escalation is the function of decision-makers' expected utility calculations.⁸

¹ Hermann, Charles, *International Crises: Insights from Behavioral Research*, New York: Free Press, London: Collier Macmillan, 1972, p.48.

² Groom, A.J.R, “Approaches to Conflict and Co-operation in International Relations: Lessons from Theory for Practice”, see website, <http://www.ukc.ac.uk/politics/publications/journals/kentpapers/groom1.html>

For the understanding of interstate relations from a strategist point of view see Schelling, Thomas, *The Strategy of Conflict*, New York: O.U.P., 1963, p.3.

³ Williams, Phil, "Crisis Management", Baylis, John, Booth, Ken, Garnett, John & Williams Phil, *Contemporary Strategy: Theories and Concepts*, New York; London: Holmes & Meier, 1987, pp.241-242.

⁴ Jervis, Robert, *Perceptions and Misperceptions in International Politics*, Princeton N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1976, p.58.

⁵ Snyder, Glenn H. & Diesing, Paul, *Conflict Among Nations: Bargaining, Decision Making and System Structure in International Crises*, Princeton University Press, 1977, p.190.

⁶ Schelling, Thomas, *The Strategy of Conflict*, p.200.

⁷ Kahn, Herman, 1965, *On Escalation: Metaphors and Scenarios*, New York; London: Praeger, 1965 p.16.

⁸ Mesquita, Bueno de, "An expected Utility Explanation of Conflict Escalation: A Preliminary Analysis" in Zinnes, Dina, (ed.), *Conflict Processes and the Breakdown of International System*,

Snyder and Diesing applied strategic formal models of bargaining (the 'Security Dilemma' and the 'Chicken Game') to study crisis decision-making. They ranked the values of the participants according to a very simple scheme, leaving out the details so as to illuminate the basic structure of a crisis created by the participants' ordinal ranking of values: win, lose, compromise, breakdown (expected costs). Nevertheless, their conclusion is that in most crises, at least one of the parties had not correctly guessed the opponent's value rankings. For example, in 1905, Germany assumed that Britain would not support France and further assumed that France would be 'Chicken'. When England, however, "did join the fray, France turned out to be Prisoner's Dilemma. If they had not mis-predicted British behaviour, the Germans would not have challenged".⁹

This is only one out of many studies which demonstrate that the rational actor model employed as a guide of policy-making can create paradoxes like self-fulfilling prophecies.¹⁰ This explains the many criticisms against the use of this approach as a framework of research and analysis. Indeed, the rational actor model has been characterised as descriptive and intuitive rather than analytical and explanatory because it fails to consider the complicated ways various factors and processes interact in the context of a crisis. Yet, despite the progress that might have been made in pointing to deficiencies in this perspective, admittedly, it seems that this is the most widespread approach among politicians, diplomats and journalists.¹¹ Therefore, from the point of view of research scholars who attempt to solve the puzzles of crisis should examine this parameter too - what were the assumptions leaders made during a crisis. That does not mean that decision-makers do not try to think rationally in matters of foreign policy and they do not calculate the pros and cons of their decisions. However, a great part of the literature raises two serious objections. First, it challenges the view that conflict can be the best or the only way for the protection and promotion of the interests of a state. Second, accumulated empirical evidence

University of Denver, 1983. See also Bueno de Mesquita, *The War Trap*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981.

⁹ Snyder, Glenn H. & Diesing, Paul, *Conflict Among Nations: Bargaining, Decision Making and System Structure in International Crises*, Princeton University Press, 1977, p.218.

¹⁰ Jervis, Robert, *Perceptions and Misperceptions in International Politics*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976, pp.76-84. See also Vasquez, John A., *The Power of Power Politics*, Cambridge University Press, 1998, pp.218-219,

¹¹ Allison, Graham & Zelikow, Philip, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, New York; Harlow: Longman, 1999, p.13 and Frei, Daniel, (ed.), *Managing International Crises*, Sage Publications, 1982, p.38.

emphasises that there are several constraints upon leaders' capacity to make rational decisions - e.g. limitations related to the quantity and quality of information gathered by various state organizations, domestic contingencies, their personal interests, etc. These constraints are the subject of the theories that will be examined below.

1.2. Psychological and Cognitive Approaches to Crisis Processes

While strategists seem to view crises as a rational and selective calculation, other scholars argue that crisis decision-making is not similar to decision-making in routine policy making. Several authors discuss the implications of the increase of tension and the resultant parameter of stress on the ability of leaders to decide during the crisis. Nicholson, in his study on rationality and in particular, when discussing crisis, maintains that "the psychological pressures under which decision makers operate, mean that there are strong tendencies for the decision making to move further and further away from any principles of rationality, however weak, and result in decisions which are based on emotion and prejudice".¹² Wilkenfeld, Hopple Rosa and Andriole, in their study of international crises found that the impact of psychological factors increases in crises situations as compared to routine situations.¹³ Holsti in his study on the 1914 crisis examined the constraints imposed by time in connection to stress when the stakes are high.¹⁴ Janis discussed the effects of stress in connection to the 'groupthink' phenomenon and he described dysfunctional performances of individuals in groups.¹⁵ These studies try to link the individual and the broader decision making process drawing upon knowledge from the field of psychology.

Robert Jervis provides us with another perspective to examine crisis decision-making, which emphasises the cognitive processes involved therein. His seminal study on misperceptions in international politics, breaks down the simplified assumption of rational cost/benefit calculations and challenges also the 'over-psychologised' theories of decision-making making the point that we do not need to delve "too deeply into individuals' psyches" in order to understand and explain leaders' attitudes.¹⁶ He

¹² Nicholson, Michael, *Rationality and the Analysis of International Conflict*, Cambridge University Press, 1992, p.135.

¹³ Wilkenfeld, Jonathan, Hopple, Gerald W., Rossa, Paul J. & Andriole, Stephen J., *Foreign Policy Behavior: The Interstate Behavior Analysis Model*, Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1980.

¹⁴ Holsti, Ole R., "The 1914 Case", *American Political Science Review*, 59, 1965, p.365. See also Holsti, Ole R., in Tetlock et al., (eds.), *Crisis Decision-Making in Behavior Society and Nuclear War*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.

¹⁵ Janis, Irving L., *Stress, Attitudes and Decisions*, New York, Praeger, 1982.

¹⁶ Jervis, Robert, *Perceptions and Misperceptions in International Politics*, p. 3.

argues that part of the immediate causes of leaders' behaviour is related to the perceptions leaders hold about their state and the world. To understand and explain crucial decisions, he says, we must explore the cognitive processes involved. His research and analysis demonstrates that decisions that escalate a crisis and lead to war often emerge through misperceptions.¹⁷

Jervis found that in times of crises leaders see *what they expect to see* because they usually avoid information contradictory to the image they have already acquired about the other side (selective perception) or diminish its importance and rely upon the knowledge they already have (selective recall).¹⁸ This perspective satisfies the human need to keep what one knows, believes and considers consistent. Irrational consistency is another cognitive process that can have an effect on crisis decision-making. It means that people recall many reasons to support their view although there is not necessarily a link among the different reasons.¹⁹

Furthermore, Jervis argues that one of the perceptions leaders frequently follow is the power politics practices encapsulated in deterrence theories. His research reveals that leaders, who use deterrence theories as a guide of action, may consider a first strike and escalate a crisis by setting off spirals of fear on the other side.²⁰ Deterrence policies may set in motion arms races, which can get out of hand, driven by their own dynamics. Leng and Wheeler's more recent research corroborates the view that bullying strategies tend to escalate disputes to war while reciprocating tactics can be the means to avoid war.²¹

Similar observations appear in many empirical studies on a number of crises. Ole Holsti, Robert North and Richard Brody in their study of the crisis of 1914²² and Lebow in his study of 26 interstate crises, emphasise that cognitive closure can be a source of misperception, which can impair rational decision-making.²³

Davis and Wolf developed a cognitive process model of decision-making where they discuss the role of cognitive processes in crisis de-escalation.

¹⁷ Jervis, Robert, "Hypotheses on Misperception", *World Politics*. 20 (April 1968), 454-479.

¹⁸ Jervis, Robert, *Perceptions and Misperceptions in International Politics*, p.145.

¹⁹ *ibid.*, p.128.

²⁰ *ibid.*, pp.58-62.

²¹ Leng, Russel J. & Wheeler, H.G. "Influence Strategies, Success and War", *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol.23, 4, 1979, pp.655-684.

²² Holsti, Ole R., North, Robert & Brody, Richard, "Perception and Action in the 1914 Crisis", in Vasquez, John A., *Classics of International Relations*, N.J. Prentice Hall, 1990, p.195.

²³ Lebow, Richard N., *Between Peace and War: The Nature of International Crisis*, Baltimore; London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981, pp.10-12.

[C]ognitive processes contribute to.... 'the fog of termination'.. Negative feelings about opponents...can result in dangerous misperceptions of opponent actions...Other common cognitive processes... can also seriously impede efforts to terminate... [and] [some] 'non-rational' cognitive processes... could cancel each other and others might favour successful termination.²⁴

These considerations have stimulated further research and analysis of aspects of the cognitive processes involved in crisis decision-making. One important parameter in cognitive processes is communication. Communication is often equated with information. Brecher's concept of communication in crisis is defined for example as "the transmission of data about the operational environment by mass media, internal bureaucratic reports, face to face contact etc".²⁵ The gathering and processing of information is another focus of crisis research.

Karl Deutsch examined crisis decision as an information processing problem, developing and applying two models: the channel approach and the information approach.²⁶ In the first approach, he pointed to practical difficulties that emerge during a crisis with increasing needs for information. Examining the relationship between increased information and the quality of decisions during a crisis, he found the following typical responses to an overload of information: delays in decision making, skipping items more or less randomly, error frequency, putting messages together according to pre-existing stereotypes, the assignment of priorities and inadequate feedback control.²⁷ The memory approach complements the examination of information processing from a hermeneutic perspective focusing on both the cognitive and psychological processes involved. Deutsch's memory approach considered the language of the message, the source, the context, the intentions of the sender, the content and the effects of the message on the recipient such as e.g pleasant/unpleasant, ethical and the effects upon the self-image of the recipient. His

²⁴ Davis, Paul K. & Wolf, Barry, "Behavioural Factors in Nuclear Crisis De-escalation", in Joseph E. Nation (ed.), *The De-escalation of Nuclear Crises*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992, p.100.

²⁵ Brecher, Michael, *Decisions in Israel's Foreign Policy*, London, Oxford University Press and New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1974, p.6. Meisel John writes "[C]ommunications, the transmission of information by speech, signals, writing or pictures, are affected by crises and other events and circumstances, and they in turn influence the way in which crises evolve". Meizel, John, "Communications and Crisis", in Frei, Daniel, (ed.), *Managing International Crises*, Sage Publications, 1982, p.61.

²⁶ Deutsch, Karl W., "Crisis Decision Making - The Information Approach", in Frei, Daniel, (ed.), *Managing International Crises*, Sage Publications, 1982, p.15-29. Karl Deutsch was the first to give an account of the role of information in policy making in general. Deutsch, Karl W., *The Nerves of Government: Models of Political Communication and Control*, New York: Free Press, 1966

²⁷ Deutsch, Karl W., "Crisis Decision making-The Information Approach", pp.21-22.

conclusion is that the larger and more pressing the problems of the political system and the smaller its capacities for information search and processing, the more inferior its crisis decisions will be in comparison to its needs for adaptation and survival.²⁸

The problem of incomplete information and ambiguity of signals was discussed by Coral Bell too. Bell using the examples of the Cuban crisis and the Korean war, argues that the intentional or unintentional ambiguity of signals transmitted during a crisis may lead both to creative or disastrous results.²⁹

To sum up this section, theories focusing on cognitive processes have made an important contribution to our understanding of crisis decision-making. This perspective deconstructs the rational actor model, which conceptualises decisions as natural and necessary steps resulting from linear cause-effect calculations. Nevertheless, although they do provide us with valuable insights to the key points of crises, they cannot account for the dynamics of societal and systemic variables. Cognitive and psychological approaches to crises focus on decision-makers and the advisory group involved in the decision-making process. This viewpoint assumes a hierarchical structure of society where governments have full control of the developments in the territorial borders of their state. Organizational approaches to international crises seriously challenge this assumption and draw our attention to processes of selection and interpretation of information within the framework of bureaucratic organizations.

1.3. Organizational Approaches to Crisis Processes

Graham Allison's study of the Cuban Missile Crisis, from an organizational perspective, made an important contribution not only to crisis theorising but also to foreign policy analysis in general.³⁰ Allison looked at the development of the Cuban crisis as the result of routine practices and established rules of operations of the organizations involved in decision-making. The unit of analysis in the organizational model is governmental action as organizational output. Allison cogently argued that the decision-making process demands the involvement of a number of organizations, which provide information. This information is often the trigger for particular

²⁸ *ibid.*, p.24.

²⁹ Bell, Coral, *The Conventions of Crisis: A Study in Diplomatic Management*, London: Oxford University Press for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1971, pp.74-75.

³⁰ Allison, Graham & Zelikow, Philip, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, New York; Harlow: Longman, 1999.

decisions or the means for the implementation of these decisions. He makes then the point that “each of the organizations frames the problem at hand according to its own objectives, special capacities, and culture”, and also according to the already established standard operating procedures. Furthermore, different organizations involved in decision making are often in a different hierarchy, if not in conflict and they pursue different objectives. For the Cuban crisis, in particular, Allison found that “organizational routines defined the options and also implemented the decisions.”³¹ This model requires the researcher to uncover the routines, the particular goals and the distinct cultures of the organizations.

This perspective is close to the cognitive perspective in the sense that it focuses on cognitive processes, but it places the emphasis on the institutionalisation of the perceptions in organizational structures.

Under the heading of organizational approaches to crisis, one can also place empirical studies of crises, which discuss the role of news media. Case studies demonstrate that pre-established routines of medias' operation as regards gathering, constructing and disseminating news and their working relationship with politicians, can be crucial factors in a crisis situation. Studies, which started appearing at the turn of the 1970s, based on empirical observation explore the ways media organizations may instigate and exacerbate an international crisis.³² Fen Osler Hampson's study suggests that in June 1979 it was the American news media and mainly the television, which led to one more American-Soviet crisis. This crisis, in fact, also ended the SALT II discussions.³³ According to Hampson, the crisis broke out when Senator Frank Church, for reasons of personal political interest, revealed on TV the existence of a Soviet unit in Cuba.³⁴ Stan Taylor and Theodore Ralston agree with Fen Osler Hampson and they point to another similar incident that occurred in 1978, when the Soviet Union shipped MIG-23 fighter interceptors to Cuba. At that time, the Carter administration had undertaken the task of resolving the potential crisis through the

³¹ *ibid.*, p.386.

³² Arno, A. & Dissanayake, W., *The News Media in National and International Conflict*, London; Boulder: Westview Press, 1984. See also Scanlon, Joseph T., Lukko, Rudy & Morton, Gerald, “Media Coverage of Crises: Better than Reported, Worse than Necessary”, *Journalism Quarterly*, 1978, Vol.55, pp. 68-72.

³³ Hampson, Fen, Osler, “The Divided Decision Maker: American Domestic Politics and the Cuban Crises”, in Kegley, Charles W. & Wittkopf Eugene R., *The Domestic Sources of American Foreign Policy-Insights and Evidence*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988, p.244.

³⁴ *ibid.*, pp.242-243.

diplomatic path. “Yet”, Taylor and Ralston conclude, “leaks to Washington journalists nearly ruined the crisis containment efforts”.³⁵

This analysis attempts to explore the domestic aspects of international crisis by connecting public opinion, news media and different interests groups. Another extensive literature drawing mainly from communication theories looks at the role of news media in international crisis from the point of view of medias' routines and their particular attraction to conflict and crisis as ‘news’.³⁶ Despite these attempts at theorizing and conceptualisation the multiple links between news media, decision-making process and public opinion have not been described within a comprehensive framework of analysis.

The discussion of the parameter of time in the context of a crisis situation has so far been placed in the context of the discussion of psychological aspects of crisis. Nevertheless, there is an important aspect that brings it closer to organizational theory. As many scholars conclude, although the First World War was a war that nobody wanted “the timetables for mobilisation structured decision-making in such a manner as to preclude delays necessary for negotiations and possible mediation.”³⁷

This observation directs attention to the social construction of time within the operation of institutions, which also might depend on technological advances. If placed in the context of organizational theory, the parameter of time acquires a different dimension. It draws attention to the autonomy of organizational structures and thus, the autonomy of the emergence of crisis.

Studies on crises from the organizational perspective explore complexity and contingency, pointing to ways rigid organizational structures may constrain the rationality of decision-makers, mislead and confuse them. They are close to the cognitive approach as the argument here is that organizations in their operation follow certain paths that they already know and rules they have pre-established. Nevertheless, it seems that there is no comprehensive framework of analysis, which can incorporate decision-making organizations, media organizations and factors like time and technology.

³⁵ Taylor, Stan A. & Ralston, Theodore J., “The Role of Intelligence in Crisis Management”, in George, Alexander L., (ed.), *Avoiding War- Problems of Crisis Management*, Westview Press, 1991, p.398.

³⁶ Ottosen, Rune, “Enemy Images and the Journalistic Process”, *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol.32, No.1, 1995, pp.97-112.

³⁷ Holsti, Kalevi J., “Paths to Peace? Theories of Conflict Resolution and Realities of International Politics”, in Thakur, Ramesh, (ed.), *International Conflict Resolution*, Boulder: Westview, 1988, p.110.

1.4. Systemic Approaches to Crisis Processes

Systemic approaches to crisis, drawing on the literature of systems theory, focus on the broader international environment within which a crisis emerges. The system is perceived as a set of actors, usually nations and international organizations, which interact with one another according to established patterns and designated structures. This strand of literature argues that it examines international crisis through a process or an interaction-structure analysis aiming in that way to illustrate the dynamic aspects of the phenomenon of crisis and changes involved therein.³⁸ It seeks to discern recurring patterns of state behaviour and regularities that indicate the emergence of a crisis.

The phenomenon of crisis in this literature is described as a 'turning point', as a disturbance to the normal run of business conducted between state actors. The focus is on the external behaviour of the parties, represented by their leaders. Inter-unit phenomena, independent variables such as the number of major actors, their interactions, the distribution of power among them, alliances and military technology find their proper place in a systemic analysis.³⁹ Oran Young defines crises through a structure-interaction perspective as "a process of interaction occurring at higher levels of perceived intensity than the ordinary flow of events and characterised by... significant implications for the stability of some system or subsystem".⁴⁰

Power cycle theories and catastrophe theories are examples of systemic approaches to the phenomenon of crises. Power cycle theories attempt to explain world wars as the result of systems in crisis and the explanation is based on structural considerations.⁴¹ The international system is perceived as being in constant change and "transformation occurs not as a discontinuity but as an "evolutionary novelty emerging from the continuum of long-term changes in systemic structure".⁴² Catastrophe theories formulated in mathematical models have also been employed in an attempt to present

³⁸ Brecher, Michael, *Crisis in World Politics: Theory and Reality*, Oxford; New York: Pergamon Press, 1993, p.20.

³⁹ Snyder, Glenn H., "Crisis Bargaining", in Hermann, Charles F., (ed.), *International Crises: Insights from Behavioural Research*, New York: Free Press, 1972, p.220.

⁴⁰ Young, Oran R., *A Systemic Approach to International Politics*, Princeton University Press, 1968, p.15.

⁴¹ Doran, Charles F., *Systems in Crisis, New Imperatives of High Politics, at Century's End*, Cambridge University Press, 1991, p.1.

⁴² *ibid.*, p.3.

a unified description of world wars.⁴³ Hot, Lob and Markus developed a catastrophe theory model postulating as independent variables the unsatisfiable systemic demand, coalition opportunities, violence potential, and relative response time. The dependent variable is the condition of the system on a peace-war continuum.⁴⁴

Most of these attempts started from the aspiration to explain world wars based on the assumption that there are features in the international system that indicate the potential for a crisis. Their focus is basically the behaviour of major powers. Nevertheless, as Brecher and Yehuda argue they are not successful in the integration of “the key concepts - change in interaction, type of structure, degree of disequilibrium and instability”.⁴⁵ Additionally, they mix unit and system-level variables and their efforts to bridge the distance between process and structure ultimately remains unsuccessful.⁴⁶ Finally, this analysis has neglected other parameters, which have been substantiated in decision -making studies as playing a crucial role in crisis escalation.

1.5. The Dynamics of Complexity

Scholars, who have developed and applied the above presented frameworks of analysis, admit that one cannot rely on the tools taken only from one perspective. Allison and Zelikow, in the latest edition of Allison's study on the Cuban crisis, argue that there is no model that can fully describe crises; rather “the models can be complements to each other”.⁴⁷ Thus, scholars agree that crises emerge through the interaction of various factors. What makes a crisis a distinct and dangerous instance in interstate relations is precisely its dynamics emanating from this complexity.

Brecher and Wilkenfeld tried to bridge the gap between the approaches to crises presented above and to deal with complexity in the International Crisis Behaviour Project (ICBP).⁴⁸ They operationalized variables taken from all the above approaches,

⁴³ Holt, Robert T., Job, Brian L. & Markus, Lawrence, "Catastrophe Theory and the Study of War", *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 22, No.2, June 1978, pp.171-208.

⁴⁴ *ibid.*, p.191.

⁴⁵ Brecher, Michael, & Yehuda Ben Hemda, "System and Crisis" in Brecher, Michael & Wilkenfeld, Jonathan, *Crisis, Conflict and Instability*, p.25.

⁴⁶ Brecher, Michael, *Crisis in World Politics: Theory and Reality*, p.21.

⁴⁷ Allison, Graham & Zelikow, Philip, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, p.392.

⁴⁸ Brecher, Michael & Wilkenfeld, Jonathan, *Crisis, Conflict and Stability*, Pergamon Press, 1989. See also Brecher, Michael, *Crisis in World Politics: Theory and Reality*, Oxford; N.York: Pergamon Press, 1993.

in order to compare 278 international and 627 foreign policy crises.⁴⁹ This was a laborious study built upon data gathered through a number of studies, covering crises from 1929 to 1985.

The results produced through this study confirm, in a way, results of all the other studies, illustrating the multiple causality that is involved in crises situations. There are some trends stronger than others e.g. a crisis within the context of a protracted conflict may escalate to war easier than others, but still, this does not offer a prescription of the causes of crisis or definite paths through which a crisis may emerge and escalate.⁵⁰

Brecher and Wilkenfeld conclude that “[T]he process is not linear...an international crisis is a four-phase dynamic process which unfolds through the perceptual interpretation by decision-makers of a salient system, actor, and crisis attributes, followed by coping, choice and behaviour...”⁵¹ Vasquez too argues that the factors that can escalate a crisis to war are not only bargaining tactics, but also issues, the nature of leadership, the domestic political context and factors that affect leaders' perceptions, like “the traditional realist advice that one must show firmness (and resolve) in the struggle for power”⁵² To add that “[I]t is not the dynamics of decision-making that produce war, but a set of foreign policy goals and a sequence of practices which create a political relationship and an atmosphere that is apt to result in war given the right set of triggers”.⁵³ Similarly, Lebow's conclusion of his study of 26 crises is that “[S]uccessful crisis management is therefore a function of cultural organizational and personal behavioural patterns established long before the onset of

⁴⁹ According to this typification, a crisis is defined as foreign when the researcher looks from the point of view of one state to the crisis. International when both countries are seen as part of a system and domestic when the researcher looks to a country involved in a crisis focusing on this country, Brecher, Michael, and Wilkenfeld, Jonathan, *Crisis, conflict ...*, p.6.

⁵⁰ The recognition of complexity is reflected on the mission assigned to a number of institutions like NGOs, think-tanks and research institutes for crisis prevention that have appeared over the last years. Factors such as political and economic reasons, existing protracted conflicts, the social structures and the culture of a country are the focus of analytical reports written by experts of these organizations. The International Crisis Group, the Crisis Prevention and Peace Forum and the Center for International Peace Operations are only a few of the many organizations that seek a role in crisis prevention. For statements on their mission and their philosophy see, The International Crisis Group (ICG), <http://www.intl-crisis-group.org> , Conflict Prevention and Peace Forum <http://www.ssrc.org/programs/conflict> , Center for International Peace Operations, http://www.zif-berlin.org/index_en.asp. See also UNDP, <http://www.undp.org/erd/smallarms/undp.htm>

⁵¹ Brecher, Michael & Wilkenfeld, Jonathan, *Crisis, Conflict and Stability*, Pergamon Press, 1989, p.226.

⁵² John, Vasquez, *The War Puzzle*, p.194.

⁵³ *ibid.*, p.195.

any crisis. These patterns and the expectations they create largely determine the performance of a system in crisis”.⁵⁴

We could also add here another point made by Allison and Zelikow. Their analysis of the Cuban crisis demonstrated that many "ifs" could have drawn the two powers to disaster but “[I]n several instances both Americans and Soviets were just plain lucky.”⁵⁵ This latter observation underlines the ‘probabilistic’ that is the contingent nature of the processes involved in crisis decision-making.⁵⁶

More recent analyses have sought to explore the complexity involved in international crisis by increasing the level of abstraction. Rosenau’s turbulence model and its subsequent elaboration by Rosenau and Durfee aims to deal precisely with the dynamics of crisis. This approach is based on abstract concepts taken from organization theories like turbulence and bifurcation.⁵⁷ Here crises emerge out of “complex streams of action - that may not have clear-cut terminations”.⁵⁸ The units of analysis are “specifiable conditions” rather than “specifiable decisions”. Furthermore, decisions are seen as “springing from prior societal or transnational processes and not necessarily bringing crises to climatic endings”.⁵⁹ This perspective - the post-internationalist perspective, as its authors call it - points to multiple rather than linear causality, where various actors may interfere leading to sudden and uncontrollable developments.

Similarly, Vivienne Jabri's study on violence also increases the level of abstraction, qualifying the outbreaking of violence as an existing choice in society, constituted through social discourses and social practices. As a matter of fact, she addresses the point Vasquez made about war being a social institution. She utilises Giddens's structuration theory in her attempt to bridge the gap between agency and structure.⁶⁰ Nevertheless, it is difficult to apply her analysis to empirical research on crises, as it is not designed to explore processes of crisis constitution that may or may not lead to violence.

⁵⁴ Lebow, Richard, Ned, *Between Peace and War*, p.335.

⁵⁵ *ibid.*, p.396.

⁵⁶ Jervis, Robert, *Perceptions and Misperceptions....*, p.31.

⁵⁷ Rosenau, James N., *Turbulence in World Politics, A Theory of Change and Continuity*, Princeton University Press, 1990 and Rosenau, James, N. & Durfee, Mary, *Thinking Theory Thoroughly*, Westview Press, 2000.

⁵⁸ *ibid.*, p.139.

⁵⁹ *ibid.*, p.139.

⁶⁰ Jabri, Vivienne, *Discourses on Violence: Conflict Analysis Reconsidered*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995, p.3.

So, we might have different pieces of the crisis puzzle but we do not know how to bring them together. What is the constitutive process of crisis? Although writers recognise complexity they can only describe, not explain the processes involved in crisis escalation and de-escalation. The 'spiral' metaphor, the discussion of the spill-over effects and the turbulence model are descriptive schemes which do not explore the mechanisms that enable the interconnection of various factors and the dynamics of crisis. They cannot explain the timing of the escalation of a conflict or the reason for which the step from non-war to war is taken at a specific time.

2. Theories of Peace Processes

The Charter of the United Nations, established in 1945, provided in article 33 that the means of peaceful conflict resolution are "negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means" through the choice of the parties.⁶¹ Negotiation and mediation are the techniques most frequently employed by the parties in a conflict and third parties that intervene in order to help them to cope with the conflict. Their focus is on face-to-face interaction, while arbitration and judicial settlement involve a third party - i.e. the International Court of The Hague - appointed by the parties in the conflict to resolve their dispute.

Over the last half century, since the establishment of the UN Charter, there has been a great deal of research on and analysis of the praxis of coping with conflicts, seeking ways to improve existing and develop new means to pave the way towards peace.⁶² New approaches to negotiation and mediation have emerged and other totally new processes have been institutionalised. Today, there are two more conceptualisations of peace processes, separate from the bargaining process involved in negotiation and mediation and the legal processes of the UN Charter. First, peace processes are conceptualised as Problem Solving processes and this approach is mainly reflected in the Problem Solving Conflict Resolution Workshop (PSW). Second, peace processes

⁶¹ See Charter of the UN, article 33.

⁶² Groom, A.J.R., "Old Ways New Insights: Conflict Resolution in International Conflict", in Czempiel, Ernst-Otto, Zadjan, Lipart, Kiv & Masopust, Zdenek, *Non-Violence in International Crises: Proceedings of the First International Symposium on Non-Violent Solutions of International Crises and Regional Conflicts*, Frankfurt am Main, February 1989, p.16. For International Law as the basis of dispute settlement in general and the obligations of states in regard to legal means of settlement, see in the same Degan, Vladimir-Djuvo, "International Law and Settlement of Disputes". Furthermore, there is a vast literature on conventional and customary International Law and jurisprudence. See Brownlie, I., *Principles of Public International Law*, Oxford, 1990.

are conceptualised as broader social change that transforms the conflict through learning processes, through peace pedagogy, peace journalism, peace and business and elaborations of the PSW, based on different - compared to earlier attempts at theorizing - ontological assumptions. These developments reflect a modified view of conflict from something to be 'won' to something to be 'solved' to something that can be 'transformed'.⁶³

This section presents a review of this literature, tracing the development of the theory and praxis of peace processes. It should be emphasised that the distinction between conflict resolution and conflict transformation does not necessarily represent different schools of thought in conflict theory. The forerunners in conflict resolution established the basis for conflict transformation approaches. Burton for example, a pioneer in the development of PSW technique whose particular approach is discussed under the second category has contributed enormously to theories of conflict transformation. Still, this distinction is useful as it highlights the difference in perspective between the two in terms of the processes they examine. Furthermore, it helps us to discuss where and how theory meets the praxis of peace processes. More specifically, it will be demonstrated that mainstream conflict resolution approaches draw a moderate role for the conflict worker whereas conflict transformation theories allow for more radical and participatory perspectives to develop.

2.1. Bargaining Approaches to Peace Processes

Negotiation and mediation are old institutionalised practices in the search for peace. Negotiation processes are launched when the parties in a conflict, alone or with the facilitation of a third party, try to achieve an agreement upon the issues of the conflict through face-to-face bargaining. The aim of the parties is "to win as much as possible".⁶⁴ In other words, the aim is to alter the behaviour of the other, rather than to modify the other parties' goals and perceptions. The interaction is conceived as power-based, competitive and formal in accordance with a set of guidelines given to the representatives of the states engaged in negotiations. Thus, this process also reflects the assumptions of the rational actor model presented above.

⁶³ Azar, Edward E., *The Management of Protracted Social Conflict: Theory and Cases*, University of Maryland, 1990, p.21.

⁶⁴ Mitchell, C.R., *The Structure of International Conflict*, Macmillan, 1981, p.198.

Studies on negotiations deal mostly with the bargaining process, that is the offers and counter-offers that attempt to build a mutually acceptable settlement. In practice, there are many obstacles at every step in the path towards achieving some form of agreement on the conflicting issues through negotiations. Often the parties do not agree upon the issues to be negotiated or how the issues should be dealt with, as it is the case with the Greek-Turkish conflict. Greece argues that the only issue to be dealt with is the demarcation of the continental shelf. On the other hand, Turkey claims that there should be a “package deal” including the demarcation of the territorial waters, the airspace, the Flight Information Region and the demilitarisation of certain Greek islands in the eastern Aegean Sea.⁶⁵

A third party, which is not part of the conflict but is interested in bringing an end to the conflict, may intervene or assist in the settlement of the dispute in the role of mediator. Peter Carnevale and Dean Pruitt see mediation as a “variation on negotiation”⁶⁶ and Peter Colosi sees it as an extension of the process of negotiation, since mediators employ the same tools as negotiators.⁶⁷ The aim here is to settle the conflict by “bringing the parties together and working with them to find a solution acceptable to both/all sides”.⁶⁸ The role of third party mediator has also been described as “empowerment of the weaker party”, or putting pressure on both parties, indeed enforcing a settlement.⁶⁹

The practice demonstrates that negotiation and mediation are the most often employed means to achieve peace. Nevertheless, reality seems to leave little space for optimism with regard to the potential of these methods to bring about sustainable peace. Recent efforts of negotiations and mediation in the conflict in Yugoslavia as well as in the Israel/Palestine conflict, for example, have further challenged the capacity of these techniques to bring about a positive change.

⁶⁵ For the Turkish view on this issue see Pazarci, Hüsseyin, *The Status of Demilitarisation of the Islands in the Eastern Aegean Sea*, Ankara University, 1986. The Greek answer to the Turkish arguments is presented in Ekonomides, C. P., *The Legal Status of the Greek Islands in the Aegean*, Gnosi, 1989.

⁶⁶ Carnevale, Peter J. & Pruitt, Dean G., *Negotiation and Mediation*, p.532.

⁶⁷ Colosi, Thomas, “A Model for Negotiation and Mediation”, in Bendahname, Diane, & McDonald, John Jr., (eds.), *International Negotiation, Art, and Science*, Center for the Study of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State, 1984, p.25.

⁶⁸ Brand-Jacobsen, Kai, Frithjof & Jacobsen, Carl G., “Beyond Mediation: Towards More Holistic Approaches to Peacebuilding and Peace Actor Empowerment”, in Galtung, Johan & Jacobsen Carl G., *Searching for Peace: the Road to Transcend*, London, Sterling, Virginia: Pluto Press, 2000, p.233.

⁶⁹ Groom, A.J.R., “Old Ways New Insights: Conflict Resolution in International Conflict”, in Czempiel, Ernst-Otto, Zadjan, Lipart, Kiv & Masopust, Zdenek, *Non-Violence in International Crises*, p.17.

A part of the literature has set out to answer the question why although states in conflict engage many times in negotiation and mediation efforts, they, still fail to reach an agreement.⁷⁰ Scholars attempt to resolve this problem by elaborating on the concept of ‘ripeness’ of a conflict and ‘timing’. ‘Ripeness’ refers to a stage of a conflict or a crisis that is most amenable to reaching a settlement. Haas identifies ripeness with context and more specifically, the presence or absence of certain conditions in which negotiation takes place. He identifies two types of conditions, intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic conditions refer to the substance of the matter of the agreement. Extrinsic conditions refer to the broader context, including decision makers’ capacity to sustain the agreement.⁷¹ Zartman argues that a mediator can intervene when “crisis and conflict are powerful enough” and he identifies conditions like a ‘hurting stalemate’ or an ‘impending catastrophe’ that could make a conflict conducive to an agreement.⁷² Contingency models, postulating a conflict life cycle constituted of different stages, have been developed in order to map phases of conflict conducive to appropriate third party intervention.⁷³

Nevertheless, these attempts do not escape the limitations the complexity of a conflict situation imposes, including the increase of complexity the third party brings. Drawing on empirical research on the Yugoslav conflict, Keith Webb *et al.*, aptly illustrate that the complexity of the situation could not make possible the prescription of a particular type of mediation.⁷⁴ This is particularly the case when a conflict involves governmental authorities, IGOs, NGOs, factions of the fighting parties and a continuous change of their positions, which can defy any attempt to discern stages in the conflict.⁷⁵

⁷⁰ Haas, Richard N., “Ripeness, De-escalation, and Arms Control”, in Kriesberg, Louis & Thorson, Stuart J., (eds.), *Timing the de-escalation of International Conflicts*, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1991 p.83.

⁷¹ Haas, Richard, “Ripeness De-escalation and Control”, pp.83-4.

⁷² Zartman, William I., “Attempts at Crisis Management”, in Winham, Gilbert R., (ed.), *New Issues in International Crisis Management*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1988.

⁷³ Keashly, Loreleigh & Fisher, Ronald J., “A Contingency Perspective on Conflict Interventions: Theoretical and Practical Considerations”, in Bercovitch, Jacob, (ed.), *Resolving International Conflicts, the Theory and Practice of Mediation*, Lynne Rienner, 1996, p.235.

⁷⁴ Webb, Keith, Koutrakou, Vassiliki & Walters, Mike, “The Yugoslavian Conflict, European Mediation and the Contingency Model: A Critical Perspective”, in Bercovitch, Jacob, (ed.), *Resolving International Conflicts, The theory and Practice of Mediation*, Boulder London, 1996, p.188.

⁷⁵ See also evaluation of past official negotiations between the two communities in Cyprus from 1968 until 1992. Hadjipavlou-Trigeorgis Maria & Trigeorgis Lenos argue that the rigid, formal and legalistic nature of the procedure of negotiations along with the constant change of parties' positions and publicity rituals doomed these efforts to failure. Hadjipavlou-Trigeorgis, Maria & Trigeorgis, Lenos, “Cyprus: An Evolutionary Approach to Conflict Resolution”, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol.37, No.2, June 1993, p.340-360.

Levinger and Rubin argue that “few opportunities exist for effective intervention by third parties - except by the most powerful actors, those in a position to coerce agreements through threat or buy off agreements by lavishing rewards”.⁷⁶ To negotiation and mediation with muscle we should add activities that fall under the category of peace making and involve the UN.

Although these activities as well as processes of negotiation and mediation may sometimes be able to bring an end to violence, they cannot address the causes of the conflict. Furthermore, the most important criticism levelled against these processes of conflict settlement is that their outcomes are often short-lived because they reflect the relative power of the parties and rest on power relationships ignoring the complexity involved in the conflict.⁷⁷

The dynamics of complexity contrast with static approaches of negotiation processes - including facilitated negotiation - which focus primarily on the interaction among the negotiating parties. Mitschell argues, to confine the process of negotiation only to the face-to-face interaction “within the chamber”, would not be an accurate description as the preliminary bargaining and the implementation of the agreement are also part of the overall process.⁷⁸ To add that “[T]he problem still remains of integrating into a negotiation process those activities outside the negotiating chamber which affect either by accident or design the on-going process of negotiation”.⁷⁹ These considerations have led to a search for other means, other processes complementary or independent from negotiations and third party intervention.

2.1.2 Problem Solving Approaches to Peace Processes

Alarmed by the failure of negotiation and facilitated negotiation, scholars like John Burton, Herbert Kelman and Leonard Doob developed a new pioneering technique of conflict resolution in the late 60s and early 70s, which has been increasingly employed over the last thirty years. This is the problem solving conflict resolution workshop (PSW). Developments in social sciences incorporated in the theory of PSW and conclusions drawn through its application over the last 10 years, have provided new conceptualisations and aims for the same technique. Here, I will examine PSW

⁷⁶ Levinger, George & Rubin, J. Z., “Bridges and Barriers to a More General Theory of Conflict”, *Negotiation Journal*, July 1994, p.209.

⁷⁷ Burton, John, *Conflict Resolution and Provention*, London: Macmillan, 1990, p.191.

⁷⁸ *ibid.*, p.207.

⁷⁹ Mitchell, C.R., *The Structure of International Conflict*, Macmillan, 1981, p.198.

practised as a process capable of resolving the conflict, while further down in this section I will refer to different approaches to PSW.

PSW is described by Anthony de Reuck as follows: “representatives of the parties in dispute should meet in the presence of a small panel of disinterested consultants, professionally qualified in the social sciences, in order to analyse and possibly also to resolve their conflict, in conditions of total confidentiality”.⁸⁰

This technique, compared to negotiation and mediation, reflects a different philosophical approach to the problem of conflict in society. Departing from socio-psychological explanations, conflict is deemed here to be “endemic in human relationships”.⁸¹ As such it can be functional, a source of creativity, which can draw attention to existing problems and help to correct attitudes.⁸² According to Burton, when basic needs like security and identity are not fulfilled, a perception of injustice emerges and in the lack of effective communication - which might be created by misperceptions - violence may arise.⁸³ The core idea behind most of the PSW approaches is that the parties to a conflict, when meeting face-to-face in an appropriate environment, can get to know each other and may change their mutual misperceptions and acknowledge each other's needs.⁸⁴ The aim of the PSW is to address the deep-rooted sources of conflict, and to generate an acceptable solution to the parties in the conflict, changing their values, goals, attitudes and behaviour. That is why the declared purpose of PSW is to resolve and not to settle the conflict.⁸⁵ If the

⁸⁰ Reuck, Anthony de, “A Theory of Conflict Resolution by Problem Solving”, in Burton, John & Dukes, Frank, (eds.), *Conflict: Readings in Management and Resolution*, Macmillan, 1990, p.183. The first PSWs were organised in 1965 and 1966 for the Borneo and Cyprus conflicts respectively by John Burton the leader of London School and his colleagues. See Burton, John, W., *Global Conflict, The Domestic Sources of International Crisis*, Brighton: Wheatsheaf, 1984, p.160.

⁸¹ Groom, A.J.R., “Old Ways New Insights: Conflict Resolution in International Conflict”, p.15.

⁸² Coser makes the argument that conflict may be functional, may re-establish unity and cohesion among the members of a group or a community but may not as well. For the functions of conflict see Coser, Lewis A., *The Functions of Conflict*, London: Routledge & K. Paul, 1956. See also North, Robert C., Koch, Howard E. Jr. & Zinnes, Dina A., “The integrative Functions of Conflict”, *Conflict Resolution Journal*, Vol. IV, No.3, pp.355-374.

⁸³ Burton, John W., *Conflict and Communication, The Use of Controlled Communication in International Relations*, London: Macmillan, 1969. See also *Deviance, Terrorism and War*, New York: St Martin's Press, 1979.

⁸⁴ Kelman, Herbert C., *Informal Mediation by the Scholar/Practitioner*, in Bercovitch, Jacob, (ed.) *Resolving International Conflict, The Theory and Practice of Mediation*, London: Boulder, 1996, p.76, Burton, John, *Conflict and Communication, The Use of Controlled Communication in International Relations*, p.215 and p.223.

⁸⁵ Initially the purpose of the workshop was to provide academics with new insights and lead to “hypotheses, and perhaps to means of testing propositions”. After the technique was tried “the method came to have a second objective - the resolution of the conflict”. Burton, John W., *Conflict and Communication, The Use of Controlled Communication in International Relations*, London: Macmillan, 1969, preface, p. xi.

cognitive processes known as 'tunnel vision' and stereotyping can lead to escalation of crisis and violent confrontation, it is argued that PSWs can "break down the stereotypes".⁸⁶ Here, learning as the direct result of the interaction constitutes an important part of the process.

This conceptualisation of PSW relies upon an assumption of an instrumental rationality. Burton has confidence in the rational human being and his ability to resolve conflicts through the analysis of the conflict situation.⁸⁷ The facilitator "is in an analytical, almost a teaching position, drawing attention to false assumptions, and opening up possibilities of arriving at potentially realistic ones".⁸⁸ In other words, the facilitator is assumed to have and apply knowledge about an objective reality, thus functioning in a therapeutic way in society. Furthermore, the participants are also conceived as cost-benefit oriented. A.J.R. Groom argues that "[T]his is an exercise in increasing the degree of rationality in decision-making and seeking to reduce thereby the scale of conflict".⁸⁹ Discussing Burton's approach to PSW, Tarja Vayrynen makes the argument that "[A]lthough Burton does not rely on the rational choice paradigm in a strict sense, by postulating the utility maximising actor, he, however, accepts implicitly many of the underlying assumptions of the paradigm".⁹⁰

Scholars who have developed the theory and have applied this approach in praxis argue that if the parties generate some kind of resolution for the issues involved in the conflict, they can deliver the results of this exercise to decision-makers and they in turn will consider and materialise them. This explains why the theory postulates that participants of the workshops should ideally be "individuals who are close to the key decision-makers of a community or state and who can influence these individuals in a private and personal way, and yet are able to explore alternatives without fear of political repercussions".⁹¹ Azar argues for a hierarchical relationship between negotiations and PSW, which are "a crucial first step ...designed to establish a pre-

⁸⁶ *ibid.*, p.21.

⁸⁷ Burton, John W., *World Society*, p.162.

⁸⁸ Burton, John W., *Conflict Resolution and Provention*, p.125.

⁸⁹ Groom, A.J.R., "Old Ways New Insights: Conflict Resolution in International Conflict", pp.18-19. John Burton argues that "controlled communication is a means of increasing the state of knowledge and the probabilities of accurate prediction". Burton, John, *The Use of Controlled Communication in International Relations*, p.209.

⁹⁰ Vayrynen, Tarja, *Sharing Reality: An Insight from Phenomenology to John Burton's Problem-Solving Conflict Resolution Theory*, PhD Thesis UKC, 1995, p.130.

⁹¹ Azar, Edward E., *The Management of Protracted Social Conflict: Theory and Cases*, p.34.

negotiation stage”.⁹² John McDonald, on the other hand, stresses the emphasis on the element of ‘complementarity’ when he argues that “if the proponents of each track learn to build on the track below them, they will gradually develop an enormous power base themselves. The proponents collectively will be able to force first track bureaucrats to change their way of thinking into a more positive, problem solving mode”.⁹³

Nevertheless, the aim of the resolution seems to overload the workshop with tasks whose implementation is doubtful. More precisely, the problem with the above described conceptualisation of the PSW is that it cannot deal with the complexity of the process of communication within the PSW. Neither can it explore its linkage with its environment, that is, both decision-making processes and the societies wholly involved in the conflict.

Participants in this kind of workshops are culturally and communicatively conditioned and even those assumed to be on the same side, may define conflict in completely different ways. Scholars stress the emphasis on how cultural differences construct behaviour in conflict and co-operation. Kevin Avruch and Peter Black develop a cultural perspective of PSW where “culture is seen to be a fundamental feature of human consciousness, the *sine qua non* of human being”.⁹⁴ Cohen argues that different cultures have developed their own negotiation styles.⁹⁵ Galtung contributes to these considerations of the complexity within the workshop, observing that there are four layers that interact in every face-to-face interaction: role behaviour, personal outlook, personal baggage and deep culture.⁹⁶ Given this complexity, the pursuit of a resolution of conflict through the workshop does not automatically arise as the result of the process.

If the complexity within the workshop challenges the assumption of an immediate change of attitudes and goals, the insertion of the workshop outcome into the society and the decision-making is another problem. Several scholars demonstrate that this is

⁹² *ibid.*, p.3.

⁹³ McDonald, John, “Exploration of Track Two Diplomacy”, in Kriesberg, Louis & Thorson, Stuart J., (eds.), *Timing the de-escalation...*, p.205.

⁹⁴ Avruch, Kevin & Black, Peter, “Conflict Resolution in Intercultural Settings: Problems and Prospects”, in Sandole, Dennis J. & Hugo van der Merve, (eds.), *Conflict Resolution Theory and Practice: Integration and Application*, Manchester: Manchester U.P., 1993, p. 32.

⁹⁵ Cohen, Raymond, *Negotiating Across Cultures, Communication Obstacles in International Diplomacy*, Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1991.

⁹⁶ Galtung, Johan, “Crafting Peace on the Psychology of the TRANSCEND approach”, p.223

not a uni-linear process of transfer from the workshop to society.⁹⁷ Discussing the issue of the re-entry, Kelman argues that although participants in the workshop may change their perceptions they might not be able to affect existing 'institutional' misperceptions.⁹⁸ The conceptualisation of PSWs as the means to resolve conflicts does not address the political and other contingencies that may interfere with the development of a peace process in a complex society. It presupposes a stable setting for the workshop and society, where changes can be engineered in a more or less mechanical and automatic way.

One of the cases that raised the hopes for the effectiveness of this technique was the Oslo process between Israelis and Palestinians in 1993. About ten years later, it seems that there is some agreement about what went wrong. Scholars point to its inability to address the causes and the complexity of the conflict. The exclusion of hard-liners and the imposition of the stronger party – Israeli - upon the weaker – PLO - were conditions conducive to a problematic development of the process. Furthermore, the process was not supported by efforts at the grassroots level and finally, the defiance of these agreements by the Israeli side in the years that followed the Oslo process, doomed the agreement to failure.⁹⁹

Taking into account these problems, modern theories seek to develop more holistic approaches to peace processes in modern society. New conceptualisations attempt both to redress the problem between the peace process and its broader environment and to mitigate the assumptions of uni-linearity, stability and control, emphasising complexity and difference in perspectives.

Before we come to the discussion of these approaches it should be added that a part of the literature describes third party mediation as a kind of facilitation. Here third parties are not academics and their activities take place outside the milieu of the institutionalised PSW. Third states, interstate organizations, NGOs and individuals can facilitate the parties in their search for peace. They can facilitate the contact of the parties who want to negotiate, though after a stage of overt hostilities this might be

⁹⁷ Groom, A.J.R., "Old Ways New Insights: Conflict Resolution in International Conflict", in Czempiel, Ernst-Otto, Zadjan, Lipart, Kiv & Masopust, Zdenek, *Non-Violence in International Crises...*, p.24.

⁹⁸ Kelman, Herbert C., "The Problem Solving Workshop in Conflict Resolution", in Merritt, R.L., *Communication in International Politics*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1972, p.54.

⁹⁹ Brand-Jacobsen, Kai, Frithjof & Jacobsen, Carl G., "Beyond Mediation: Towards More Holistic Approaches to Peacebuilding and Peace Actor Empowerment", in Galtung, Johan & Jacobsen Carl, G., *Searching for Peace: the Road to Transcend*, p.238-240.

difficult. That was the case with Northern Ireland, where a religious community was involved in bringing together Sinn Fein and the Irish government. They can play an important role in "gaining the trust and confidence of the parties, setting agendas, clarifying issues and formulating agreements."¹⁰⁰ These tasks are closer to facilitation and problem solving than to enforcement and use of power for bargaining. The assets of third parties here are their reputation and their skills.

2.2. Conflict Transformation Approaches to Peace Processes

From 1991, when Raimo Vayrynen posed the question "To Settle or to Transform?" until 2000, accumulated theory and research seem to answer in favour of conflict transformation as opposed to conflict settlement or conflict resolution. Conflict transformation is considered a step beyond or a development of conflict resolution and differentiates from the latter in two important points: First, it stresses the emphasis on a holistic conceptualisation of peace processes arguing that peace processes should not involve only leaders and elites but the whole of society.¹⁰¹ Second, it is distanced from instrumental rationality and moves towards the exploration of complexity and discursive rationality, which is defined as "an understanding of the possibility and fruitfulness of dialogue".¹⁰²

The idea that changes in society may affect the peaceful resolution of conflicts is not new; it started well before the 1990s. There is a vast literature on processes of democratisation and the ways the establishment of democratic institutions can ensure a sustainable peace.¹⁰³ Change of world economic structures can be another viable path to peace, argued Kalevi Holsti towards the end of the Cold War.¹⁰⁴ Burton has also been one of the forerunners arguing for the need for fundamental social changes through the means of education and the role of common functions which will increase co-operative interactions between societies in conflict. Smoke and Harman built from where Burton had left the issue of education, to look for more profound and abstract

¹⁰⁰ Miall, Hugh, Ramsbotham, Oliver & Woodhouse, Tom, *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1999, p.224.

¹⁰¹ *ibid.*, p.21.

¹⁰² Vayrynen, Tarja, *Sharing Reality: An Insight from Phenomenology to John Burton's Problem-Solving Conflict Resolution Theory*, PhD Thesis UKC, 1995, p.213.

¹⁰³ See for example Ray, James, Lee, *Democracy and International Conflict: An evaluation of the democratic peace proposition*, Columbia, South Carolina : University of South Carolina P., 1995.

¹⁰⁴ Holsti, Kalevi J., "Paths to Peace? Theories of Conflict Resolution and Realities of International Politics", in Thakur, Ramesh, (ed.), *International Conflict Resolution*, Boulder: Westview, 1988, p.126-128.

changes, such as the change of attitudes and perceptions and the need “to believe in the possibility of peace”, as an important alternative path to achieve peace.¹⁰⁵

While these analyses have been more descriptive and conceptual rather than postulating a way of action, a different problematique of conflict transformation appeared in the early 90s. This new perspective conceptualized what had been a maturing of ideas over the previous ten years, drawing on certain developments in the conflict theory and the failures the praxis of the above techniques had revealed. Vayrynen was the first to put these ideas into words. He developed a generic framework of six transformers of conflict: context transformation, structural transformation, actor transformation, issue transformation, personal and group transformation. The contribution made by that conceptualization was that conflict is not something that can be solved but it can be transformed and this can happen through different paths, which involve all the levels of society simultaneously. While conventional analysis stresses the emphasis on processes of interactions among decision-makers - and the participation of elites in PSW - transformation theories shift the emphasis to society as a whole departing from hierarchical approaches to peace processes and recognizing the complexity involved therein.

In the last ten years, there is a burgeoning literature on the need for empowerment of local actors, changes in the education of societies in conflict and new conceptualisations of PSW based on transformation rather than resolution of conflict. Conflict transformation theory is a call for an even more active engagement in paving the way to peace. Developments in thinking about conflict have motivated conflict researchers-activists to make praxis the conclusions they have drawn. This, in turn, has resulted in a multiplication of institutions involved in coping with conflict and the emergence of a profession of peace workers. These developments have brought about a change with regard to the subject of research and analysis and the self-conceptualisation of the role of conflict worker.

In what follows, I will discuss functionalism, learning processes, PSW as means for conflict transformation, Galtung's TRANSCEND method of conflict transformation and contingent, non-engineered transformation.

¹⁰⁵ Smoke, Richard & Harman Willis, *Paths to Peace: Exploring the Feasibility of Sustainable Peace*, London: Westview Press, p.73-97, 1987. See also Harman, Willis, “The Quest for Security Viewed as a Whole-System Problem”, in Thakur, Ramesh, *International Conflict Resolution*, 261-280.

2.2.1. Functionalism

Functionalism is the oldest approach that challenged the rational actor model and the state-centric view of the world. Its origins lie with Mitrany's work on how networks of international institutions, based on common functions, can provide world stability and order.¹⁰⁶ This approach has inspired a lot of constructive discussion as well as action aiming to move societies from the pole of conflict towards the pole of co-operational relations. Its main unit of analysis is transactions engendered by "the delineation and fulfilment of super-ordinate goals".¹⁰⁷ It envisions a co-operative world society based on the notion "form follows function". Functionalists' arguments are mainly derived from the observation of world society and the emergence of organizations that provide 'alternatives' to the state based on function instead of territory or legitimacy. The emphasis is on organizations able to overcome state boundaries. A.J.R. Groom describes the basic assumption of functionalism as "a 'working peace system' that will tend to diminish conflict by allowing cross-cutting loyalties, by developing super-ordinate goals, by removing barriers to intercourse and by creating a sense of security through fulfilling necessary functions rather than through a threat system".¹⁰⁸ An often cited example of successful functionalism, is the impact of the European Coal and Steel Community on the Franco-German conflict. Looking specifically at how functionalism affects conflict resolution, Burton made a distinction between long-term processes and short-term or immediate handling of the conflict. Within the first category he finds a spillback process from international society to the national domain. With regard to the immediate handling of a conflict, he argued that functional institutions that develop during conflict e.g. separate *ad hoc* administrations, postal and electricity services, can pave the way to a sustainable

¹⁰⁶ The origins of the functionalist approach to conflict are found in Mitrany's work in 30s and its later development. The basic idea was that order and thus peace could be sustained through the development of a web of non-coercive international organizations, which would reflect the institutionalisation of functions. Mitrany, David, *A Working Peace System*, London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1943. This work has also inspired scholars as Haas. Haas, Ernst, *International Political Communities*, New York: Anchor Books, 1966.

¹⁰⁷ Groom, A. J. R., "Functionalism and World Society", in Groom, A. J. R. & Taylor, P., (eds.), *Functionalism: Theory and Practice in International Relations*, London: University of London Press, 1975, p.98.

¹⁰⁸ Groom, A. J. R., "Functionalism and World Society", p.95.

resolution.¹⁰⁹ The reasoning behind this is that functional practices, rather than “deliberate and logical decision”, can induce greater integration.¹¹⁰

Functionalism has inspired thinking about the influence of the private sector as a powerful new dimension in coping with conflicts. Business and Conflict programmes aim to address this dimension through developing strategies that promote and catalyse peace-building practices, principles and policies of extractive transnational corporations and local businesses in partnership with multilateral agencies, governments and NGOs.¹¹¹

Nevertheless, in evaluating this approach to conflict, Groom observes that there are many questions unanswered, like the fact that interests can be conflicting and based on different values, and that this could mobilise not only integrative but disintegrative forces.¹¹² Burton agreed with Groom that “functionalism is essentially a neutral concept in terms of values” while he depicted “shared values that tend to act as an invisible decision-maker” as the solution for disintegration.¹¹³ He conceptualised functionalism in a society in conflict, as

a condition that emerges in a highly complex and developed political system, in which there is a high level of overlapping role behaviour creating shared values, in which there are administrative skills and awareness of interrelationships between different functional institutions, in which the complexity of political demands and tasks are beyond the decision-making capacity of any central authorities, in which interests and values systems extend well beyond the immediate requirements of survival.¹¹⁴

Nevertheless, despite his genuine interest in complexity - characteristically enough Burton closes his essay on functionalism with a comment on the inability of the theory to deal with the number of factors that influence these processes - he does not elaborate further on this issue.¹¹⁵ Instead, in his later writings, he turned from transactions to an emphasis on the human needs approach. Reading carefully Burton's early functionalist approach we realise that he followed a technocratic conception of

¹⁰⁹ Burton, John W., “Functionalism and the Resolution of Conflict”, in Groom, A. J. R. & Taylor, P., (eds.), *Functionalism: Theory and Practice in International Relations*, p.246.

¹¹⁰ *ibid.*, p.247.

¹¹¹ See for example the United Nations Development Programme, <http://www.undp.org/business>, about conflict transformation programmes related to the private sector see <http://www.international-alert.org/policy/business.htm>, The International Business Leaders' Forum <http://www.iblf.org/csr/csrwebassist.nsf/content/a1a2a3a4a5.html>

¹¹² Groom, A. J. R., “Functionalism and World Society”, p.107.

¹¹³ Burton, John W., “Functionalism and the Resolution of Conflict”, p.244.

¹¹⁴ *ibid.*, p.245.

¹¹⁵ *ibid.*, p. 249.

function, rationalised by a means/ends schema. When, however, his functionalism is supported by the human needs theory, it ends up in a tautology. If we take seriously the argument that human needs are the motives, we end up in a tautological cycle where the predetermined result is the same as its cause.¹¹⁶ This perspective produces a scientific perception of the world where there is a natural tendency for adaptation without friction and without conflict.

2.2.2. Learning Processes

Thucydides, who wrote *The Peloponnesian War*, believed that “knowledge of the past can be an aid to the interpretation of the future”.¹¹⁷ That seems to have been the case with Barbara Tuchman's book *The Guns of August*. President Kennedy appears to admit in the aftermath of the crisis that his management during the Cuban crisis was affected by Tuchman's analysis of the First World War.¹¹⁸ Scholars in the field of conflict analysis invest heavily in learning processes.¹¹⁹ Smoke, Willis and Vasquez argue for the need to learn a culture of peace as we have learned a culture of war.

It is suggested that education imbued with principles of peaceful conflict resolution may be the key for a profound transformation from a war to a peace culture. A whole new generation of peace researchers-activists has emerged over the last decade, dedicated to the application of the lessons drawn from accumulating and developing research and analysis in the field of societies in conflict. Many projects over recent years in countries in conflict - like Greece, Turkey, Cyprus and Yugoslavia - include revising history text books in schools and universities in order to prevent the instilling of "enemy images" in children's minds. Several non-governmental conflict resolution organizations have started implementing media projects to educate the media to be tolerant of differences and train them in peace journalism. A number of web sites have also been created making knowledge of these issues available to a great number of

¹¹⁶ The tautology implied in the application of human needs theory on conflict resolution in general is described also by John Warfield. Warfield, John N., “Cognitive Equilibrium: Experimental Results and their Implications”, Sandole, Dennis J, & Hugo van der Merve, (eds.), *Conflict Resolution Theory and Practice: Integration and Application*, p.67.

¹¹⁷ Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, Translated by Richard Krawley, New York: Modern Library, 1951, p.14.

¹¹⁸ “At the time of the Cuba Crisis John Kennedy made sure that at least some members of his staff had read *The Guns of August* by Barbara Tuchman so as to strengthen and refresh their memories of 1914”. Deutsch, Karl W., “Crisis Decision making-The Information Approach”, in Frei, Daniel (ed.), *Managing International Crises*, p.17.

¹¹⁹ See about co-operative education in Burton, John & Dukes, Frank, *Conflict: Practices in Management, Settlement, and Resolution*, London Macmillan Press, 1990, pp. 165-169.

people. Conflict analysis and conflict resolution courses and university programmes all around the world, aim to develop the necessary skills to deal with conflicts in a peaceful and creative way.

This approach to education looks at learning as a positive and uni-linear process. But are schools and universities the only educational institutions? What about cultural centres in conflict sites like Bosnia for example, set up by parties in conflict or those who want to influence the development of the conflict by reproducing the dividing lines within a society or between states?¹²⁰

Functionalists also see the establishment and development of new, co-operative functions as an automatic learning process with positive effects. They assume that once people experience the beneficial results of co-operation, they will be motivated to improve co-operation.

Studies on the Cuban crisis and Soviet-American relations often view the experience of crisis as an automatic, trial and error learning process. They refer to the lessons drawn from the experience of the crisis. It is assumed that Russians and Americans drew similar conclusions, which they operationalized in the conduct of their relations during the Cold War. Decision-makers are supposed to have learned how to prevent an increase of tension that could lead to a hot confrontation between the two superpowers.¹²¹ Lebow's discussion of the lessons drawn from crises, however, demonstrates that crises can have both positive and negative effects. The Cuba and the Fashoda crisis for example, had ameliorating effects upon the relations of France and Britain, while the Berlin crisis deepened the hostility between the USA and Western Europe on one hand and the Soviet Union on the other.¹²²

Yaacov Bar-Siman-Tov's study demonstrates how the simplicity of a trial-error pattern of learning is defied in practice. Rather than crisis he discusses conflict resolution as a learning process in the context of the protracted Arab-Israeli conflict.¹²³ He develops a three-stage learning process model from conflict suppression to regulation and institutionalisation. According to this approach,

¹²⁰ Turkey, a country torn by conflicts - islamists/secularists, Kurds/Turks - is an interesting case study from that perspective. There are educational programmes of Peaceful Conflict Resolution established by universities like the Sabanci University in Istanbul which involve training of civil servants in peaceful conflict resolution techniques. At the same time, in the same city, certain religious leaders preach in mosques, after the Friday prayer, the enmity against the non-believers.

¹²¹ Lebow, Richard, Ned, *Between Peace and War*, p.3.

¹²² *ibid.*, pp.309-333.

¹²³ Bar-Siman-Tov, Yaacov, "The Arab-Israeli Conflict: Learning Conflict Resolution", *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol.31, No.1, 1994, pp.75-92.

decision-makers try different methods in the conduct of the conflict; depending on the response they get or the results of their actions, they adapt their next step. That approach assumes a mechanistic, stimulus/response interaction that accounts for the events. Nevertheless, testing this model on the Syrian-Israeli, Jordanian-Israeli and Palestinian-Israeli conflicts, the author found that "learning developed in each dyadic conflict, separately, independently and differently from other dyadic conflicts."¹²⁴ That led him to the conclusion that "the complexities of the Arab-Israeli conflict - many actors and different issues - hindered the development of the same rate and scope of learning in each dyadic conflict".¹²⁵

The non-linearity of leaders' learning and the cognitive processes involved in that has been discussed extensively by Jervis in his study on perceptions and misperceptions. He maintains that leaders "learn broad general lessons from history, but this kind of learning hinders rather than aids productive thinking".¹²⁶ Decision-makers do not "understand the detailed causal linkages". Moreover, Jervis points to the 'generational cycles' in policies. Generations with immediate or close experience of wars or other traumatic experiences learn the lessons "especially well but because of the flawed nature of the way they will have learned, the lessons will be oversimplified and over-generalised and therefore will be likely to be applied to inappropriate situations".¹²⁷ Leng's study on six pairs of states, involved in three successive disputes, corroborates this view. He discovered a learning pattern according to which the loser of the previous dispute may initiate the second dispute as the result of the attribution of the loss to his failure to demonstrate sufficient resolve.¹²⁸ Several other studies have pointed to these aspects of learning from the past. Stern maintains that leaders use the past "to buttress pre-existing policy preferences".¹²⁹ Similarly, Burke argues that history for decision-makers is "a magical mirror where everyone sees what he wants".¹³⁰

This discussion stresses the emphasis on the importance of cognitive processes in decision-making. The conclusion of this section is that learning processes constitute

¹²⁴ *ibid.*, p.90.

¹²⁵ *ibid.*, p.91.

¹²⁶ Jervis, Robert, "How do decision-makers learn from History", p.151.

¹²⁷ *ibid.*, p.154.

¹²⁸ Leng, Russel J., "When Will They Ever Learn? Coercive Bargaining in Recurrent Crises", *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol.27, No.3, 1983, p.412.

¹²⁹ Stern, Eric, "Crisis and Learning: A Balance Sheet", *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management*, Vol.5, June 1997, p.69-86.

¹³⁰ Burke, Edmund, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, New York: Anchor, 1989, p.155.

an indispensable part of conflict transformation. Nevertheless, the mainstream discussion of learning processes in conflict transformation follows an uni-linear understanding of learning. In most of the cases learning is approached as something positive and self-evident that leads to progress and mutual understanding, when in fact, it is neither always positive nor self-evident. Learning is a neutral, continuous process. It builds on the basis of existing knowledge. New information is processed either in order to change or to reinforce existing images, expectations and schemas of interpretation. Thus, learning processes may reinforce the structures of a conflict, that is the expectations each side holds for the other. Yet, learning can also contribute to attitude changes towards co-operation.

To sum up this section, a theory of conflict transformation should accommodate the above-described seemingly contradictory trends. For that purpose it should be able to explore in depth, through rigorous empirical research, the mechanisms of learning processes in modern society. The relevant literature places the emphasis mainly on how leaders learn or do not learn. There is scant research about the learning process societies as a whole undergo and even less about scientists' learning processes.

2.2.3. PSW as the Means for Conflict Transformation

So far, PSW has been discussed as the means to resolve a conflict through analysing it. This approach is based on instrumental rationality and it assumes that the participants in the PSWs go through a learning process, which can break down stereotypes and misperceptions. A strand of the conflict theory, drawing on various criticisms to this approach, developed an alternative, more modest aim for the PSW on the basis of discursive rationality. The argument here is that the workshop can enable the transformation rather than the resolution of the conflict. Scholars have sought to describe and explain the processes of transformation focusing on the emergence of a new language and new 'thematic relevances', which can then be conveyed to society.

The emphasis in these analyses is on the process of communication and the management of difference. Benjamin Broome lays the emphasis on learning how to approach the conflict, and "how to deal with difference".¹³¹ Dryzek in a similar line of

¹³¹ Broome, Benjamin, "Managing Differences in Conflict Resolution: The Role of Relational Empathy", Sandole, Sandole, Dennis J. & Hugo van der Merve, (eds.), *Conflict Resolution Theory and Practice: Integration and Application*, p.104-105. "Learning how to learn" is the aim of the Yale

thought argues that “individuals can seek consensus on what is to be done while differing about why”.¹³² Tarja Vayrynen, in her study of Burton's analysis of PSWs, built upon these approaches, to follow a phenomenological interpretation of the PSW as an alternative ontological basis. This approach enabled her to develop the hermeneutic elements in PSW.¹³³ She argues that

[T]he problem-solving workshop is, thus, an attempt to find a shared reality between the parties in conflict. It deals mainly with the interpretative schemes of the participants by offering them a framework for 'negotiations over realities'. The finding of a common language game both presupposes and facilitates the finding of a shared reality.¹³⁴

This shift of emphasis has practical implications regarding the role of facilitator, as well as the problem of the insertion of the results of the workshop into society. The facilitator undertakes here the role of participant-observer. As for the problem of the re-entry of the outcome of the workshop to the society, Tarja Vayrynen argues that it depends

on the issues through which a shared reality is achieved. If the issues discussed relate to the ‘real’ problems of the conflicting parties and a shared language game is created to deal with them, the relevances are more likely to be transferred than, for example, in the case where personal feelings are focused on in the workshop.¹³⁵

Another important implication of this conceptualisation of PSWs is the conclusion it draws with regard to the principle of secrecy. It argues that secrecy might not be necessary; in fact it might be detrimental to the process of relating the new themes out of the workshop.¹³⁶

These observations generate many questions about the kind of “thematic relevances” and the mechanisms through which the “relating” can happen in a modern society. It creates questions about the competing thematic relevances that may appear in a society. Nevertheless, it is an important contribution to the problematique of conflict transformation.

Group, which employs two experimental methods subsumed under the categories of the “National Training Laboratory” and “Tavistock Approach”. These methods are assumed to enable participants to learn about psychological processes, about themselves, interpersonal relations, groups and social systems. Appley, Dee & Alvin, Winder, *T-Groups and Therapy Groups in a Changing Society*, London, San Fransisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1973, p.85.

¹³² *ibid.*, p.43.

¹³³ Vayrynen, Tarja, *Sharing Reality: An Insight from Phenomenology to John Burton's Problem-Solving Conflict Resolution Theory*, p.133.

¹³⁴ *ibid.*, p. 211.

¹³⁵ *ibid.*, p.189.

¹³⁶ *ibid.*, p.190.

2.2.4. Peace Process as Complexification

Galtung, one of the founders of the conflict theory field, incorporated his experience from 40 conflicts over the last 40 years in what he named the *TRANSCEND* approach.¹³⁷ This approach is close to the above discussion of PSW but it comes to make one important contribution. The original element in the *TRANSCEND* method is that it provides a new understanding of complexity in the context of peace processes. *TRANSCEND* addresses all possible levels of society, leaders, media, civil society organizations, peace activists and academics, rejecting top-down approaches. The question is how this is possible, what kind of processes can connect the different levels and bring about a change. The main method is "dialogue" or more correctly 'dialogues', which should take place at all possible levels of society. As regards the level of leadership, it starts unconventionally in that instead of trying to "bring the parties to a table", the conflict worker is engaged in dialogues with the different parties separately. (S)he does not try to argue with the parties and bring about a compromise. Rather, the aim is to "stimulate creativity" and prepare the parties for the table. To do that, the conflict worker looks at the nature of the goals of the parties, exploring their multiple dimensions and opening "a cognitive space to new outcomes not envisaged by the parties". These are elements incorporated in the other conceptualisations of PSWs too. The *TRANSCEND* method, however, conceptualises this process as complexification. Complexification means introducing "more goal dimensions with or without clashes, more actors, more concerns".¹³⁸ The idea behind this process is that conflict is 'embedded' in a dualistic framework. By introducing more complexity, it can get 'disembedded' from this restrictive frame. It is argued that after the process of complexification, the parties "may not even have to meet, the conflict may simply have 'evaporated'".¹³⁹

The conflict worker has a different task to accomplish here. The *TRANSCEND* method is not "a Socratic 'dialogue' in which the conflict worker knows in advance what s/he wants as a conclusion. This is a reciprocal process taking place inside the conflict worker too".¹⁴⁰ The conflict worker does not rely upon rationality. He is

¹³⁷ The *TRANSCEND* approach is presented in Galtung, Johan, & Jacobsen, Carl, G., (eds.), *Searching for Peace: the Road to Transcend*, pp.207-227.

¹³⁸ *ibid.*, p.212.

¹³⁹ *ibid.*, p.210.

¹⁴⁰ *ibid.*, p.214.

"bound to the principle of hope: somewhere there is some exit". This belief drives him "[A]nd then the same process again... and again, until something fruitful emerges; if necessary by replacing both the conflict parties and the conflict workers".

The contribution of the TRANSCEND method to our understanding of peace processes is important for one more reason. It makes a breaking with mainstream theory with regard to the issue of complexity. So far, complexity has been discussed as a problem that threatens peace efforts, the main obstacle in the praxis of peace processes. Here Galtung's argument is innovative in that he suggests that it is precisely the increase of complexity that can enable the transformation of the conflict. Furthermore, it acknowledges that the conflict worker does not control the interaction. On the other hand, the function of complexity is not fully analysed in the TRANSCEND method. As a matter of fact, this formulation generates many questions. If we imagine the introduction of complexity on different levels of society, through "dialogues", what will happen? How do changes occur within society and how do different levels of society interact? Could the result be more conflict? Or could it be more reflexive communication? Or both? These are questions, which again refer to society as a whole and thus demand a comprehensive theory of society instead of a theory of peace processes. Luhmann's theory of social autopoiesis can address these questions and provide us the analytical tools to explore complexity and contingency in modern society.

2.2.5. Contingent Transformation

The above discussion referred mostly to intentional or engineered transformation of conflict. Nevertheless, in the last years we have witnessed transformations of conflicts that are not engineered by a specifiable actor. Raimo Vayrynen observes that "the transformation of conflict may be either intended or unintended" and "conflict resolution is not only a form of stepwise rational action in which the actors involved try to adjust their competing interests to each other. It is also associated with everyday and broader historical changes transforming the scope, nature and functions of collective violence...".¹⁴¹

¹⁴¹ Vayrynen, Raimo, "To Settle or to Transform? Perspectives on the Resolution of National and International Conflicts", in Vayrynen, Raimo, (ed.), *New Directions in Conflict Theory: Conflict Resolution and Conflict Transformation*, London: Sage, 1991, p.6.

Let us reflect on some examples: Gorbachev's becoming the head of the government of the USSR is one interesting example. This change opened the way to important developments in the USA-USSR relations and in other conflicts around the world.¹⁴² The dissolution of the USSR allowed many conflicts in different parts of the world to move towards resolution. The conflict between the Black and the White communities in South Africa was affected by these developments. De Klerk's regime could not be justified any more as an anti-communist pillar. The important aspect that we shall draw attention to is that in cases like South Africa the transformation of the conflict was not directly related to the issues that these conflicts were about. The leaders of the parties in conflict did not achieve major breakthroughs in the form of agreements over the central issues of the conflict. Let us take another example, this time from the development of the rapprochement between Israelis/Palestinians during the 90s: the Israeli Prime Minister, Yitzak Rabin's assassination by opponents to his policy of rapprochement with the PLO, was an event that empowered this policy and enabled his successor, Shimon Peres, to speed up the peace process.¹⁴³

What are the processes that may bring about changes all around the world, far beyond a specific context where certain events emerge? One element our explanation should include is the contingent nature of these changes and their impact on the conflict. The above processes of conflict transformation did not emerge as necessary developments, which could be explained through a rational calculation - realist approach - or the prevalence of the value of peace -as normative approaches could argue. We cannot find some sort of direct learning process or institutionalised practices that led to that direction either. Could we talk about a kind of complexification with the introduction of new issues, seemingly irrelevant to the conflict issues, and thematically interconnected changes?

On the other hand, we should keep in mind some other parallels: the collapse of the Soviet Union also triggered a number of crisis processes with the infamous examples of Yugoslavia and the ex-Soviet Republics. The question then comes back here too: how were these processes carried out? How does the same event in one part of the world unleash dynamics that may lead to peace and in another it can lead to violence? What is the constitutive element of these processes of change? Theory has observed

¹⁴² Kriesberg, Louis, *Constructive conflicts: From Escalation to Resolution*, Lanham, Md; Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield, 1998, p.25.

¹⁴³ *ibid.*, p.209.

these phenomena but it has not elaborated on the implications of these observations regarding the nature of crisis and peace processes.

3. The Greek-Turkish Crisis and Peace Processes Literature

The Greek-Turkish dispute is often cited as a protracted conflict that has the potential to lead the two countries to war.¹⁴⁴ Azar defines a protracted conflict as processes instead of events or clusters of events. The term is employed to describe:

hostile interactions, which extend over long periods of time with sporadic outbreaks of open warfare fluctuating in frequency and intensity. These are conflict situations in which stakes are very high -the conflicts involve whole societies and act as agents for defining the scope of national identity and social solidarity. While they may exhibit some breakpoints during which there is a cessation of overt violence, they linger on in time and have no distinguishable point of termination...¹⁴⁵

The Greek-Turkish conflict goes back to the years of the Ottoman Empire. The Modern Greek State was founded in 1830, after the Greek revolution against the Ottoman Empire. Today the conflict is centred around the Cyprus problem, the demarcation in the Aegean Sea and issues related to minorities in both countries. Six main issues are involved in the Greek-Turkish dispute: the demarcation of the continental shelf, territorial sea and airspace, the Flight Information Region, the demilitarisation of certain Greek islands close to the Turkish coasts and, more recently (since 1996), the unclear demarcation of borders from Evros to the Dodecanese (grey areas).¹⁴⁶ To these initial problems, others have been added, like the Kurdish issue with Turkey accusing Greece of supporting the Kurdish separatists, and the "diplomatic war" between the two countries within the EU and NATO and elsewhere in international fora.¹⁴⁷

Greece and Turkey have come to the brink of war four times over the last three decades. In 1974, Turkey invaded Cyprus, which created a major crisis and

¹⁴⁴ Miall *et al.* *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*, p.211. Richard Haass writing about the Greek-Turkish dispute presents several scenarios of escalation of the conflict arguing that "[T]he Aegean is an accident waiting to happen". Haass, Richard, *Conflicts Unending: The United States and Regional Disputes*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990, p.58.

¹⁴⁵ Azar, Edward E., Jureidini, Paul & McLaurin, Robert, "Protracted Conflict: Theory and Practice in the Middle East", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, VIII, 29, 1978, p.50.

¹⁴⁶ Greece and Turkey do not agree either on the definition of the problems or on the methods they should employ in order to deal with them. For a presentation of the issues of dispute in Greek-Turkish relations see Heraclides, Alexis, *Greece and the "Threat from the East"*, [in Greek], Polis, 2001, pp. 202-250.

¹⁴⁷ *ibid.*, p.200.

overburdened thereafter Greek-Turkish relations. After that, the two countries lived through three more crises in the Aegean Sea, which invited full mobilisation of the armed forces: the first in 1976, the second in 1987 and the third in 1996. During the last two decades, several peace initiatives have been undertaken by the two parties - and sometimes by a third party - in order to pave the way to sustainable, peaceful relations between the neighbours. Negotiations, mediation efforts, facilitation, good offices, conferences and problem solving workshops have been employed as the means to achieve that aim.¹⁴⁸ Greek-Turkish relations display an additional interest for research and analysis for one more reason: an accidental event, a devastating earthquake that occurred in the area of Marmara in Turkey, in 1999, seems to have provoked a sudden and abrupt change of attitudes on the level of Greek and Turkish civil societies.

The empirical part of this thesis focuses on the last two crises and the peace processes that followed them, as well as the co-operation initiated after the earthquake. Here, I will provide a brief overview of the relevant literature on the Greek-Turkish crises of 1987 and 1996 and the peace processes that followed them. This section aims to prepare the ground for the analysis that follows in the empirical part. Thus, it is confined to the description of the analytical tools employed by scholars when they examine these phenomena and some observations regarding the paradoxes created by this application.¹⁴⁹ Detailed analysis and critical evaluation of these approaches, however, can only be finalised after the presentation of the results of my empirical research into the same phenomena in the light of Luhmann's theory.

A first observation regarding the literature on Greek-Turkish relations is that more emphasis has been given to the study of the crises than to the study of the peace initiatives. The second main point is that crises and peace processes in Greek and Turkish literature have been basically approached through the rational actor model in both countries.

¹⁴⁸ Furthermore, after the crisis of 1976 Greece lodged an appeal to the International Court of the Hague, in parallel with the intervention of the Security Council. For a discussion of this issue see Syrigos, Angelos, *The Status of the Aegean Sea According to International Law*, Sakkoulas/Bruyant, 1998, pp.125-140.

¹⁴⁹ For an authoritative study on the detrimental effects of the application of realist and deterrence theories on Greek-Turkish relations in general, on the part of Greek scholars, see Heraclides, Alexis, *Greece and the "Threat from the East"*, pp.162-194. In the same study Heraclides discusses Greek perceptions of hostility against Turkey and policies of antagonism that emanate also from a part of the Greek elites and intellectuals driven by an extreme Greek nationalism and a religio-cultural nationalism.

Greek and Turkish analysts argue that the crises of 1987 and 1996 were the instruments employed by the other side in order to gain some advantage in the Aegean Sea dispute.¹⁵⁰ The other side is accused of having designed the crisis in order to bring about a favourable for it change in the Aegean Sea by the threat of force. As for the de-escalation each side argues that in the crisis of 1987 the determination it displayed forced the other to withdrawal. The crisis of 1996 was more complex and left the Greek side with the feeling of defeat, convinced that the USA intervened in favour of Turkey.

The sharply opposed interests of the two states have frequently been considered the reason for the failure of peace initiatives. A great deal of the literature focuses on official negotiations and seeks to explain the failure to bring about a positive result. The conclusion often reached is that the maximization of profits and the incompatibility of the demands each side makes do not allow for a solution to the conflict.¹⁵¹ Thus, the emphasis is on the outcome of various peace initiatives not the process. They do not question for example the timing of the emergence of these processes and their every time conditioning. Additionally, a great part of the literature is devoted to the legal issues of the dispute and exhausts its efforts in the repetition of the legal arguments official authorities employ.

The striking paradox here, however, is that although scholars look at the same phenomenon, the same crises and employ the same tools of analysis - the realist perspective - they reach diametrically opposed conclusions. Furthermore, they do not seem to understand and provide an explanation for this paradox.

Finally, following carefully the literature on Greek-Turkish relations during the last ten years and especially after the crisis of 1996, we observe that alternative to the above mainstream explanations to the Greek-Turkish conflict have started to emerge. Scholars have employed analytical tools from conflict resolution and conflict

¹⁵⁰ For the crisis of 1996 from the Greek perspective see Mavrides, Panayiotis, & Fakiolas, Eustathios, "Strategic crisis management and the Greek-Turkish Dispute", [in Greek and English] in Hristodoulos Giallourides, *Greece and Turkey after the end of Cold War*, Sideris 1999, pp.133-176. For the crisis of 1987 see Giallourides, Hristodoulos, *The Greek-Turkish Conflict from Cyprus to Imia 1955-1996, The Press Perspective*, [in Greek], Sideris, 2001, Veremis, Thanos, *History of Greek-Turkish Relations 1453-1998* (sec ed.), [in Greek], ELIAMEP, Sideris, 1998. From a Turkish perspective Gürel, Sükrü Sina, *The Greek Turkish Relations (1821-1993)*, [in Turkish] Ankara, 1993, and Ayman, Gülten S., "The Kardak (Imia) Crisis and Turkish-Greek Relations", *Hellenic Studies*, Vol.9, No 2, 200, p.56. Pazarci, Hüsseyin, *The Status of Demilitarisation of the Islands in the Eastern Aegean*, Ankara University, 1986.

transformation perspectives. Before 1996 there were only a few exceptions of alternative analyses attempting to explain cognitive, psychological and systemic parameters involved in the Greek-Turkish conflict in general.¹⁵² After the 1996 crisis these studies have multiplied. Insights from sociology and history and the trend of discourse analysis have broadened the scope of the study of Greek-Turkish relations introducing a self-critical perspective into the relevant literature of both sides.

Additionally, it is after 1996 that academics became engaged with peace initiatives undertaking themselves initiatives towards the direction of conflict transformation. Institutionalised meetings among Greek and Turkish academics and programmes of action aiming, for example, at changing history texts books and organised seminars regarding multicultural education are only some examples of Greek and Turkish academics' joint action. The emergence of these initiatives and their development will be discussed analytically in chapter IV, in the empirical part of the thesis.

4. The Blind Spots of Crisis and Peace Processes Theories

In this part of the chapter, I will further discuss the relationship between theory and empirical research. The aim is to clarify certain requirements of a theory for the examination of the phenomena of crisis and peace processes. The above review of the theory demonstrated that the recognition of the complexity of these phenomena is the limit of the available theoretical analysis. Existing theories explain aspects, pieces of the puzzle of crisis and peace processes but they do not provide an explanation about their dynamics.

A common problem of theories of crisis and peace processes is that they define their subject matter in certain ways and then 'prove' that their definitions are appropriate by reading the empirical evidence in certain ways.¹⁵³ Their positivist ontological

¹⁵¹ Coufoudakis, Van, "Greek Political Party Attitudes towards Turkey: 1974-1989", in Conostas, Dimitri, *The Greek-Turkish Conflict in the 1990s: Domestic and External Influences*, London: Macmillan, 1991, p.49.

¹⁵² Volkan, Vamik, D., & Itzkowitz, Norman, *Turks and Greeks: Neighbours in Conflict*, The Eothern Press, 1994, Artunkal, Tugrul, "The Greek stereotype in the Turkish school textbooks", in Semih, Vaner, *The Greek-Turkish Dispute*, [in Turkish], Istanbul: Metis, 1990, p.229-239, Heraclides, Alexis, "The images of National "Self and "Other" in International Relations: the Case of the Greek Foreign Policy", *Modern Issues*, (in Greek), Vol.54, January-March 1995, Ayman, Gulden S., *The Turkish policy of Negotiation and Deterrence in the Aegean Sea* in Sule Kut, *The Longest Decade: the '90s in Turkey's National Security and Foreign Policy Agenda*, Boyut, Istanbul, 1998, pp.285-325.

¹⁵³ John Burton writes that "the great majority of scholars work within paradigms without question, work inductively and seek support for their theses". Burton, John, *Global Conflict*, p.36,

foundation has pre-determined their approach to the phenomena of crisis and peace processes. Nevertheless, scholars cannot perceive how they construct their analysis through the tools they have employed in the first place.

The underpinning assumptions of the theories are reflected in the way they perceive themselves and how they define their own task as regards these phenomena. Crisis theories' aim is to provide the means for control and management of crises. On the other hand, the majority of the literature on peace processes discusses how the academic-facilitator can engineer the resolution of the conflict. In other words, scholars are assumed to have knowledge about an 'objective world'. Taking this for granted, they believe that they can produce prescriptions about phenomena, and function in a therapeutic mode within society through diffusing knowledge.¹⁵⁴ However, this assumption is often based on an understanding of crisis and peace processes that separates these phenomena from society at large and that ignores the function of theory itself, within society.

To further explain this aspect, I will employ an example taken from my research on Greek-Turkish relations and the role of science within society. Analyses of the Greek-Turkish crises of 1987 and 1996 have re-entered society through writing and printing. These analyses have reproduced and reinforced the structures of the Greek-Turkish conflict itself. Furthermore, they have constituted the basic material of further discourse within Greece and Turkey about Greek-Turkish relations: material for courses in the universities, journalistic discourse and the material for political and military planning and decision-making.

This phenomenon is not unique to the crisis in Greece and Turkey. We find similar accounts of the function of science within society in the American international relations literature, in particular with regard to the Cold War. Banks and Burton discuss the role of American scholars in the service of their government¹⁵⁵. Deterrence theories have been criticised as another case of theory entering the praxis of foreign policy and which can create paradoxes like self-fulfilling prophecies leading eventually to crisis escalation.

"Functionalism and the Resolution of Conflict" in Groom, A. J. R., and Taylor, Paul (eds.) *Functionalism*, 1975, p.249

¹⁵⁴ Vayrynen, Tarja, *Sharing Reality..*, p.126.

¹⁵⁵ See Burton, John, *World Society*, London: Macmillan, 1972 and Banks, Michal, "The International Relations Discipline: Asset or Liability for Conflict Resolution?", in Burton, John & Dukes, Frank, *Conflict: Readings in Management and Resolution*, London: Macmillan, 1990, pp.51-70.

Transformation theories enter modern society too through scholars/activists who seek to apply the conclusions of their theoretical analysis and empirical research to societies in conflict. The re-entry of theory to society, has been institutionalised, as it was demonstrated above, in several NGOs for conflict resolution, conflict transformation and crisis prevention. Furthermore, a first evaluation of their role argues for both positive and negative effects that they may have with regard to the development of a conflict. In many cases, they have saved lives by providing early warning, which allowed timely intervention and prevented the escalation of conflicts. Nevertheless, there is evidence too that their action in the field of conflict supported warlords, or these organizations looked to serve their own institutionalised interests.

To sum up the argument here, the re-entry of theory in society results in a paradox: namely, theory is not something different from its object; it changes its own object and ultimately it becomes its own object. Nevertheless, it cannot see its role in society. This is the *blind spot* of theory, which remains invisible to it. Producing a theory restricted to a narrow examination of crisis and peace processes based on empirical observations with occasional injections of sociology and philosophy, does not help us to conceptualise the relation of the part, that is the role of the theory, and the whole, that is society. By creating isolated theories, which are not integrated with society, we run the risk of losing touch with reality. We may end up creating artificial esoteric constructs, which do not help us understand society's complexity but instead increase our confusion.

Thus, a call for control or social engineering through scientific knowledge in a functionally differentiated society seems to be inappropriate and misleading. It presupposes that scientists can control, that is they can intervene and plan the totality of society. However, paradoxically, the theory undertaking that role is itself not a theory, which can understand and describe its own operation, let alone the mode of operation of society. The pretension of 'scientific' validity excludes self-reflection and the open admission of self-reference and circular reasoning, which are characteristics of our modern society.

Burton's passionate demand for scholars to reconsider their assumptions is an attempt to induce self-referentiality, to stimulate discussion and self-reflexive processes about how we think about thinking, about what kind of decisions are made prior to decision making, for decision making and about how we learn to learn. Conflict transformation theories have modified the ambition of control and our tools of observation of society.

Furthermore, the current interest in discourse analysis contributes important insights on how knowledge is constructed and is taken for granted.

This section of the chapter put forth two correctives for a theory of crisis and peace processes. First they should be theories of society and second they should be designed to include their own self-reference, their own operation within society as an object of their analysis.

Conclusion

In this chapter crisis and peace processes theories were reviewed. Rational cost/benefit calculations, psychological and cognitive processes and systemic parameters have been examined as important aspects of the analysis of crisis and peace processes. The main endeavour of theories of crisis and peace processes has been to discover patterns of crisis escalation and conflict resolution. Underpinning assumption of the mainstream theory is that crisis and peace processes are interaction processes in a society that is constituted on the level of -rational- action. This approach emanates from a more profound philosophical tradition, which conceptualises society as stable, hierarchically differentiated and directed by decision-makers and elites. The role of science in this framework is perceived as the key to the problems of society. It is assumed that science can provide society with knowledge that will enable control and social engineering.

Nevertheless, the above review demonstrated that crisis and peace processes resist linear analysis. They are highly complex phenomena, characterised by unpredictability, lack of control and constant change. This is further substantiated by the paradox we are facing in the turn of the 20th century: despite the outpouring of scientific studies on crisis and peace processes, a significant increase in crises and violent conflicts raging all over the world has been observed over the last 40 years.

The above review revealed the need for more pertinent analyses of today's complex reality and also the classical problems of knowledge and objectivity. Accumulated empirical evidence and attempts to theorize about these phenomena have explored aspects of this complexity but they cannot afford to go beyond simplistic description or normative claims.

The conclusion drawn in this chapter is that a theory of crisis and peace processes should be designed in such a way as to enable comparative analysis and the exploration of these processes from the point of view of complexity and contingency.

That also requires a different conceptualisation of theory's task. Theory should approach itself as one of its objects that takes part in the world of objects it describes. It should be designed to contemplate its re-entry in society. This enterprise requires a completely different scope and framework of analysis; a theory of society, which will provide us with tools, sophisticated enough to cope with the problems indicated above. I propose to use Luhmann's theory of modern systems for this purpose.

CHAPTER II

THE THEORY OF SOCIAL AUTOPOIESIS

In the first chapter I discussed how theories conceptualise crisis and peace processes as being constituted through actions, interactions and inputs of individuals and decision-makers. In this part I will present Niklas Luhmann's theory of social autopoiesis, which I used in the research and analysis of my case studies. Luhmann's theory argues that modern society is constituted, and more precisely self-constituted, on the level of communications. Actions and decisions presuppose communication and thus they cannot be considered the elementary units of social systems. Luhmann's voluminous work is devoted to the development of analytical tools for the exploration of this self-constitution.

Modern society is seen as shaped and re-shaped through the constant activity of the processes of communication. It is described as a free-floating reality, a multi-centred world differentiated according to the principle of function and not hierarchy. Here 'individuals', as understood by Luhmann, have an important role to play but they are not considered to be 'parts' or 'elements' of social systems. This turn to a highly abstract conceptualization of social systems and society as a whole changes completely the way of perceiving and thinking about the world. The restless and creative nature of social systems and their autonomy – rather than homeostasis and equilibrium – become the focus of analysis.

Niklas Luhmann's modern systems theory integrates the theory of evolution, the theory of social systems and the theory of communication. The theoretical architecture of Luhmann's systems is built on carefully crafted relationships among concepts employed from these theories. Niklas Luhmann needed 40 years to develop the whole of his theory but his research interests were clear from the beginning.¹⁵⁶ From early on he problematized social complexity, contingency and the dynamics of societal evolution. Developments in different fields of knowledge and research during these years gave him the tools he was looking for to complete his project. In order to build up his approach, he adopted and further elaborated existing theories or different elements of existing theories. General systems theory, developments in information and decision theories and cybernetics, thermodynamics, functionalism, and Husserl's

¹⁵⁶ For a comprehensive account of the development of Luhmann's theory, see Rossbach, Stefan, *On Friedrich Nietzsche, Michel Foucault, and Niklas Luhmann*, Badia Fiesolana, San Domenico, EUI Working Paper SPS No. 93/10, pp.81-119.

phenomenology were incorporated in a theoretical edifice, which makes the theory of modern social systems.

To be specific, Luhmann integrated in his theoretical framework the two important paradigm shifts of the last decades in general systems theory. First, he followed the move from the 'whole/parts' conceptualization of systems to the 'system/environment' approach of open systems. Second, he conceptualized systems, including social systems, as self-referential systems. Self-reference clarifies how social systems can be open and closed at the same time. They communicate with their environment only through their own meaning world, through self-contact. The system/environment difference and the self-reference combined with functional analysis provide the (empirical) epistemology of autopoiesis.

This chapter is divided in three main parts. In the first part I present the basic principles of Luhmann's systems theory. In the second part, I describe modern society as the overall encompassing system and outline its main characteristics. In the third part I discuss the implications of the theory for empirical research. Furthermore, I seek to demonstrate the change of perspective Luhmann's theory offers by formulating new questions for the study of crisis and peace processes.

Luhmann has been one of the most productive thinkers of the last century, as his work includes some 40 books and 400 articles.¹⁵⁷ In this part of the study I do not intend to present a full account of this voluminous work. Instead I just want to introduce the necessary tools for my research. For that reason I tried to keep this section brief - hopefully not at the expense of the necessary clarity.

1. Principles of Social Autopoiesis

1.1. Social Autopoiesis

Autopoiesis is a Greek word and literally means self-production.¹⁵⁸ Luhmann borrowed this concept from biology in order to describe a form of system building valid not only for living but also for social systems. Through autopoiesis systems produce and reproduce themselves by generating their constitutive elements, their structures, their boundaries and also their unity.

¹⁵⁷ For a full account see Luhmann, Niklas, *Social Systems*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995.

¹⁵⁸ It was first coined by the Chilean biologists Maturana, Humberto, R. & Varela, Fransesco G., *Autopoiesis and Cognition: The Realization of the living*, Dordrecht: Reidel, 1980.

Luhmann conceptualizes society as an autopoietic system. He distinguishes in particular three main levels of system formation: Life systems, psychic systems and social systems. Life systems are biological systems, cells, organisms, brains etc. For the theory of autopoiesis, life systems form a different level of existence than social systems. The autopoiesis of society needs this level and uses it as a necessary precondition for its own operations but it does not 'include' or 'constitute' living systems. Life systems exist in the environment of society. Similarly, psychic systems – consciousness – are not 'parts' of society. They too exist in society's environment. In other words, the three levels – life systems (organisms), psychic systems (consciousness), and social systems (communication) – are strictly separate although the systems that exist at these levels are all autopoietic systems. In particular, Luhmann emphasizes that society is not an organism. Psychic and social systems are both autopoietic systems but they have very different modes of operation: life and communication respectively. Psychic systems too are autopoietic systems but they are different from life systems and social systems in that their mode of operation is consciousness.

The difference between living systems on the one hand and psychic and social systems on the other is that psychic and social systems can internally represent the complexity of the world *through* 'meaning'. In fact, this is exactly what 'meaning' is: an internal representation of the world. In other words, psychic and social systems can construct an image of themselves and the world, which 'guides' them in their ongoing autopoiesis. Whether and how such systems respond to 'irritations' and 'perturbations' depends on whether and how they are able to assign 'meaning' to them.

Traditional sociology considered 'individuals', 'actors' or 'persons' as the fundamental elements or units of society. In Luhmann's theory there is no entity that directly corresponds to the "individual" of traditional sociology. 'Individuals', 'persons' and 'actors' are constituted through communication in society, a process that helps society externalize its self-reference. But for society, these constructions correspond to entities that it perceives in its environment. In turn, the self-description of psychic systems – the meaning that consciousness assigns to itself – may or may not correspond to such constructions. The fact that in Luhmann's theory 'individuals' are found, by society, in society's environment has led some critics to argue that

Luhmann's theory is 'a-human'.¹⁵⁹ However, a careful reading of the theory shows that modern systems theory allocates an important role for psychic systems. Both psychic and social systems are necessary for society's autopoietic evolution. Without psychic systems there would be no communication at all. The innovation here however is that psychic systems cannot interact directly, because they cannot make the contents of their consciousness, their own complexity, part of the other system's consciousness. Instead, it is only through social systems – communication – that they can get in contact and interact with other psychic systems.¹⁶⁰

For Luhmann, the term 'interaction' has a precise technical meaning. 'Interactions' are social systems that require the (physical) presence of at least two psychic systems for their autopoietic reproduction. A typical example of an 'interaction' is a 'meeting'. There is a sense in which 'interactions' are the most basic social systems. More complex systems, such as 'organizations', have an identity and continue to exist regardless of whether their members attend the required meetings. Interaction systems were extremely important for society's autopoiesis because they provided social systems with the 'raw material' for their autopoiesis. In other words, it is out of the noise of interaction systems that other social systems created order. Nevertheless, with the invention of printing and writing society became less dependent on interactions. As a result, the unity of society is no longer accessible through interactions. Less complex societies were based on interaction, but in modern societies 'function' became the principal mode of society's differentiation. Today's principal function systems are the systems of economy, politics, family, law, religion and science. Function systems are subsystems of society; they perform specialized functions that are important for society's autopoiesis. They continuously differentiate internally and externally in order to cope with increased complexity and contingency.

There is no general 'rationality' – such as e.g. 'stability' – that social systems follow. Their rationalities are system-specific. This emphasizes the autonomy and

¹⁵⁹ Conventional sociological theories attempt to socialise the individual or deconstruct it through language-centred views. Here individuals are segregated from society but it is precisely this move that recognises their special hypostasis.

¹⁶⁰ Gunther Teubner's example illustrates the nature of interaction and its relation with psychic systems. "There are sixteen human beings in the room in which the seminar takes place. But the seminar's "social system" is also a seventeenth cognitive unit active in the meeting in the form. This is a meaning creating entity with similar dynamics to the kinds of things going on in the minds of its physical actors. However, this social system does not consist of the physical people and their interrelations, but solely of the seminar's communication acts based on expressed language, gestures

independence of social systems. However, this autonomy does not mean that social systems are 'isolated' systems. On the contrary, social systems are constituted precisely through their difference with the environment, i.e. in relation to the environment.

1.2. Social Systems: the unity of system/environment difference

Traditional sociological theory perceived systems as units isolated from their environment. Social systems theory argues that it is precisely the difference between system and environment that constitutes the system. In order to understand this, we need to discuss the basic operations of a social system: self- and other- (or hetero-) observation as well as self-description.

The system does not communicate directly with its environment; it only observes it. In particular, the system takes information or is stimulated to construct information about its environment and it uses that for the creation of its own 'meaning world'. This internal world can be constituted of highly artificial and even esoteric constructs about the external world. This mode of operation makes understandable why self-reference is the central concept of the theory of modern systems. The meaning of self-reference is that the contact of social systems with their environments is shaped through their contact with themselves. Hetero-reference is possible only through self-reference.

Every observation is at the same time a distinction because the observation of 'something' necessitates that this 'something' is distinguished from everything else. Observing a tree, for example, means that I distinguish it from the rest of the objects entering my optical prism. Thus, as the system observes, it produces distinctions. In fact, an observation is the unity of a distinction and a denotation. For as I observe the tree, I not only distinguish it from everything else, I also 'denote' it, in this case by calling or naming or identifying it as a 'tree'. When distinctions are introduced and incorporated into the system's 'meaning world', they can be represented in language - which is in itself an evolutionary achievement of the co-evolution of psychic and social systems - through words, types and concepts, which in turn become important for the processing of further distinctions, and for connecting the various distinctions in the system's repertoire. In order to avoid misunderstandings I should make clear at

and other sensory interplay. It is a world of meaning, with a life and cognition of its own". Teubner,

this point that the 'observer' is not a subject that operates outside the observed reality; instead the observer is to be understood as a system constituted of observations connected to each other and differentiated from its environment.

Social systems may use binary codes in order to proceed with their operations, that is, in order to make distinctions and connect them with further distinctions. Through binary codes, systems observe the world with a view to applying either of the two sides of the code. Codes "fix a positive and a negative value whilst exclude every third possibility".¹⁶¹ For example, the social system of science uses the true/false code, with 'true' as the positive and 'false' as the negative value; the economy uses the code have/have not, and the media system uses the information/non-information code etc. Binary codes are implemented through programmes.

This mode of systems operation stresses the fact that social systems are operatively closed but at the same time they are open to external influence through their basic operations of self and other-observation. The system's environment is not a unity itself capable of operations, because it cannot perceive, have dealings with, or directly influence the system.

The system-environment relationship is asymmetric. No system can match the complexity of its environment, because a system cannot have enough information about all the other systems that constitute its environment.¹⁶² The difference in complexity between system and environment is the fundamental problem of modern systems theory. Social systems are built up as selections responding to complexity. According to Luhmann, complexity is exactly this: enforced selectivity. Under the conditions of complexity, for something to happen, it must be selected among a multitude of diverse possibilities. The very existence of a system is already a reduction of complexity because it actualizes only one of a multitude of possibilities. Thus, the system's existence is contingent, and its continued existence remains fragile and requires continuous selectivity. Accordingly, the emergence of a system itself is a contingent event; it does not follow a causal law. Systems emerge through selective operations guided by distinctions and above all by the system/environment difference.¹⁶³

Gunther, "Law as an Autopoietic System", LSE Complexity Study Group Meeting No.3, 18 June 1997.

¹⁶¹ See in particular the discussion of binary codes in the context of mass media function system.

Luhmann, Niklas, *The Reality of Mass Media*, Polity Press, 2000, p.16-18.

¹⁶² Luhmann, Niklas, *Social Systems*, p.182.

¹⁶³ *ibid.*, p.32.

The principle of self-reference emphasizes the autonomy of autopoietic systems vis-à-vis their environment. It also means that the environment cannot be reached through cognition, but the system's operational closure enables it to process external influences through an internal circular causal process. The reproduction of social systems does not follow linear cause-effect links but results from a recursive, self-referential process.

I will now try to illustrate the system/environment relationship for autopoietic systems with two metaphors.¹⁶⁴ The well-known 'butterfly effect' metaphor – as seen from the perspective of self-referential systems – is one of them. The 'butterfly effect' was initially discussed in the context of meteorology where it was demonstrated that, depending on the overall weather dynamics, a butterfly that flies over Canterbury can trigger a local turbulence which can cause a hurricane in the Atlantic. This metaphor illustrates the point that microscopic fluctuations may produce macroscopic changes. However, from the point of view of systems theory, the butterfly is not the cause of the hurricane. The internal dynamics of the weather conditions at that specific moment enabled the butterfly to induce this result. In other words it is the system-environment synergy that brought about the hurricane phenomenon.

The same point, now applied to meaning-based systems, is further illustrated by the following metaphor. Let us imagine a man who is dreaming that he prepares a dinner for his partner. While his dream unfolds he sees himself preparing the food and laying the table. Then suddenly his alarm clock rings. But instead of waking him up, he perceives it as the doorbell and thus the sign of his guest's arrival. Accordingly, his dream continues. In this situation, it is the context of the dream – the dream's 'meaning world' – that incorporated the sound of the alarm. The noise was incorporated into the dream by perceiving it in a certain way. The noise itself is a mere irritation, the meaning of which is determined by the overall dynamics of the dream. Note how the environment has a 'real' impact on the system, but the nature of this impact is determined by the system. In this sense, the system creates its own elements from the noise provided by the environment.

¹⁶⁴ Rossbach, Stefan, "The Myth of the System: On the development, purpose and context of Niklas Luhmann's Systems Theory", Paper prepared for ECPR Joint Session of Workshops, Copenhagen, April 2000, pp.13-14.

The question that arises next is how the system manages this complexity, how it makes selections. The answer is that it uses different strategies but above all it copes with complexity through the evolutionary achievement of meaning.

1.3. Meaning: the System's Response to Infinite Complexity

Meaning consists of references, which are the result of the system's observations. References are connected to other references forming contexts useful for the orientation of the system's operations.¹⁶⁵ Without meaning contexts, communication would not be possible at all.

In meaning systems everything is given as meaning, including elements, boundaries and structures. Social and psychic systems evolve together through meaning, differentiating themselves with respect to it. The difference between them, as we noted above, lies in that psychic systems use consciousness as their mode of autopoietic reproduction and, in their self-descriptions, their elements are 'thoughts', while social systems use communication and their elements are 'actions/events'. But in both cases psychic and social systems make up their own meaning worlds, which include what is important for them.¹⁶⁶ Through meaning, social systems create a history for themselves to which they can refer and which they can use for further connections.

Meaning fulfils two important functions: it constrains and preserves complexity at the same time.¹⁶⁷ It constrains complexity and helps systems to order experience, handle selectivity and self-reproduce. The system observes its environment, makes distinctions and then it uses the distinctions that it extracts for connective information processing. Every element of the system refers back to other elements and at the same time it makes itself available for future connections in different situations. In that way meaning solves the problem that systems are continuously confronted with: they have to decide, at every moment of their autopoiesis, what state they select as their next state. Nevertheless, each actual selection does not imply the elimination of what has not been selected. Each selection of meaning simultaneously includes its negation, all that has not been selected. In that way enough complexity for further system

¹⁶⁵ Luhmann, Niklas, "The Modernity of Science", *New German Critique*, Winter 94, Issue 61, available also on the website <http://www.libfl.ru.Luhmann3.html>.

¹⁶⁶ Rossbach, Srefan, *The Autopoiesis of the Cold War, An Evolutionary Approach to International Relations?*, p.9.

formation is preserved. Therefore, meaning serves another function as well, that of the preservation of what has not been selected. Meaning provides the system with “a surplus of references to other possibilities of experiences and actions”.¹⁶⁸ Every actual state of the system refers to far more than itself, and every actual experience of a psychic system “by far exceeds what can be realized through action or actualised in experience”.¹⁶⁹

This surplus of references prevents a static and deterministic conceptualization of meaning. Meaning is conceptualized by Luhmann in terms of horizons, which include all possibilities and indicate further ones.

This can be better understood if one looks closely at the self-referential constitution of meaning. The self-referentiality of meaning is possible by means of generalisation. Meaning is generalised in all the three dimensions, the factual, the temporal and the social. Once a system has come into existence - in other words, once an identity has emerged - it becomes independent and autonomous from the concrete events that brought it about - Luhmann refers to this as a ‘generalization’ in the factual dimension of meaning. Furthermore, the system looks for other references to connect with in the past and extrapolates itself into the future - a further ‘generalization’ but this time in the temporal dimension. There is a social dimension as well, where the system’s existence can be reinforced and reproduced in that other systems make their autopoiesis dependent on the first system’s existence. In other words, the system’s existence is ‘generalized’ by other systems. As an example from the empirical part of this thesis, consider how a ‘crisis’, once it has been given an ‘identity’, can become independent of the concrete facts that brought it about. It becomes taken for granted as a fact of its own. The concrete events are not important anymore; rather, what is of importance is the new entity/identity that is the crisis, which is then explained through references to the past of the conflict, i.e. to the already existing structures of a conflict. The self-referential processing of meaning requires, apart from language, symbolic generalizations, which define the identity of things, events, types or concepts and they are condensed in the form of structures of expectations. What we consider today as part of a self-evident reality is the history of meaning that has been consolidated to structures of expectations. That does not imply that there is no reality at all. Reality

¹⁶⁷ See Luhmann, Niklas, *Social Systems*, pp.59-102, Luhmann, Niklas, *Essays on Self-Reference*, pp.21-79.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p.60.

itself can never be fully accessible due to its infinite complexity. Reality serves however as a background, as 'noise', from which distinctions and differences are extracted selectively and continuously processed as information.

The question that will occupy us next is the way in which meaning is formed at the moment of the emergence of a system. The basic condition for that is double contingency.

1.4. Double Contingency: the Basic Condition for the Emergence of Meaning

Double contingency is the basic condition for the formation of social systems and thus for the emergence of social order¹⁷⁰. In a situation of double contingency every participant in a social action considers his action to be dependent on the action of the other: "I will do what you want if you do what I want".¹⁷¹ In that sense an ego is also an alter ego as he anticipates alter's reaction to his own action and to his own expectations. The "I will do what you want if you do what I want" – in its 'double' or reciprocal form – is a paradox that attracts accidents. In other words, double contingency creates sensitivity to chance. As ego and alter observe each other, and as they try to make their actions dependent on the other's actions, *any* change in their behaviour will in fact be interpreted as 'action', as a selection, as a reduction of the infinite contingency implicit in double contingency. Once alter or ego has 'acted' in this way, it becomes possible for ego or alter to re-act, to connect. From then on the interaction between alter and ego constitutes a self-referential system that renews itself from within.

Double contingency is thus a situation around which a new system/environment difference can crystallize and thus a new social system can emerge. In a situation of double contingency, every alteration is perceived as a selection, as a non-random event, to which it becomes possible to respond with a further selection. Hence, double contingency gives rise to the formation of the system and on the other hand the autopoietic operation of the system continues to 'process' and 'manage' this double contingency by creating themes, information, and meaning, that is, by creating order out of noise. Every subsequent selection the system makes is an action with a contingency reducing, determining effect – be it positive or negative. Connections

¹⁶⁹ Luhmann, Niklas, *Essays on Self-Reference*, p.26.

¹⁷⁰ E. Shils was the first to express the theorem of double contingency, see Parsons, T. & Shils, E., *Toward a General Theory of Action*, N. York, Evenston, 1951.

between selections and further selections create structures as well as a history for the system. In this sense double contingency works autocatalytically, as it is both the factor that enables the formation of the system and at the same time it becomes a component carried along by the system that it forms. According to Luhmann, the parameter of time is important for a social system as a functional equivalent to socio-cultural patterns that constrain double contingency.¹⁷²

In some sense, of course, double contingency is a 'limit' situation. 'Pure' double contingency without any pre-given is not possible. This is because wherever and whenever alter and ego 'meet', they will be able to draw on already existing structures and expectations to navigate their respective 'actions'. But while these structures may be able to reduce the contingency of the situation in some respects, other aspects of alter's and ego's behaviour may remain undetermined. In fact, it is exactly in this sense that double contingency remains a factor in the encounter and requires the continued existence of a system to 'process' and 'channel' this contingency.

The system ensures that selections after selections are made – with subsequent selections building on and presupposing previous selections – and transformed into expectations. At this point at the latest, the system ceases to be open indiscriminately to anything and it acquires sensitivity to specific items.¹⁷³ Expectations, as structures, reduce the 'everything is possible' of double contingency into the more manageable "some things are possible, and others (normally) are not". Expectations allow systems to take aspects of their reality for granted and thus to direct their observation to the as yet 'untamed' areas of their reality. This, of course, involves risks because expectations can be disappointed. For example, organizations have institutionalized routines and rules of operation that entail certain expectations as to what situations they will have to deal with in the future. These institutionalized expectations will lead them to deal with different issues in the same way. The nuances of reality are overlooked. Nevertheless, this risk is just another way of looking at the difference in complexity between system and environment: the environment is always more complex than the system.

Whatever unfolds from a situation of double contingency, however, cannot be interpreted as a form of understanding that alter and ego reach with each other.

¹⁷¹ Luhmann, Niklas, *Social Systems*, p.117.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, p.127.

¹⁷³ *ibid.*, p.132.

Luhmann emphasizes that the systems involved – whether psychic or social – remain black boxes for each other. What they do achieve is a form of co-evolution, a coordination of their autopoiesis. In their meaning worlds, the systems will see themselves as reacting to each other. However, the self-perception of one system may be very different from how the other system perceives it. The systematicity of their coordination is thus a new reality that cannot be reduced to the ‘intentions’ or ‘purposes’ of the contributing systems. Thus, Luhmann’s take on double contingency follows the traditional understanding in that it emphasizes the social dimension of action and illustrates the point that the social domain cannot be reduced to ‘individuals’ and their intentions/actions.

1.5. Communication as the Autopoietic Mode of Social Systems’ Operation

For Talcott Parsons, a social system is a system of action, made up of interactions between individuals. For Luhmann, in contrast, the elemental unit of the self-constitution of social systems is communication.¹⁷⁴ After the inventions of writing and printing and the developments in communications technology, the gap between interaction and society became deeper and wider. The unity of society became inaccessible to interaction and accordingly a higher degree of abstraction was necessary for the theory of social systems.¹⁷⁵ According to Luhmann, it is only as communication that self-reference can be adequately conceptualized since communication – and not actions/decisions – can thematize itself (self-reference) and everything else (hetero-reference).

Communication is defined as the unity of three selections: ‘information’, ‘utterance’ and ‘understanding’ (including misunderstanding). Information should not be thought of something that already exists out there in the environment of the system ready to be picked up by the system. Information both presupposes and actualizes the use of the system’s structures. In that sense it is the system itself that produces information through its basic operations of self-observation and other-observation, self-description and reflection.¹⁷⁶ Communication is a self-referential process. Every social system determines what is accepted as communication for its meaning world. This decision follows its own rationale, aims and programmes. Luhmann criticizes Habermas for

¹⁷⁴ For the autopoiesis of communication and its relationship to action see Luhmann, Niklas, *Social Systems*, pp.137-175.

¹⁷⁵ *ibid.*, p.430.

suggesting that communication aims at a 'consensus'; according to Luhmann, the abstract notion of communication does not entail a substantive 'aim'. All that we can say is that communication invites further communication.

Utterance is the reproduction of information within the system itself. The system duplicates information, reformulates it through utterance by providing it with a linguistic – be it acoustic, written, or other – form.¹⁷⁷ Utterance itself is a selection in that the form of utterance has to be decided upon.

Understanding is the third selection of the unity of communication that enables the self-referential evolution of the system through the connection of one communication with another. 'Understanding' refers to the understanding of the distinction between information and utterance and not any kind of acceptance or rejection – this comes later and it is not part of the unity of communication. In other words the third selection of communication denotes an understanding of reality as a two-sided form of the 'what' is being observed and the 'how' it is being observed. 'Utterance' adds something to the information. The fact that the information was reproduced through utterance is in itself significant and must be 'understood' for communication to emerge and continue. What has to be 'understood' here is not the contents of a message but the basic distinction between information and utterance as different kinds of selection. If we only perceive information but not utterance, then we have perception but not communication. If for example I see someone rushing about and I interpret it as a sign of haste then it is perception. If I consider the particular way in which the other person is rushing about as an 'utterance', as a sign, as a selection, then we have communication. In other words, communication entails that alter anticipates that ego anticipates his anticipation and it is precisely this aspect of communication that makes it the constitutive element of the social domain. The consequence of that is the self-referential nature of communication.

Understanding does not mean that a reader, listener, or an observer will accept or reject communication. Rejection or acceptance follows once communication is taking place, and it can be seen as the transformation of the difference between information and utterance into the difference of acceptance or rejection. But rejecting or accepting communication is in itself communication. This new difference between rejecting and accepting is used in order to channel communication, as the basis for connecting with

¹⁷⁶ *ibid.*, p.444.

further communication in certain ways. Furthermore, and more generally, the dynamics of communication are found precisely in the unity of the three selections because it enables connections with further communications. Communication becomes a process through new connections with other references. The process-like character of communication can be supported by 'themes', which function as structures in that they order communicative nexes by attracting only certain contributions (connections) and not others.

Luhmann emphasizes the unlikelihood of communication. Given the fact that psychic and social systems are closed autopoietic systems and that in the conditions of modernity, reaching the addressee is a problem, and given that the 'understanding' part of communication cannot be taken for granted, it is not clear why communication should occur at all. How is communication as coordinated selectivity possible?

We find the answer to this question in the evolutionary achievements of language, media of mass communication and symbolically generalized media of communication. Language enables reflexive communication. One can always ask questions for example about something that is uncertain or unexpected. Thus language both increases the understandability of communication and thereby ensures its continuation. The development of technologically advanced media of dissemination of communication guarantees the continuity of communication by addressing an unspecified number of potential receivers.

Finally, 'symbolically generalized' media of communication include money/property, power/law, truth, love, and basic values. They increase the likelihood of 'understanding' in that they entail 'incentives' by structuring communication in certain ways. In other words, they pre-select possibilities of connection. For example, the most important symbolically generalized media of communication direct selections towards the principal functional subsystem of society. Money directs communication towards the economic system, truth directs it towards science and power towards politics.¹⁷⁸

The above conceptualization of communication emphasizes the autonomy of communication itself and its self-referential and dynamic nature based on the continuous activity and selectivity that underlies it.

¹⁷⁷ *ibid.*, p.142.

1.6. Communication and Action in Systems Theory

Traditional sociology took for granted that action - or communicative action according to Habermas - rather than communication should be the unit of analysis. In social systems theory communications are the constitutive elements of social systems and 'actions' occur at the level of the self-descriptions of these systems. When social systems communicate about themselves, they break down their continuous autopoietic operation into a series of 'actions', thereby generating a simplified description of themselves (and their environment).

In the self-description of social systems, actions may appear to be incorporated in communication. First, the very selection of information can appear as an action. Furthermore, the selection of utterance – the way in which the information is uttered – can be interpreted as 'action'. To interpret selection as 'action' means to assign responsibility for consequences to the respective 'actors'. Thus, action is the externalization of self-reference. The system 'rationalizes' an event as 'action' by perceiving the event as the result of a selection, a choice among alternatives, represented as decision, and as such as driven by motives. But this attribution is in itself the result of the system describing itself and its environment. The author of the selections is always the system itself. An 'action' is thus an observer's perception of actualized contingency.

Actions are used for the self-description of the system in order to 'steer' and 'manage' the continuation of communication, to direct into certain directions. In order to steer itself the communication process must be decomposed to actions. Actions serve as connective points because of the combination of determinacy and indeterminacy they bring with them and the synchronization they achieve for the system. Actions as events are determinate in their momentary actuality and indeterminate in their connectivity. There is a sense, then, in which it may be very difficult if not impossible to empirically distinguish communication and action. However, communication cannot be reduced to action because 'action' is constituted through communication. A lady dropping a handkerchief in the presence of a gentleman might have qualified as 'action' in a previous century but does not do so today. What does and what does not qualify as action is communicatively constituted.

¹⁷⁸ Luhmann, Niklas, *Social Systems*, p.161.

1.7. Structural Couplings v Uni-linear Causality

In the introductory chapter I discussed how the theory of international crisis and peace processes is engaged in a search for causal links between actions and that this search often leads to the unquestioned assumption of one overarching instrumental rationality behind actions.

Systems theory perceives systems as co-evolving through on-going processes of structural couplings and interpenetration between worlds of meaning. Systems that constitute environments for each other make available their complexity for the constitution of another system. Thus, structural coupling is the phenomenon where the same element may be used simultaneously by several systems through an “a-causal synchronization of parallel ongoing processes”.¹⁷⁹ An event like an earthquake can be interpreted and used by different systems, for example as a source of news for the media, an occasion for professional organizations like humanitarian aid organizations to make profit, an occasion for civil society’s philanthropic organizations to become active, and an occasion for co-operation among interstate-organizations on a specific task.

The simultaneous use of the same element does not determine the effects that it will have in different systems. Systems link and influence each other not in some causal way but blindly. This is better understood if we think of the third element of communication namely understanding, which also includes misunderstanding. The same communication can be observed by each system according to its own unique code and rationality, thus different meanings will be attributed to it by different systems.¹⁸⁰

The emphasis here is on the lack of a linear causality as well as on the parameter of time. Cause-effect relationships imply a difference in time in a sequential process, whereas the concept of structural coupling defines synchronous - simultaneous - co-evolution.

Structural couplings create zones of contact not only among social systems but also among social and psychic systems. Structural couplings among social and psychic

¹⁷⁹ Teubner, Gunther, “Law as an Autopoietic System”, p.10.

¹⁸⁰ Kyriakos Mikelis, in his discussion of the European integration theory through the modern systems perspective, points to the example of the operation of the EU and its different policy making agencies. He maintains that each agency responds to only locally available to it information and does not hold a picture of the whole of the system or the other systems. Mikelis, Kyriakos, “The Deparadoxization of European Integration Theory Through Social and Complex Systems Theory”, Paper prepared for ECPR Joint Sessions, Denmark, April 2000.

systems are described by the concept of 'interpenetration'. The interpenetration of social and psychic systems and thus their co-evolution is possible because they both employ meaning. Communication can be incorporated in the meaning worlds of psychic systems, and consciousness and thoughts can be incorporated in communication. In other words, one can think about communication and one can communicate about thinking.¹⁸¹ Luhmann emphasizes the importance of language for the structural coupling between social and psychic systems because language "automatizes the structural coupling between psychic and social systems".¹⁸²

1.8. The Formation of Social Structures

The question in this section is the stability and change of social structures in modern society. Luhmann's argument is that society is constituted and self-reproduced continuously on the level of communication. Its elements, structures and processes are based on communication. Societal evolution is a process of constant production and reproduction of the whole of society on the level of communication through a reshaping and widening of the possibilities for communication.¹⁸³

Self-observation is the operation that underlies the formation of structures in the social system that produces them.¹⁸⁴ Self-observation is an operation of distinguishing. In other words, self-observation establishes differences and draws distinctions. When distinctions are drawn, new identities are introduced and tested, and these identities can then be connected to other distinctions and they can be used to 'order' already existing distinctions and differences. In this way they may crystallize into structures, and may even be organizationally implemented".

Structures are established and are continuously self-reproduced through processes of selection and variation. The system's basis of selection is time. Social systems do not have the time to connect with every element in their environment because the environment is always more complex than the system. Complexity then enforces selectivity. Selection itself is a temporal concept because "it is imminent, it is required, is performed and finally enters the past."¹⁸⁵ Events vanish in time and then

¹⁸¹ Luhmann, Niklas, *Social Systems*, p.219.

¹⁸² Rossbach, Stefan, "The Autopoiesis of the Cold War: An Evolutionary Approach to..", p.13.

¹⁸³ Luhmann, Niklas, *Social Systems*, p.159.

¹⁸⁴ *ibid.*, p.301.

¹⁸⁵ Luhmann, Niklas, "Complexity and Meaning", in *Essays on Self-Reference*, p.83.

pass away immediately after their appearance. Nevertheless, events actualize the existence of structures and constitute structures at the same time.

There are several mechanisms for the intensification of selectivity. In the temporal dimension, speed is of essence. Themes to which one can make contributions quickly are preferred to other themes that require more time for thought. In other words, those chains of selections that can operate faster will prevail over those that require deliberation on how to react. Similarly, time pressures make structures change at a faster rate. In the factual and social dimension, connectivity is the crucial factor that enables the autogenesis of social systems.¹⁸⁶

The function of structures is that they pre-select possibilities for choice and thus constrain complexity. Structures are reflexive expectations. Structures are expectations of expectations – rather than expectations of behaviours – in that they allow us to expect what others expect of themselves.¹⁸⁷ Anticipating the same expectations, different participants in communication can orient themselves towards the same attitudes simultaneously and thus transform unstructured complexity into structured complexity. Luhmann explains that in the factual dimension expectations are identified through roles, persons, programmes (norms or goals) and values.¹⁸⁸

Networks of recursive observations of observations yield recursive patterns of behaviour, self-descriptions that have prevailed and become stable conditions. These are called ‘eigenvalues’ or ‘attractors’. Attractors are not final products or end points; rather, they remain unchanged in the course of the ongoing operation of the system. In most cases it is impossible to predict the emergence of attractors; the system will, or will not, produce such an attractor.

The processes of systemic formation involved in social evolution are morphogenetic; they involve deviation-amplifying mutual causal processes.¹⁸⁹ Within the context of social autopoietic systems every change is self-change. Although the environment remains the stimulus, it is the system that selects its causes of change. The system does not adapt to external conditions; it is adapted to itself. Learning, for example,

¹⁸⁶ Luhmann, Niklas, *Social Systems*, p.119.

¹⁸⁷ About the question of how it is possible to successfully expect others' expectations see Luhmann, Niklas, *Essays on Self-Reference*, p.46.

¹⁸⁸ Luhmann, Niklas, *The Differentiation of Society*, p.250.

¹⁸⁹ Buckley, Walter, *Sociology and modern systems theory*, Prentice-Hall International Inc., 1967 p.p. 58-62.

that is the adjustment to disappointments, is understood as a morphogenetic change of structure within a system that is operationally closed.¹⁹⁰

Structural changes accumulate depending on chance. The process of structural formation is a process of blind variation and selection because in an environment of infinite complexity it is impossible to control - and understand - the process whereby self-observation is filtered back to communication. What we can say, according to Luhmann, is that society, as it recursively bases its ongoing selections on previous selections, will actualize possibilities which are more and more 'unlikely' - unlikely in the same sense in which it is extremely unlikely that one could type Shakespeare's Hamlet by randomly hitting keys on a typewriter. That being the case, Luhmann concludes that societal evolution operates without goal and without foresight.

2. The Emergence of a World Society

The concept of world society has been discussed before in international relations theory. Globalisation theories, theories of interdependence and Burton's theory of world society, are only some examples. These theories however point to individuals, regimes and transactions as the basic unit of analysis. For systems theory, contemporary world society relies on functional differentiation and mass communication for its evolution. It is these two characteristics and their effects that I will discuss in this section.

According to Luhmann, the functional differentiation of society is an historical achievement. Societal evolution is divided into three developmental stages depending on the principle of differentiation. Initially, traditional societies were differentiated in a number of sub-systems, which were 'equal' in that they all had to fulfil the same functions, limiting complexity through redundancy. Such 'equal' subsystems were e.g. tribes and households. As societies became more complex, the redundancy implicit in the traditional fragmentation was given up and a higher order of differentiation was introduced. The next principle of differentiation was stratification: subsystems of society were differentiated according to rank (social strata). The turning point for the evolution of society was the invention of writing and printing. This triggered a number of changes in the 17th and 18th centuries, which set in motion the functional differentiation of society.

¹⁹⁰ Luhmann, Niklas, *Essays on Self-Reference*, p.18.

The critical change writing and printing brought about, as we noted earlier, was the separation of action and observation in society. That freed society from concrete interactions, which require the 'presence' of psychic systems. Reading takes place far from the place of action and that type of communication is different compared to interaction. Communicating about what is written also requires a different type of communication. Through writing and printing more knowledge is accumulated and disseminated and new arrangements for the processing of knowledge are formed. Themes for reflexive self-observation are opened up and complexity increases. Functional differentiation was the answer to the increase of complexity. Function is less rigid and can cope with the complexity of an open and fluctuating environment. Among the principal functions systematized in society are politics, the economy, law, science, religion, art and others.

Functional differentiation means that problems are moved from the level of society to the level of functional subsystems. In tribal societies, these problems had to be solved in each tribe (redundancy); modern society differentiated systems, which specialise on particular functions and problems and deal with them for the whole of society. To cope with increased complexity and contingency, function systems constantly process information selectively and in that way they both adapt to and influence their environment through further internal and external differentiation. To take an example of internal differentiation from the system of politics, when the 'state' was established new problems appeared which were resolved through new structures and practices like for example the separation of powers and the education of princes.¹⁹¹ Bureaucracy, political parties and parliament are examples of subsystems of the political system, which emerged in the course of the evolution of society.

This mode of operation of society is made possible through mass communication and the evolutionary achievement of mass media. Luhmann suggests that mass media constitutes a separate autonomous function system. The creation of mass media through the application of advanced technologies to the printing, writing and electronic reproduction of language plays a crucial role in the autopoiesis of modern society. Mass media provides social systems with the necessary noise and irritation for their emergence and autopoietic reproduction. By recursively applying new communications upon the results of the old communications they ensure the

¹⁹¹ See Luhmann, Niklas, *The Differentiation of Society*, p.210.

continuation of communication. The dissemination of communication gives rise to a surplus of possibilities. That ensures high levels of freedom of communication by excluding the existence of a central control of communication. The mass media does not address a particular target group. Rather, mass communication seeks for any willing audience in order to experiment with possibilities. The emergence of a surplus of meaningful informational possibilities that is still functionally meaningful makes the system independent of specific relations and protects it against the danger that something will be lost.¹⁹² Finally, another function of mass media is that it reduces complexity by creating and maintaining structural couplings among different social systems, which affect the whole reality of modern society.

Functional differentiation and mass communication have considerable effects on society. First of all they led to the emergence of one world society rather than several different societies. While the political and the legal systems still differentiate along territorial boundaries – because that serves their function – other function systems like the economy, science and religion have expanded all around the globe. Society's boundaries no longer correspond to territorial borders. The constant increase in functional differentiation led to the extension of the outer boundaries of society to the extent that further evolution is the evolution of one unique system, of world society, which encompasses all possible social communication.

Furthermore, the extension of boundaries increased both the number of the elements of the system and their interrelations. The meaning of this development however is nothing more than an increase of complexity and hence of selectivity. Functional differentiation is the enhancement of selectivity, which resulted in an infinite world, highly contingent and dynamic. These developments have an impact upon the concept of time in modern society. Once information is published, it is taken for granted and becomes the basis for further communication. This results in a change of the temporal dimension of experience and action, since more time is necessary and less time is available.

Systems produce problems, which they cannot solve by themselves. Problems then must be transferred to systems that specialise in the processing of these problems. This specialisation reduces the 'redundancy' within society. Having delegated certain functions and problems to specialised functional subsystems, social systems can

¹⁹² Luhmann, Niklas, *The Reality of Mass Media*, Polity Press, 2000, p.99.

concentrate on their own autopoiesis and build up further complexity. The increasing dependency on the functional subsystems in some areas increases their autonomy in other areas.

None of the primary functions can describe society as a whole, nor can one function system gain complete control over the others. Taking the example of the system of politics, its function is decision-making and the integration of society (by making decisions, which are binding, for the whole of society). However, which decisions will be made is something decided in society as society places problems on the political agenda. To be able to cope with increased complexity the political system then needs to maintain a level of complexity that somehow remains adequate to that of its environment. The political system responds to the environment's indeterminacy, which always threatens to undermine the function of politics, with further internal differentiation. Thus, whether politics can fulfill its function to integrate society through binding decisions ultimately depends on complexity.

3. The Epistemology of Autopoiesis

The theory of social autopoiesis comes with its own epistemology, a specific way of observing modern society. Its method draws on both functional analysis and systems theory. Luhmann developed traditional causal functionalism into a functionalism of equivalencies. In the first case, the analysis seeks to establish laws of causality, which describe one cause that can produce a specific result.¹⁹³ In contrast, Luhmann conceived functionalism as an analytical tool for comparing different causes that were functionally equivalent in that they could all produce the effect in question. A function is a conceptual scheme, which represents a field of equivalencies. Hence, functional analysis in systems theory helps the sociologist to establish a point of reference, a problem that may have many solutions. From this point of reference, the contingency of each solution is obvious. The aim here is not to identify final elements but to analyse complexity and change, as well as possibilities of variation and replacement. Identity is hence not an invariable ontological entity based on

¹⁹³ Human needs theory is an example of causal functional analysis, which however cannot avoid its own tautology. See the assessment of Burton's human needs theory, Introduction, p. 27.

knowledge, but it is a system, 'a co-ordinating synthesis' which includes references to other possibilities. In the theory of social autopoiesis method and theory merge.¹⁹⁴

Traditional functional analysis is commonly criticised on the grounds that it is static and conservative in the sense that everything the system does is causally reduced to the necessity of preserving the system. This criticism does not apply to Luhmann's theory. The concepts of self-reference and the system/environment difference direct the empirical analysis. In spite of its high level of abstraction, the theory is very empirical. This is because Luhmann's theory is a social system. In other words, as Luhmann emphasises, the theory applies to itself. That being the case, the theory is constituted through the system/environment difference. Thus, the theory is operationally closed and cognitively open towards its environment.

From the point of view of the theory, the decisive empirical question is how systems come to do what they do, how they externalise their self-reference. First order observation focuses on actions, that is, it tells us what social and psychic systems do and what their self-simplifications are. Second order observation compels us to proceed and explore not only the observations but also the complex processes of their constitution: how do systems observe and simplify themselves? How do social systems narrow down their choices and select what they select and not something else? Social and psychic systems pick up irritations from their environment and they incorporate them into their meaning world by taking for granted what they take for granted. Second order observation can see that the system cannot see what it cannot see. It employs the distinctions manifest/latent and aims to reveal the 'blind spots', the a priori of the observed systems.¹⁹⁵

Luhmann emphasizes that there is no central and therefore no objective point of view from which we can start building up causal connections. Luhmann's theory asks us to preserve complexity while we explore it, and not to reduce it as traditional theoretical frameworks do. As we noted in the introductory chapter, conventional crisis and peace processes theories seek immediately for direct links between actions. In Luhmann's systems theory causal relations based on a sequence of interactions are replaced with simultaneous and contingent structural couplings. We then need to ask how these structural couplings became possible, and how they emerged. Here second

¹⁹⁴ Rossbach, Stefan, "The Myth of the System: On the development, purpose and context of Niklas Luhmann's Systems Theory", Paper prepared for ECPR Joint Session of Workshops, p.5.

order observation attempts to disentangle the connections between multiple processes. In order to find out how these recursive processes are interrelated, we need to find out first how they are closed to each other.

The question of rationality is important for conventional theory, but in light of Luhmann's analysis, this question has now become a question of several distinct rationalities. Luhmann understands 'rationality' as a 're-entry' of the distinction between system and environment into the system.¹⁹⁶ In other words, the system's rationality represents the way in which it describes itself in relation to its environment.

The unquestioned emphasis on control and stability that we find in traditional theories is here replaced with an emphasis on dynamics. Dynamics is defined through the connectability of themes that are available to the system for selection. As we shall see in subsequent chapters, in the case of Greek-Turkish crisis and peace processes the themes of crisis or co-operation emerged as an attempt to reduce complexity. The empirical questions we need to ask in this context are question such as the following: What are the themes that emerge during a crisis and then reproduce the crisis? How do processes of amplification of an initial microscopic fluctuation to macroscopic change occur within society and contribute to the crystallization of communication processes so that they become systemic structures of crisis or co-operation? This thesis argues that answers to these questions can be found in the investigation of deviation-amplifying processes and the systematization of communication processes into social structures like themes, expectations, roles and institutions. The news media form a social system that amplifies communication processes within a functionally differentiated society. The examination of the news media's function involves empirical research about news production and also about the structural couplings that news media enable among different social and psychic systems.

The systems theory perspective puts new demands on empirical research. A second order observer cannot rely on existing accounts about the phenomena she examines. In the case of crisis and peace processes, history books, press, international relations literature and political discourse are considered to be constructions of observing systems – be it media, science or politics. For they too are communication, and as

¹⁹⁵ Luhmann, Niklas, "The Modernity of Science", *New German Critique*, Winter 94, Issue 61, available on the website <http://libfl.ru.Luhamnn3.html>.

such they constitute elements in the systems of crisis, conflict or co-operation. Therefore, historical literature as well as the international relations literature and press articles become the subject of research too.

Interviews with participants, the interrogation of their actions and their underlying perceptions, as well as the analysis of the rationalities of participating systems illuminate the various contributions and coincidences constituting these phenomena. The comparison of these rationalities reveals their blind spots.

This last point illustrates one more difference between conventional theory and systems theory as far as their research interests are concerned. Systems theory is interested not only in phenomena of being but also in phenomena of becoming, change and movement. Conventional analysis identifies the end of a crisis and/or a peace process with its de-escalation or the conclusion or the failure of conclusion of an agreement. Systems theory is interested in both the constitution of crisis and peace processes within society *and their re-entry into society*. The communicatively constructed accounts – through selections of information, utterance and understanding – and their reproduction through writing and printing provide social systems with information for their autopoiesis. In other words, the academic analysis of the system does not stand outside the system but re-enters it and hence both unfolds from, and impacts on, the system's autopoiesis.

We close this part on the epistemology of social autopoiesis by commenting on the epistemological status of the results of our analysis. Luhmann's theory does not claim that it is 'the' representation of reality. Just like any other communicative system, the theory has contact with reality only through self-contact. The theory itself understands itself as constructed knowledge, though as second order knowledge, knowledge based on second order observation. Still, even second order observation has its blind spot. Luhmann would contradict himself if he were to argue that his theory offers 'the' description of reality. How are we then to assess the usefulness of the theory and the adequacy of the analysis present here? As with all communication, its success depends on its 'connectability', on the way in which it is integrated into further communication. If the present analysis provokes such communication, it will be possible to submit it to the second order observations of other observers.

¹⁹⁶ Luhmann, Niklas, "Globalisation or World Society: How to conceive of Modern Society?", p.7,

Conclusion

In this chapter I presented the basic principles of Luhmann's theory of social autopoiesis, a comprehensive theory of modern society. Niklas Luhmann draws the picture of the world as a free-floating, a-central world where social systems are operationally closed and cognitively open. Their operational closure gives them a certain autonomy vis-à-vis each other. Luhmann's theory radically changes the emphasis from rational action and decision to the transformational dynamics of communication and the fundamental problem of modern society, its self-referentiality. Observing systems make distinctions about their environment according to their meaning world. This means that the 'knowledge' social and psychic systems have about the world constitutes them.

Within the context of modern systems theory, social phenomena appear to be contingent developments rather than final products determined by historical laws. The acknowledgement of the absence of an objective reality and the emergence of different realities and rationalities does not lead to a relativist or constructivist approach, which would discourage empirical research. The theory of autopoiesis accepts that there is a reality, which social and psychic systems use in order to extract differences and build new elements in the process of their self-reproduction. It adds though that social and psychic systems can come into contact with reality only selectively, by reducing the infinite complexity of reality through selections. The question then is – and this is an empirical question – how systems select what they select and how they neglect everything else. In this way, the theory motivates an eminently *empirical* investigation. The self-referential design of systems theory enables us to deal with the paradoxes engendered by the *blind spots* of social systems. Additionally, the theory of social systems guards us against its own paradox because its design enables the theory to problematize itself as an object of its study.

In the next four chapters I will demonstrate that systems theory provides us new analytical tools for the exploration of the emergence and development of phenomena such as crisis and peace processes in a highly complex modern society.

CHAPTER III

THE IMIA/KARDAK CRISIS AS A “BUTTERFLY EFFECT” IN GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS

In this chapter I will examine the emergence and development of the Greek-Turkish crisis that broke out in January 1996 and brought the two countries to the brink of war. The crisis centred on the dispute over the sovereignty of two rocky islets, located in the Eastern Aegean and called Imia for Greeks and Kardak for Turks. After the grounding ashore there of a Turkish vessel, the two ministries of foreign affairs exchanged two *notes verbales* claiming ownership over the islets.¹ Days after that, the issue came to the media and a full-scale Greek-Turkish crisis emerged. According to existing analyses of the crisis, which follow basically the rational actor model, the cause of the crisis was the dispute over the sovereignty of the islets. This view considers the crisis to have been the means used by the one or the other state - depending on which side analyses it - in order to change the status quo in the Aegean Sea in its favour.

This chapter seeks to demonstrate that the crisis emerged through the dynamics of communication processes rather than rational calculations. The trigger of the crisis was not an event, an action or decision undertaken by governmental authorities. It is argued that the transmission of information about the incident that happened in the Aegean Sea by the news media and its interpretation - and not the communicated event alone - triggered the crisis in the Aegean Sea as a “butterfly effect”. It gave rise to a chain of a-causal and spontaneous meaning constituting processes within a multitude of autonomous but mutually interfering social systems. That increased the complexity of the situation, which enforced the formation of crisis by means of successive selections made by social and psychic systems.

It will be demonstrated that various social systems such as the Greek and Turkish politics, media, military, civil society organizations, contributed to the emergence of the crisis through their normal operations of meaning determination. They both increased and eventually constrained the complexity carrying out selections toward the direction of crisis, by operating according to their pre-established distinctions, their own rationale, aims and programmes of action/goals. They observed, that is selected to

observe, events, which they rationalized as 'actions' in order to continue their autopoiesis. Furthermore, it is argued that social systems were not aware of their contribution to the emergence of the crisis. This is what was described in the theory chapter as the *blind spots* of social systems. The semantics employed by various social systems in their processing of information are explored.

Accordingly the argument made here is that the dynamics of crisis is found in simultaneous and contingent structural couplings among social systems. The analysis that follows seeks to disentangle the connections among them.

The examination of the process of de-escalation of the crisis after the American intervention illuminates further the crisis's constitution as a communicative system. The argument here is that it was reflexive communication rather than the use or the threat of use of power that de-escalated the crisis of 1996.

This approach challenges traditional analyses of interstate crises, which focus on the decision-making process as rational processing of information. Comparison with the traditional theory of international crisis is occasionally employed throughout the chapter in order to clarify the arguments made and the method of research employed here. It will be demonstrated that the traditional view is rather static and cannot explain the type of crisis dealt with here.

The chapter is divided in seven sections. The first three sections describe the emergence and development of the crisis of 1996 as a "butterfly effect". It is demonstrated that an unimportant event, an accident in the Aegean Sea, provoked macroscopic changes in Greek and Turkish societies. It increased the complexity and created the need for its reduction. The meaning processes that reduced complexity through selections towards the direction of crisis are explored in the fourth chapter. The fifth section discusses the de-escalation of crisis. The sixth section seeks to explore further the mechanisms of communication that enabled the emergence of the crisis of 1996 as an autonomous self-referential system. Finally, the last section examines how the crisis of 1996 re-entered the system of conflict through academic analyses of the crisis and thereby it reproduced it.

¹ The two uninhabited islets lie 1.9 miles from the Greek island of Kalolimnos, 5.3 miles from the Greek island of Kalymnos, 2.3 miles from the Turkish island of Cavus and 3.8 miles from the Turkish mainland. For the chronicle of the crisis see Appendix, p.251.

1. Antenna's Report as the 'Butterfly'

Conventional analysis from the Greek point of view starts with the assumption that Turkey instigated and/or exploited the incident that occurred in the Aegean Sea with the Turkish vessel *Figen Akat*, in order to dispute Greek sovereignty over the two islets. On the other hand, the Turkish view of the matter argues that the crisis started after the Greek mayor hoisted the flag on the islet. This incident, they suggest, was an attempt to bring forward Greek claims in the Aegean once again, with the ultimate goal of expanding Greek territorial waters and transforming the Aegean Sea into "a Greek lake".

The Greek view ignores the fact that this was not the first time that Turkey disputed the ownership of these islets. During the late 1970's, Turkey had refused to sign NATO Document MC 38/4, which had to do with the operational control of the islets' immediate area. This document had recognised that the two islets are part of Greek territory.² However, from that time until 1996 this disagreement neither constituted the cause of any crisis nor did it ever become a major issue in Greek-Turkish relations. Furthermore, the first Turkish *note verbale* sent on the 29th of December was not the result of an official decision made by the Turkish leadership. The Turkish bureaucracy had taken the initiative to send this *note verbale*, and the arguments made in it were based on the existing files of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Document MC38/4 in particular.³ Second, after the exchange of diplomatic correspondence between the two countries, which stated each side's positions, the incident was considered to have ended by the official authorities, diplomats and politicians in both countries. Careful consideration of the crisis' timetable demonstrates that the increasing tension and the definition of the situation as a 'crisis' began in Greece and this only happened after the Greek television channel Antenna reported on the issue. It was after Antenna aired the story about the incident with the *Figen Akat* and the diplomatic correspondence that followed it that a chain reaction unfolded rapidly and eventually led the two fleets to confront each other in the Aegean.⁴ Antenna's story and

² Interviews with Ambassador Yalim Eralp, Istanbul, 04.05.02 and 10.05.02.

³ *ibid.*

⁴ In addition, the fact that there had not been any previous planning is further substantiated by the lack of preparation by various Turkish State organizations. Turkish Admiral Attila Kiyat, who was the Head of the Turkish delegation to NATO headquarters in Brussels, had not been informed about the incident and its development. At that time he found himself in an extremely difficult position when colleagues from other countries started asking him about the Imia/Kardak crisis. Interview with Attila Kiyat, Istanbul, 08.11.01. Furthermore, the fact that in the aftermath of the crisis the Turkish government initiated an investigation regarding the *Figen Akat* incident substantiates the previous argument. "State

the developments that followed it can be described with the “butterfly effect” metaphor.⁵

Antenna's story about the *Figen Akat* and the diplomatic correspondence between the two Ministries was broadcast on the 24th of January. This story, from the very moment of its first broadcast on Antenna's main news bulletin at 8:30 p.m., triggered a number of information processes within several social and psychic systems. This is very well reflected in Furlis's narration about the first hours after the story was aired.⁶

Immediately after the airing of the story, panic ensued. At the Antenna offices, we received phone calls from the office of the Minister of Defence and the office of the Foreign Minister. They seemed to be somewhat disturbed, but not in any exaggerated way. The question was ‘*why did you air this?*’ At eleven o' clock Mr. Bikas, the spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, called me personally. Colleagues from other channels were also calling us, requesting more information. Antonis Liaros, chief news editor of Mega Channel, and Georgios Giorgiadis from Star channel called Antenna. From a journalistic point of view, everyone was congratulating us, saying ‘bravo’, ‘great story’! That same evening, reporter Argiris Dinopoulos received orders from his news director, Mr. Spyropoulos, to go to the islet, using whatever means of transport he could find. Dinopoulos flew to Kos and then travelled by ship to Kalymnos. From there he went to Imia. We needed to have the follow-up of the story.⁷

The next evening, the 25th of January, Antenna managed to keep the same news story high on its agenda and the day after that they presented one more exclusive fact about it: the hoisting of the Greek flag on the islet by the mayor of Kalymnos.

The mayor, along with some other inhabitants of Kalymnos, amongst them a priest and some children, went to one of the two islets. The newscaster's first phrase was: “Antenna reveals a new provocation by Ankara, after the incident of Imia. The Turks have voiced territorial claims against the Greek islets”.

The hoisting of the Greek flag was a decisive step in the emergence of the crisis, since it brought the story to the attention of the Turkish media and also onto the Turkish political agenda. The rationale behind the hoisting of the flag will be analysed later in

officials looked into whether there was any link between the ship's grounding at Imia/Kardak and any initiative by individuals, or by any Turkish state official. This means that one hand of the Turkish State started was suspecting what the other hand was doing”. Interview with Kemal Kirişçi, Professor of International Relations at Bosphorus University in Istanbul, Istanbul, 03.10.01.

⁵ The “butterfly effect” was first used in meteorology in order to describe the unpredictable and chaotic evolutionary patterns of climatic changes. After that, however, it was transferred to other disciplines in order to explain how microscopic fluctuations can lead to macroscopic changes. See Stewart, Ian, “Does God play Dice?: The New Mathematics of Chaos”, London: Penguin, 1997.

⁶ The translations of the interviews as well as the translations of other sources such as press and books from Greek and Turkish to English are the author's, unless otherwise indicated.

⁷ Interview with Antenna's journalist, Antonis Furlis, Athens, 18.09.01.

the section that explores the blind spots of social systems. This incident however, further increased the complexity of the situation. The airing of this new story, the hoisting of the Greek flag by the inhabitants of the nearby island, triggered a number of information processes, this time in the Turkish news media. Nur Batur, the Athens correspondent of *Hürriyet* (the best-selling Turkish national newspaper) described how this process started in Athens. Ferai Tinc, the then foreign news editor of *Hürriyet*, fills the gaps of this narration with the description of the information processing at *Hürriyet's* offices in Istanbul.

On the evening broadcast of Antenna (at 20:30), I first saw the hoisting of the Greek flag on the islet. I immediately called Antenna to ask for a photo and at 23:00 I went to Antenna's offices, bought two photos, and sent them to *Hürriyet* immediately. The next day (26th of January) the photos and the story were on the front page... Then there was an alarm in Ankara. Journalists started asking questions about it. Suddenly bureaucrats realized that something is happening in Greece. They wanted politicians to pay attention to that. Correspondents were pushing.⁸

Ferai Tinc says that

it was Nur Batur and the Anatolian Agency who reported on Antenna's broadcast of the 26th of January. At that time, in the morning meeting of news editors in *Hürriyet's* offices, we started talking without knowing anything. A news editor then said that we could go and put the flag up because we had done it in Cyprus some time around the end of the '60's and it had been good journalism. Another friend, who had contacts with the airlines, arranged the helicopter. The next day *Milliyet* came out with the title 'We Found the Islet'. They also had a photo from the islet. We learned that it was not the right islet... The orders we gave our people, who were sent there, were: 'go there, put the Turkish flag up, and take a photo.' It was to be a mere response to the Greek priest. We knew that it was the priest who went and put the flag up. We did not know anything about the mayor of the island.⁹

The reaction to the Greek priest stems from the perception in the Turkish society that the Greek Orthodox Church and its representatives have always been on the front line of the Greek-Turkish conflict.¹⁰ Greek Orthodox priests are distinguished from ordinary citizens because they wear clerical garb. This explains why the figure of the priest impressed the Turkish journalists when they saw the photo.

The next morning, the Turkish flag was located on the islet by a Greek war ship. When the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces was informed, he was attending a

⁸ Interview with Nur Batur, Athens correspondent of the Turkish national newspaper *Hürriyet*, Athens, 16.05.00.

⁹ Interview with Ferai Tinc, editor of foreign news of *Hürriyet*, Istanbul, 19.02.01.

¹⁰ This is a very common perception among Turkish journalists. Discussions I had with Turkish journalists from CNN-Turk and Canal-8 confirmed this perception.

Sunday morning church service. He ordered the mayor of the island of Kalymnos to replace the Turkish flag with a Greek flag. However, communication with the warship was not possible and so the Greek flag was hoisted by the warship's personnel.¹¹ Later on, the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces told the Minister of Defence about the steps he had taken and the Minister agreed that a guard detachment should be sent to the islet. Although that action added a military parameter and thus further increased the complexity of the situation, it was not a decision of the kind that contemporary crisis literature discusses. It was not decided after consultations with the Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs.¹² This decision was made within the framework of routine practices followed by the Greek naval forces in the Aegean Sea. This decision did not create the perception of crisis on the part of the Greek or Turkish decision-makers. This is further substantiated by the fact that the National Council of Foreign Policy and Security was not convened in Greece, as happened, for example, in the crisis of 1987.¹³ On the 28th of January, the crisis had not yet emerged. For that reason there could not be a plan regarding the management of the crisis. The actions taken by the media and the military emanated from their routines that is their institutionalised practices. It was at a later stage that a specific meaning, and thus causality, was attributed to these events to produce the system of crisis. Nevertheless, these un-coordinated and autonomous operations of social systems increased the complexity of the situation and enabled the emergence of a bifurcation stage.

2. A stage of Bifurcation

The television story of the *Figen Akat* and the Turkish claims to the islets' sovereignty provided the Greek society with an irritation. Communication of this event spread in every direction, through the news media, setting in motion processes of communication in a multitude of social systems, generating noise and increasing the complexity of the situation. Ongoing interactions among different systems such as journalists, politicians, and citizens through news media increased the communicative possibilities and led to the emergence of an unstable situation, a stage of undecidability. That situation entailed an increasing observation of the other side, and each side's actions depended on what the other side was doing. Mutual close

¹¹ Hristos Lyberis, "National Strategy and Crisis Management", 1997, Poiotita, p.193.

¹² This is what the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Theodoros Pangalos, admitted in a press conference he gave on the 30th of January.

observation and potential infinite complexity were the features of this stage. At this stage the crisis had not emerged yet. Nevertheless, under such circumstances of double contingency every accident, every error could be productive.

The stage of bifurcation is reflected in the contradictions that we see in the media accounts of these events as well as in the political rhetoric of these critical days. Furthermore, this stage is also marked by a search for a rational explanation. The Greek press initially did not follow Antenna's interpretation of the facts but it did not ignore it either. The first articles concerning the Imia/Kardak problem appeared in the Greek press the next day, on the 25th of January. *Eleftherotypia* and *Ta Nea* presented the issue as one of the 'usual' attempts by Turkey to increase tension between the two countries and minimised the incidence's importance. Moreover, the articles' size and use of language came in stark contrast with Antenna's presentation of an imminent threat and a serious issue of national security.¹⁴ On the other hand, the newspapers *Eleftheros Typos* and *Apogeumatini*, which represented the views of the political opposition, reproduced Antenna's story.

The day after the televised broadcast of the hoisting of the Greek flag (January 26th), the other private channels followed Antenna's story and attitude. The channel Sky started its broadcast as follows: "Step by step, there is an escalation of the provocative actions at the islet of Imia. Alert at the Ministries of Defence and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Greek Armed Forces are in high state of readiness".¹⁵ The newspaper *Ta Nea* ran the headline "The Turkish Provocations Were Premeditated".¹⁶ The stance of the Greek and Turkish officials, vis-à-vis the media's disclosure of this incident, from the time the *Figen Akat* was driven ashore to the day the incident came into the public eye, is another indication of the undecidability of the system of crisis. They kept the incident covered up until it was introduced to the public eye by various media outlets. It was on the 25th, after the question of the *Figen Akat* had emerged in the Greek media, that the Minister of Press and Information, Reppas, and the spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Bikas, admitted that the Imia/Kardak issue existed. Bikas, in a laconic statement, said that "there is no question of disputing Greek sovereignty over the islet Imia, according to the Peace Treaty of

¹³ Hristos Lyberis, *National Strategy and Crisis Management*, 1997, Poiotita, p.150.

¹⁴ *Eleftherotypia*, 25.01.96, p.4.

¹⁵ Antenna news bulletin at 8:30 p.m., 26.01.96.

¹⁶ *Ta Nea*, 26.01.96.

1947".¹⁷ Reppas was also careful with his choice of words, when he stated that: "Turkey thinks that it has rights to the island. We do not think that any dispute over our national territory is conceivable".¹⁸ On the 26th of January the Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs, Theodoros Pangalos, in his first press conference after his appointment as Foreign Minister, insisted that "the issue of the islet is not important and there is a lot of noise about nothing".¹⁹

Even on the 28th of January, three days after the Antenna story had broken, Pangalos appeared in an interview he gave the previous day to the newspaper *To Vima*, saying the following: The *Figen Akat* incident "is not a serious incident...several similar incidents have occurred in the last years between Greece and Turkey, not only in the Aegean Sea but also along the Greek-Turkish border, at the River Evros. There, a small island in the middle of the river changes position as the river flows the way the current takes it".²⁰

This indicates that the Greek government initially distanced itself from the noise that was created by the media concerning the incident. At the same time it was waiting for the other side to make a move.

The stage of bifurcation is also characterised by the search for a rational explanation of what was happening. The Minister of Foreign Affairs on the 26th of January expressed the hope that the incident in Imia was an accidental one and that this would not be continued. He said, "the issue has been closed. I do not consider this a matter that should create a crisis atmosphere".²¹ On the other hand, he added that "it is an absurd claim" that might have come from a Turkish diplomat "who in this way nurtures bad feelings against Greece".²² Furthermore, he made an important addition, saying "it is the first time that Turkey doubts Greek sovereignty over Greek land. We do not know if this claim is part of a well-organised plan".²³

Another attempt at rationalisation of the events appears in the editorial article of *Eleftherotypia*, where we read "the USA may be behind this".²⁴ It is argued that "it is obvious that the USA have not abandoned their plan to impose confidence-building

¹⁷ *Ta Nea* 26.01.96.

¹⁸ Antenna news at 8:30 p.m., 24.01.96.

¹⁹ *Eleftherotypia*, 26.01.96.

²⁰ *To Vima*, 28.01.96.

²¹ *Eleftherotypia*, 27.01.96.

²² *Eleftherotypia*, 29.01.96.

²³ *ibid.*

²⁴ *ibid.*

measures in the Aegean, which is best served every time Ankara provokes an 'accidental' incident in the Aegean".²⁵ The hoisting of the Turkish flag, reported on the first page, was interpreted as an act committed by "journalists of *Hürriyet* with Ankara's blessing". In the paper's inner pages we see another interpretation saying that "it is the first time that Ankara chose a 'hot-headed' newspaper as a 'vehicle' and 'lever' for the initiation of its territorial claims". Finally, in another article, the following description of the days of the crisis appears. "At the beginning it was difficult to believe that simple citizens could perform such an act. ...Later on some talked about an organised operation with 'special' journalists, and 'special' pilots of helicopters who were trained in military flights, which means trained to fly low so as to avoid the radar even in bad weather".

On the other side of the Aegean, during the same days and until January 28th, the Turkish media did not put the issue on their agenda. The correspondents of the Turkish newspapers in Athens argue that from the first day they learned about the *Figen Akat* incident, that is the 24th of January, they tried to give the story to the Turkish media, as they usually do, but this time they failed. The reason was that their editors considered the incident to be one of the many times that Greek media talk about the 'Turkish threat' and this was not at all interesting, compared to the internal political scene. The 'hot' issue of the days was the formation of a government by the then interim Prime Minister Tansu Ciller. The focus was on the Islamic party (Refah) and its recent electoral success.²⁶ Nevertheless, the Greek flag hoisted on Imia/Kardak islets was the irritation observed by various social systems in Greece and Turkey and stimulated a number of meaning constituting processes, increasing the complexity that enabled the emergence of the crisis/non crisis difference.

Initially, the Turkish officials and politicians followed a similar attitude to that of the Greek administration. Turkish diplomats were emphasising the legal nature of the dispute, and the need for the issue to be solved through bilateral negotiations and other peaceful means. When the Greek correspondent of the Athens News Agency, Alkis Kourkoulas, asked Turkish diplomats in Ankara about the issue, they said they were surprised at the "inexplicable" and "exaggerated" dimension the issue had

²⁵ *Eleftherotypia*, 29.01.96.

²⁶ Interviews with Stelios Berberakis, correspondent in Athens of the newspaper *Sabah* and the television channel Atv, 15.05.00, and with Nur Batur, correspondent in Athens of the Turkish newspaper *Hürriyet*, 16.05.00.

assumed in Greece.²⁷ Stelios Berberakis, a correspondent in Athens, for the Turkish newspaper *Sabah*, corroborates this view: “The day after Antenna's story I met the Turkish Ambassador in Athens and I asked him what was going on. His answer was ‘this surprised me too. This issue was closed one month ago’”.²⁸ The President of Turkey, Suleyman Demirel, on January 28th said that “there is some tension but we believe it will be resolved by peaceful means”.²⁹ Turkish officials kept a low tone. The spokesman of the Turkish Foreign Ministry stated on January 29th, argued that “the Greek flag may stay, but if it does, it would not serve any peaceful purpose”.³⁰ On the other hand, after the issue entered the agenda of the Turkish media, Turkish columnists also tried to explain and rationalise the events. The hoisting of the Greek flag was connected with Greek claims over the islets’ sovereignty. Their understanding was that Greece was trying to profit from the vacuum of power in Turkey, since no Turkish government had yet been formed.³¹ On January 29th, Ferai Tinc wrote in *Hürriyet* that “what happened is not accidental.... Greece is not satisfied with Holbrooke's proposal for Cyprus and thus has created this crisis in order to expose Turkey internationally”.³²

Apart from the politicians, it is also possible to see columnists, especially in the Turkish newspapers *Cumhuriyet* and *Milliyet*, trying to understand this sudden crisis whilst maintaining a distance from it. Articles, which appeared in *Cumhuriyet* and *Milliyet* at the time, emphasised the existence of Greek-Turkish friendship. Sami Kohen, for instance, wrote an article at the time entitled “For a Small Rock?” and made a distinction between the underlying and the immediate causes of the crisis, suggesting that:

The blowing up of the problem is due to two reasons: the first is related to the existing dispute in the Aegean Sea. The second is related to the way the problem has been used by the news media... Without any doubt, the lack of communication and dialogue, and on top of that, the lack of mutual trust, have played a role in this

²⁷ See Alkis Kourkoulas, *Imia, A Critical Approach to the Turkish Factor*, Sideris, 1997, p.29, see also *Eleftherotypia* 26.01.96 where it is reported that diplomatic sources consider the significance attributed to this issue exaggerated and the Turkish public was informed about it through laconic reports.

²⁸ Interview with the correspondent of the Turkish newspaper *Sabah* in Athens, Stelios Berberakis, Athens, 11.03.01.

²⁹ *Hürriyet*, 28.01.96. Furthermore, the same issue of *Hürriyet* referred to the reactions of the Turkish military. Military officers argued that they do research about the legal aspects of the Imia/Kardak case in order to better support their arguments but they claimed this research to be a matter of routine.

³⁰ *Hürriyet*, 29.01.96.

³¹ See statements by the President of the Republic of Turkey Suleyman Demirel, *Hürriyet*, 28.01.96, the leader of the DSP Bulent Ecevit, *Hürriyet*, 29.01.96, p.1, Mesut Yilmaz, the leader of the DYP, *Hürriyet* 28.01.96 p.1, views expressed by a Turkish fisherman, *Hürriyet* 29.01.96.

³² Ferai Tinc, *Hürriyet*, 29.01.96.

situation...The immediate cause that has created the events, and has enlarged them to these dimensions, is the attitude of the media.³³

These kinds of articles however, were in the inner pages of the newspapers and the front pages were reflecting on and thus constructing a crisis climate. Examples are the titles below from *Milliyet* and *Hürriyet* “War of Flags” (*Hürriyet* 28/1/1996), “Tension of Flags”, “The Greek Fleet on Alert” and “War of Law” (*Milliyet*, 28/1/1996)

3. The Emergence of the Crisis

Antenna's report on the Figen Akat incident instigated chain reactions on the part of various social systems. This created a bifurcation moment, which enabled the emergence of the difference crisis/or not crisis. Multiple connections among social and psychic systems oriented towards the direction of the conflict gave rise to the crisis as a new attractor. An attractor is a self-description that has prevailed and become stable condition through networks of recursive observations of observations. The attractor after its emergence is employed by social systems as a guide for their selections, which seek to reduce complexity. Put otherwise, the operations of self and other observation of various social systems in Greece and Turkey produced the pattern of crisis, which acquired its own dynamics and then in turn guided social systems.

There were three events in particular that became points for multiple connections towards the direction of the crisis. The first was the decision of the Greek government to “publicize” the issue. In the evening of the 28th of January, the Ambassadors of the fifteen European Union member states, the Ambassador of Russia, of the United States, and of Turkey were invited to the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in order to be briefed on the Greek positions regarding the Imia/Kardak dispute. Second, the Greek Prime Minister Costas Simitis issued a statement about the situation the next day.

The statement said that

the atmosphere that this change [the hoisting of the Turkish flag on the islet] creates, constitutes a very serious issue. It demonstrates an aggressive nationalism. To this and to any other signs of aggressive nationalism, we reply that Greece's reaction will be strong, direct, and effective. We have the means and we will use

³³ *Milliyet*, 30.01.96, p.18.

them without hesitation. We do not accept any dispute of our sovereign rights. They shouldn't kid themselves.³⁴

The third event came from the Turkish side. The Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Ciller the same day answered this statement with an aggressive statement: "[W]e do not have to give even one little pebble of the land of this country... We do not allow the raising of a foreign flag on Turkish land".³⁵

The two first events, namely the publicizing of the issue and Simitis's statement, compared to the previous policy of keeping a low profile on the issue, marked a radical change in the Greek stance. Simitis's statement interpreted these events as 'actions' of the Turkish state, as a serious Turkish provocation. Furthermore, he postulated Greece's decisive stance even if it had to be by military means. Simitis's statement showed no doubts about the meaning of the events. The Greek media and the Greek people interpreted the statement and the invitation of the Ambassadors as acts of deterrence, which show the determination of the Greek political leadership against Turkey. The Commander-in-Chief of the Greek Armed Forces, Hristos Lyberis, perceived this statement as a decision for the escalation of the crisis. He writes in his book: "The Prime Minister, with his statement that underlined his intention to use military power, has contributed to the escalation of the crisis".³⁶ This statement was, therefore, a turning point that reversed the hesitant attempts of both countries' diplomats, who had been trying to reassure each other that they had no intention to challenge the other side.

These three actions ultimately determined the crystallisation of the crisis. After that, all attention was focused on the military aspect of crisis, as a military presence had started to build up in the Aegean Sea from early in the morning of January 29th. By the evening of January 30th, the two countries were living in the whirlwind that the crisis had created, and the system had completely emerged. The Greek Foreign Minister, Pangalos, at that time stated that for the Greek side "there is no doubt" about the Turkish motives. Greek and Turkish decision-makers, military officials, and

³⁴ *Eleftherotypia*, 29.01.96.

³⁵ *Hürriyet*, 30.01.96.

³⁶ Hristos Lyberis, *National...*, p.166. And at another point Lyberis writes in his book about the crisis of 1996: "On Tuesday at noon time, G. Arsenis [the Greek Minister of Defence] talking to the news media, showed that the political will was for de-escalation of the crisis. Here comes the question: If that was the case why then did the Prime Minister, the day before, make this strong statement?". *ibid.*, p.173.

media, despite their previous doubts, were all now working on the hypothesis of a challenge from the other side which they had to resist.

The style of reporting gradually became more belligerent. The doubts that had been expressed before disappeared. The following dramatic headlines selected at random from the Turkish newspapers *Hürriyet*, *Milliyet*, and *Cumhuriyet* aptly demonstrate the gradual escalation of the crisis and the transition from a moment of bifurcation to a stage where crisis became the attractor:

“Anguish in the Aegean, Turkish and Greek Warships Nose to Nose”, “Greek Flag on Kardak”, “Clinton: Turkish-Greek War May Arise”. (*Hürriyet*, 29/1/1996)

“Take Back the Army or Else...Athens Was Warned for the Last Time about the Soldiers who Went to Kardak. On the Threshold of [military] Operations”. (*Milliyet*, 29/1/1996)

The emergence of the crisis and the subsequent focus on the military aspects condensed the complexity of the situation and enabled social and psychic systems to acquire security and continue communication. In the section below I explore how various social systems were oriented towards the selections they made and not others and how each selection reinforced the selectivity and connectability of the emerging order.

4. The Blind Spots of Social and Psychic Systems

The above presentation of the ‘hard facts’ of the crisis does not explain the emergence of the crisis. Mainstream approaches to the crisis of 1996 have sought to explain the development of the crisis by trying to establish causal links among actions. For example they assume that Simitis's statement was an act of deterrence to what he perceived as a threat posed by Turkey. Nevertheless, these assumptions are not checked against empirical evidence. They appear self-evident according to the pre-determined distinctions the researcher himself has formed through the theory (s)he holds about the operation of the system of politics and the emergence of an interstate crisis.

For the theory of social autopoiesis ‘actions’ are externalisations of self-reference, simplifications of systems’ complex operations of meaning determination.³⁷ They are constructed, that is selected by social systems, which are observing systems and try to

³⁷ See Chapter II, p.57.

rationalise events by attributing responsibility, by naming agents. In that way systems can constrain infinite complexity and continue their autopoiesis. The attribution of meaning, however, is an operation that systems carry out with the help of pre-established determinations of meaning namely, their unique code, rationality and institutionalised practices. Here, second-order observation seeks to explore these semantics and their effects. It will be demonstrated that social systems such as the Greek and Turkish politics, the media, the military, civil society and psychic systems like the mayor of Kalymnos and journalists, could not see the introduction of their previous determinations of meaning back to the society and how these affected their information processing. These are their blind spots. Furthermore, systems cannot control the effects of their own operations for the autopoiesis of society and the constitution of crisis. As social systems operate autonomously, they link up and influence each other not in a causal or intentional way but blindly. The research has sought to disentangle these interconnections, the structural couplings of the various systems, which constrained the complexity of the situation and enforced the emergence of crisis as increased selectivity.

4.1. The System of News media

The role of the news media in the emergence of the crisis of 1996 was catalytic. News media are observing social systems, which employ the binary code news/not news for their function. Their attitudes during the days of the crisis were rather determined by their goals of high ratings and their own rules of operation. The media's rationale is basically to have an exciting headline, which will boost their ratings.

The leak of the specific story to Antenna, and its subsequent presentation, was the irritation that set in motion chain reactions in a multitude of social systems, increased the complexity of the situation and enabled the formation of the system of crisis through autocatalytic processes of communication. This very story was an accidental event, and not an event designed by the Greek government or any other official authority. The report regarding the *Figen Akat's* grounding and the correspondence between the two ministries was presented by the young journalist Furlis - he was about 25 at the time. His narration as to what happened on that day is illuminating of the processes of meaning determination carried out within Antenna:

... I personally knew the man who gave me the papers. He is an official in one of the two ministries directly involved in this case [the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

and the Ministry of Defence]. He called me at 3 in the afternoon, on January 24th, and he told me that he had documents, which had to do with some dispute over Greek territory. He asked me to meet him at 5, two hours later. He then gave me an envelope with all the documents namely the correspondence and the orders for increased vigilance issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Ministry of Defence.³⁸ He believed that by doing this, he was doing a service to his country. He thought he was revealing 'dark' actions of the government to Greek public opinion. I called Costas Spyropoulos straight away. He was then the director of Antenna. I read some of the documents aloud over the phone to him. I was at the Parliament building at that time. The first question was where *is* this island. They started poring over maps in the offices of Antenna, and they could not find it! I told them over the phone 'look near the island of Kalymnos' and eventually, after a lot of effort, they found it. Then the television story started to be prepared, and at the same time Costas Spyropoulos and I were looking for officials who could provide us with information. We tried to contact the Foreign Minister's office. I called twice between 5 and 8 but he was in a meeting, so I left a message with his secretary saying that it was about a very serious matter which concerns Imia- with an accent on the first or the second "I"! We did not know then how it was correctly pronounced, because we had only seen the name in capitals. I contacted Mr. Bikas, who was the spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at that time, and he said that he did not know anything about the issue, but it did not sound serious to him. So we should not be concerned with it. We tried to contact the Prime Minister's diplomatic office. There we found a young ambassador, who seemed surprised when he heard us. He thought the issue was very serious, but he was very young and he did not undertake any initiative...Some time after the events I met Pangalos for other reasons and I asked him about those days. He told me that his secretary did not want to interrupt him because he had a very important meeting with the Greek Ambassador to the United Nations, Mr. Christos Zaharakis.³⁹

Fourlis's narration demonstrates clearly that Antenna constructed a television story about the *Figen Akat*, following its own way of making news, as television channels do. In other words, Antenna's operation in this case was formulated within the context of institutionalised practices and aims. The usual practice, the routine of checking with the authorities for issues of significance, were employed, but they did not work out. Furthermore, Fourlis argues that the perception of the people of Antenna was

that since this has started a month ago and nothing has happened so far, it means that it's over. Since the last telegram was dated January 9, we interpreted it this way. So, we then thought we would reveal it afterwards. We could not know and no one could have known that one flag would follow and then another, and so on.⁴⁰

³⁸ See the chronicle of the crisis, Appendix, p.253.

³⁹ Interview with Antonis Fourlis, the Greek journalist who first presented the Imia/Kradak case on Antenna TV, Athens 18.09.01.

⁴⁰ Interview with Antonis Fourlis, Athens, 18.09.01.

Antenna's coverage of the *Figen Akat* story on the 24th and the hoisting of the flag on January 25th, were marked by two characteristics: the continual repetition that this was an “exclusive story” for Antenna, and the dramatic way the story was presented, with the use of red headlines and sensational words. The title of the story was “Mysterious Meeting”. It referred to a meeting that the Prime Minister had had with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of the Interior on the previous day, January 23rd. The reporter presented four possible scenarios regarding the topic of the discussion, suggesting that most likely, the meeting was related to the Turkish vessel incident, and the subsequent Turkish claims. To conclude: “All this presents a picture of escalating tension between Ankara and Athens over the islet.”⁴¹ Words like “revelation now”, “new Turkish provocation” and “new serious threat against Greek sovereignty” were repeated continuously on this day and during the following days. Paradoxically enough, Furlis admits that even today - six years after the crisis - he does not know whether the meeting he was referring to at that time had any connection with the Imia/Kardak incident!⁴²

The logic of the media is further reflected on the explanations of Turkish media directors and journalists with regard to the hoisting of the Turkish flag by journalists. The Turkish journalists who hoisted the flag worked for the newspaper *Hürriyet* and the television channel Canal D. Ertuğrul Özgök, *Hürriyet*'s director, explained the motives behind this action in an interview he gave in the aftermath of the crisis:

I do not think that Turkey and Greece would have fought in the end for this rock. That would be very silly and really I would not forgive the Turks and the Greeks if they ended up making war over such a trivial matter. For us it was just a journalistic matter. We went there, took photos and videos; we sold these pictures, and we made a lot of money. We sold these pictures to Greek journalists as well. We were happy about it.⁴³

Media editors underlined that “their decisions were made on a daily routine basis”.⁴⁴ They did not have the time to think about their next step, neither could they have foreseen what that step could have been. Furthermore, according to the people of the private television channels, the inter-media chain reaction was inevitable, as “one of the basic rules of television is the viewer ratings”.⁴⁵

⁴¹ Antenna, News at 8:30, 24.01.96.

⁴² Interview with Antonis Furlis, Athens, 18.09.01.

⁴³ Interview of Ertuğrul Özgök by George Vlavianos, on Antenna 3.02.96.

⁴⁴ Interview with Costas Iordanides, chief news editor, Kathimerini, Athens, 20.05.00.

⁴⁵ *ibid.*.

Haluk Sahin who became news director of Canal D after the crisis, placed the Turkish media attitudes in January 1996 within the context of the media antagonism at the time: "The private television channels had just discovered the way that news bulletins can boost viewing ratings. It was the lowest point for the private Turkish television channels".⁴⁶

This climate of antagonism is illustrated by several incidents. On January 29th, the Turkish channel Interstar disseminated scenes of some people on another island hoisting the Turkish flag and the flag of the television channel.⁴⁷ They claimed to be on one of the two Imia/Kardak islands, but it was quickly proven that this film had come from some island near Istanbul. Excessive comments by journalists followed the hoisting of the Turkish flag on the disputed islet. Interstar again, on the day of the crisis' climax, started asking people "Should we go to war with Greece?"⁴⁸ On the other side of the Aegean, the Greek news media covered the sortie of the Greek fleet live, giving details about the time, the types of warships, and their destination too.⁴⁹

To conclude this section, the above analysis demonstrated that technological innovations in the mass communications field and the self-referential nature of communication itself enable media to operate as providers and amplifiers of irritations within modern society. In the crisis of 1996, the media multiplied the possible sources of contributions to the system of crisis by disseminating communications rapidly and effectively to an undetermined number of receivers. This operation of news media increased the complexity and speeded up structural couplings among various social systems whose selections were simultaneously oriented towards the same direction namely the direction of crisis. It is important to stress that it was news medias' normal operation that accelerated the selectivity and connectability of the emerging system.

4.2. The System of Politics

Both governments initially attempted to keep a distance and keep a low profile concerning the noise about the crisis. The Greek decision to raise the tone and the reply by the Turkish Prime Minister were turning points in the emergence of the crisis, which must be explored further in terms of the processes of their constitution.

⁴⁶ Interview with Haluk Sahin, Director of the News Programme of Canal D after the crisis, Istanbul 10.08.98.

⁴⁷ Interstar Evening News, 29 January 1996.

⁴⁸ Interstar Morning Programme, 30 January 1996.

⁴⁹ Hristos Lyberis, *National Strategy and Crisis Management*, 1997, Poiotita, p.299.

In the afternoon of January 28th, the Greek cabinet met in the Parliament to discuss the newly elected government's programme. At that moment the crisis had not emerged yet. For Greek politicians and diplomats, this was a problem that the media created. That afternoon it was once again agreed upon that the government should follow a policy of keeping a low profile regarding the Imia/Kardak issue, in order to avoid the exacerbation of the already increased tension.⁵⁰ The same evening however, the Greek cabinet was informed that the Greek television channels had a videotape with the hoisting of the Turkish flag on the islet. At that moment they changed their initially decided policy on the issue.⁵¹

The Greek government found itself in a difficult position not only could it not control the noise in Greece about the incident, but it found itself in the difficult position where it had to convince everyone that it was defending the national interests of the country. It had to act on four fronts at the same time: the opposition within the government which was supporting a more aggressive policy vis-à-vis Turkey, the opposition to the government, public opinion, and finally Turkey itself. Furthermore, the vote of confidence for the newly elected government scheduled to take place in the parliament within the next days was another concern of the Greek cabinet.

Simitis's statement was enforced selectivity, an emerging order that reduced complexity and served the interests of the system of politics. The system of the Greek politics with its own particular need to appear as defending the country's interests, its practices and routines was acting under the limiting condition of the institutionalised within society Greek-Turkish conflict. The statement was more a contingent selection than a necessary and natural move according to some imperative rationale. Furthermore, as it will be demonstrated later, the Greek government could not predict the effects of its actions.

The next day, the interim Prime Minister Tansu Ciller replied more aggressively "we do not have to give even one little pebble of the land of this country... We do not allow the raising of a foreign flag on Turkish land".⁵² This statement was also a selection and thus reduction of complexity of the situation. In those days, Ciller had been too preoccupied with domestic politics, in particular with negotiations about the new government's formation. She had been trying to find a formula for an alliance

⁵⁰ Interview with a high-ranking Greek diplomat [1].

⁵¹ Interview with a high-ranking Greek diplomat [1].

⁵² *Hürriyet*, 30.01.96.

with another political party, which would make her Prime Minister. Therefore, she was not informed about the issue of the Imia/Kardak islets until January 29th. On the afternoon of January 28th, she flew to Antalya for the inauguration of a building. On her way back to Ankara, *Hürriyet*'s correspondent, Sedat Ergin, asked her about the Imia/Kardak islets. Her answer was "we will discuss this on our next trip".⁵³ As it became known later, she had not read the briefings that Turkish diplomats had given her and thus replied "give me some time, we will look at this later".⁵⁴

When the issue emerged in the Turkish media and on the political agenda, diplomats and officials at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and in the army started researching the legal status of the islets. As it was revealed later on the Turkish press, a dispute occurred at the time within the Turkish Foreign Ministry, regarding the ownership of the islets. Furthermore, the Turkish Ambassador in Rome informed the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs about the diplomatic correspondence between Italy and Turkey after the two 1932 agreements related to the status of the islets. This memorandum suggested that Greek sovereignty over Imia/Kardak was indisputable. According to the Turkish press, this document was destroyed.⁵⁵ The day the National Security Council (NSC) convened, Ciller asked the Secretary of the Ministry, Ambassador Oynur Oymen, whether the Turkish arguments regarding the islets were well substantiated. Oymen, during this briefing, did not let Ciller know about the different views expressed within the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. His answer was positive and that became the basis of her tough and belligerent position during the meeting of the NSC. Ciller attempted to rally people around the flag and reinforce her own position within Turkey. Her real agenda was that she wanted to become the Prime Minister of Turkey's next government.

At the aftermath of the crisis, criticism was levelled against the then interim Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Ciller, as well as against Oynur Oymen. Mesut Yilmaz, who succeeded Ciller to the premiership after the crisis, accused her of irresponsible behaviour, and of having let the crisis escalate. Additionally, in a speech within the Turkish Parliament, Yilmaz argued that, in the case of the Imia/Kardak crisis, the bureaucrats of the Foreign Ministry "took the government's place and dictated the

⁵³ Faruk Bildirici, *Masqueli Leydi*, Umit Yayincilik, Ankara 1998, p.345.

⁵⁴ Faruk Bildirici, *Masqueli Leydi*, p.346.

⁵⁵ Günery Civaoglu, *Milliyet* 28.03.96.

policy that was to be followed by themselves".⁵⁶ Yilmaz believed that high-ranking officials within the ministry, led by Oynur Oymen, had hidden from the political leadership documents, which substantiated the Greek arguments regarding the legal status of the Imia/Kardak islets.⁵⁷ When he became Prime Minister, he tried to remove these people from their positions, but he was not successful, as the new Turkish government was a coalition between his party and Ciller's party. The latter sought to keep her protégés in the ministry.⁵⁸

Thus, the results of the empirical research on what appears to be key points in the escalation of the crisis, namely the publicizing of the issue, the statement made by the Greek Prime Minister and finally the statement made by the Turkish Foreign Minister, demonstrate that they were not made according to an imperative logic of national interests. Nevertheless, they became points for further connections, structural couplings that amplified the initial condition, the incident about the Figen Akat, constraining complexity towards the direction of crisis. As demonstrated above, the system of politics in Greece was a-causally coupled with various other social systems, which interpreted Simitis's statement, each one, according to its specific rationale. These connections enabled social systems to continue their recursive operations and thus their autopoiesis. Ciller's statement also set in motion similar processes in Turkey.

4.3. The Military

Social systems, when they carry out their operations of self and other observation, employ different distinctions, simplified schemes of interpretation for their connective processing of information which correspond to their own rationale. The difference of rationale between the Greek military and political leadership was made clear during the crisis. Furthermore, it came to the surface the day after its de-escalation, and eventually caused the forced resignation of the Commander-in-Chief of the Greek Armed Forces, Admiral Hristos Lyberis.

Admiral Lyberis himself admits the existence of a difference in the interpretation of the events and he describes it as follows in the book he wrote after the crisis: "there is a contradiction in the evaluation of the incident's importance. The worst case scenario

⁵⁶ Mesut Yilmaz's speech in the Turkish Parliament, *Reuters*, 17.04.96.

⁵⁷ Alkis Kourkoulas, *Imia, a Critical Approach to the Turkish Factor*, p.103-104.

⁵⁸ *ibid.*, p.104.

should constitute the basis for the planning of further diplomatic and military actions... The Greek Armed Forces were activated on that basis".⁵⁹ The Greek government however, as it was analysed above, not only did not choose that option but it basically had not thought of this incident as capable of causing a Greek-Turkish crisis and it decided to handle it in a different way.

This difference in rationale was manifested in the first decision, which introduced the military. That decision was not a closely deliberated decision. The Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces was the person who issued the order for the hoisting of the flag. In addition, the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, Hristos Lyberis, also issued an order for dispatching of Special Forces to the islet after consultation with the Minister of Defence, Gerasimos Arsenis.⁶⁰ The Minister of Foreign Affairs was not only not asked about this, but he was not even immediately informed of it. It was on the next day that he learned about this development by accident.⁶¹ Pangalos himself asserted this in a press conference on January 30th: "If I had been asked, I would have told them to take the [Turkish] flag but not to leave forces there, not even the Greek flag, so as to avoid getting involved in this game, since those were not Turkish soldiers but journalist-spies".⁶²

Nevertheless, the activation of the Greek military forces on the basis of the worst case scenario was observed by the Greek news media and possibly by the Turkish news media and other organizations. They in their turn attributed a different meaning to what was happening, which contradicted the statements of the political leadership. For example the moment the Greek authorities were trying to play down the noise about the crisis, the media focused on the preparations on the military level. Sky's Evening News Bulletin on the 26th started with the headline "[A]lert at the Ministries of Defence and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Greek Armed Forces are in high state of readiness".⁶³ Lyberis could not see how his own distinctions re-entered society and contributed to the constitution of the crisis.

The rules of engagement became one more point of dispute between the military and the political leadership in Greece. When admiral Lyberis asked the Greek political leadership for permission to issue Rules of Engagement to the fleet, the answer that he

⁵⁹ Hristos Lyberis, *National Strategy...*, p.170.

⁶⁰ *ibid.*, p.193, see also *Eleftherotypia*, 18 February 1996, pp. 9-10.

⁶¹ Interview with a high-ranking Greek diplomat, [1].

⁶² Hristos Lyberis, *National Strategy...*, pp.167-168.

⁶³ Antenna news bulletin at 8:30 p.m., 26.01.96.

received was “leave the rules of engagement; now we are negotiating”.⁶⁴ However, Lyberis admits that “[I]t was inconceivable to me that there could be a possibility of confrontation, without rules of engagement....For that reason I never recalled the rules of engagement established by the Council of the Greek Armed Forces, with the political cover of the Minister of Defence”.⁶⁵

On the Turkish side, the different rationales of the military and the system of politics emerged when the Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Ciller asked the Admiral Güven Erkaya to suspend the operations of the occupation of the other of the two islets, during the most critical night of the crisis. Admiral Güven Erkaya did not accept this proposal. His reasoning derived from the technicalities of the operation.

When Admiral Erkaya retired from the military, he became a member of a Greek-Turkish civil society organization, the Greek-Turkish Forum, which was actively engaged in second track of diplomacy. His own explanation about his participation in this effort was based on his experience from the crisis.⁶⁶ Being one of the people that managed the crisis of 1996, he explained his own understanding of how crises emerge in the Forum’s first meetings. He believed that there is always the risk of a crisis breaking out, because of the problems of communication and the lack of contact between the two sides. “Many times an event which might have been accidental or might have been organized by some mischief makers can acquire huge dimensions, because there is no possibility for direct communication of the two sides which can help clear up the situation immediately.” He emphasized that in the framework of the army “crises of this type lead to automatic procedures, which lead to other actions and these to further actions, ending up in a snowball effect, which cannot be controlled”.⁶⁷ Finally, it seems that another coincidence contributed to the building up of the two fleets in the area. The Greek side brought out war-ships in order to patrol the area of the islets because at that time the Greek coast guard had only inflatable boats and no metallic ones. Nevertheless, the presence of the Greek warships was interpreted by the Turkish side as a signal of escalation leading to an automatic increase of the military presence.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ Hristos Lyberis, *National Strategy...*, p.150.

⁶⁵ *ibid.*, p. 150.

⁶⁶ Admiral Güven Erkaya was the co-ordinator of the Turkish part of the group until 1988. His health condition did not allow him to follow the work of the Forum after 1999.

⁶⁷ Interviews with Paulina Lampsas, Athens, 19.02.01 and Soli Ozel, Istanbul, 18.01.01.

4.4. Opposition Parties

The policy of the main opposition political party in Greece, Nea Dimokratia, ranged at the time from national solidarity to exploitation of the issue for political reasons. In a parliamentary speech broadcast live on television, the leader of the main opposition party supported the policy of the government regarding the crisis. On the other hand, high-ranking members of Nea Dimokratia, as well as members of the press who were affiliated with the opposition, criticised the government for its way of handling things at the time. The spokesman of Nea Dimokratia, on January 28th, accused the government of “bad reflexes, which led to delays that can cause damage to Greek national interests” and the day before, it was suggested that a police force should be sent to all the islets.⁶⁹

These messages provided points for connections within society, which continued the reproduction of communication about the crisis and thereby constituted the crisis itself. News media reported on them and they also posed questions to the Greek government. Members of the opposition party commented on the developments promoting their party's image. “The Deputy President of Nea Dimokratia, Ioannis Varvitsiotis, has said that the matter is particularly serious, and he has also revealed that when he was Minister of Defence a regiment regularly went to the area of these islets”.⁷⁰

The right-wing newspapers in Greece were using provocative and populist language at the time. They adopted the opposition's point of view, that is, that the government's reaction had been inappropriate, and they also started advocating an even more decisive reply.⁷¹ On January 29th *Eleftheros Typos*, under the headline “The Turks Humiliated Us”, criticised the government for the way it had dealt with the matter. This article argued that “[T]he irresponsibility Simitis' government displayed to the initial Turkish provocation over the islet gave ground for Ankara to continue...The unprecedented Turkish provocation occurred because of the government's inertia...”⁷²

⁶⁸ Interview with Ambassador Fotis Xydas, 22.04.01.

⁶⁹ Sky Evening News at 8:30, 26 January 1996.

⁷⁰ *Eleftheros Typos*, 29.01.96, pp.8-9.

⁷¹ *Apoyevmatini*, a right wing newspaper, reported on January 26th on a meeting that took place in the offices of the main opposition party Nea Dimokratia, where the Imia issue and the lack of government reaction had been discussed. The same newspaper emphasised the need for military measures.

⁷² *Eleftheros Typos*, 29.01.96, pp.8-9.

4.5. Individuals

This section discusses the role certain individuals played in the emergence of this crisis. The focus is particularly on the initiative undertaken by the mayor of the island of Kalymnos, Dimitris Diakomihalis, to hoist the Greek flag on one of the two islets and the Turkish journalist who replaced the Greek with the Turkish flag. The aim here is the exploration of the constitution of these actions and the effects they had in Greek and Turkish society. Luhmann argues that psychic systems are not constitutive elements of social systems but they make part of systems' environment. Psychic systems in their attempts to communicate supply social systems with disorder and sufficient complexity for their autopoiesis.⁷³ In what follows I seek to explore the constitution of what appears to be decisive actions in the development of the crisis. The focus is particularly on the initiative undertaken by the mayor of the island of Kalymnos, Dimitris Diakomihalis, to hoist the Greek flag on one of the two islets and the Turkish journalist who replaced the Greek with the Turkish flag. Two points are made. First, these 'actions' emerged as the selective reduction of their complexity and the complexity of their environment. Second, these actions were events selected by other social systems, according to their own rationale and thus they reflect the externalization of the self-reference of the observing systems rather than the "real" purpose of the agent.

4.5.1. The Mayor of Kalymnos

The hoisting of the Greek flag on one of the two islets on December 25th by Diakomihalis, the mayor of the nearby island of Kalymnos, should not be attributed to the specific individual but to the broader environment from which this action emerged. Considering the mayor's action we should investigate its conditioning. The island of Kalymnos is close to the Turkish coast. During the years before the crisis, tension had started to build up in the region. The inhabitants of Kalymnos had the feeling that there was a kind of "psychological war" between them and the Turks who lived on the coast opposite their island. This psychological war had developed its own routines: Turks and Greeks did not fight with guns but they drew flags as signs of sovereignty. There were large Turkish flags on the mountains opposite Kalymnos. On the other hand, Greek fishermen had made a tradition of painting Greek flags, using

⁷³ For the differences between life, psychic and social systems see Chapter II, p.4.

simple paint and brushes, on small Greek islands or rocky islets, as a kind of reply to the Turks.⁷⁴ Furthermore, there were other incidents in the fishermen's daily routine that intensified this "warlike" climate. It must be noted that Greek and Turkish coasts are so close that while Greek fishermen were going about their everyday work, that is while they were fishing, they frequently entered Turkish territorial waters without noticing. The Turkish coast guard often went after them. The islanders had approached the mayor of the island many times, asking him to do something about the situation. Diakomihalis is reported to have said at the time, that if he had not put up the flag, everyone on the island would have accused him of having embarrassed Greece.⁷⁵

Furthermore, in an interview that the mayor of Kalymnos gave to *Eleftherotypia* on January 29th, he defended his actions, suggesting that the hoisting of the flag was in the same line of action as "the initiative he had undertaken along with other mayors of islands and towns of the Eastern Aegean Sea, a decision to find a way to protest against Turkey for its provocative actions, which were indications of Turkey's general aims in the Aegean Sea".⁷⁶ Diakomihalis referred here to an initiative undertaken by the Municipalities of several Greek islands in the region, an initiative that was supported by the Ministries of Defence and of the Aegean Sea. The goal was to establish settlements on remote islets that were considered to be part of the Greek territory. The future inhabitants of these islands, according to media reports on that matter, were to be volunteers, retired military officers. The first steps of this initiative had already been implemented, and publicised by the Greek news media in September 1995. The Turkish authorities had considered that action to be centrally orchestrated by the Greek state as part of a broader plan, within the proclaimed goal of expansion of Greece's territorial waters to 12 miles. Turks have always considered the possibility of the expansion of Greece's territorial waters to 12 miles, as a "nightmare". Nevertheless, the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs was not involved in this initiative.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Interview with Georgia Dama, journalist of *Eleftherotypia*, Istanbul, 25.07.00.

⁷⁵ Ibid..

⁷⁶ *Eleftherotypia*, 29.01.96.

⁷⁷ "Although the programme for the 10 islets had a serious political and defensive dimension, it was planned more with emotion and less with logic. This programme had not been the subject of discussion in the Council of the Commanders-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. The General Staff of Defence did not know about it. As Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, I was informed about it through the press. I assume that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs did not know about it either". Hristos Lyberis, *National Strategy and Crisis Management*, Poiotita, third edition, 1997, p.243.

The occurrence of the hoisting of the Greek flag was simultaneously selected by various social and psychic systems for their further autopoiesis. Each of them attributed meaning to it - that is it attributed selectivity and connectivity - according to its own meaning world. In other words, the hoisting of the Greek flag on the islet, observed by the Turkish news media and evaluated against their previous knowledge about the islets - that they were Turkish land - was considered by Turkish journalists to be a threat to the Turkish territorial integrity and as such it was 'news'. This event immediately set in motion the media routines. It motivated Nur Batur, the correspondent of *Hürriyet* in Athens, to find a photo and send an article on that event to *Hürriyet*, making it a story to be discussed in the editors' meeting of the newspaper the next morning. In this meeting it was decided to send journalists to the islets. On the other hand, the same event was news for the Greek Antenna TV channel which gave it another exclusive.

4.5.2. Cesur Sert

Cesur Sert was the Turkish journalist who replaced the Greek flag with the Turkish flag. At that time he was working for the Doğan Group - one of the biggest media groups in Turkey. What follows below is his own account of his role in the crisis of 1996.⁷⁸

... I was told that day to abandon everything else I was doing. We were briefly informed about the situation, and we departed. Just as I was about to leave the newspaper's offices, one of the newspaper's executives caught up with me, and gave me a big Turkish flag. He told me to try to land on the islet and take photos with the flag. I didn't know that there was a Greek flag already on the islet. Nobody had told us this. Nor had anyone told us to remove the Greek flag and put the Turkish one there. They only told us to take photos of ourselves holding the Turkish flag. This is the truth that I'm telling you ... Nobody had given us any orders to do what we did. Not the state, not the military, not even the newspaper. The pilot tried to land the helicopter on the islet, and it took him more than ten minutes. Eventually he landed it next to the flagstaffs. We ran out, as if we were soldiers, with the engines of the helicopter on and the rotor turning. I felt that our actions resembled those of a military squad. Even today I wonder why... We removed the Greek flag, I put it in my pocket, I handed the Turkish flag to the others, and we raised it. We stayed 7-8 minutes on the island, all in all. We all took photos of each other, one by one...

Whatever I did, I did it only for a headline with my name under it, on the first page. I remember that I started trembling when I saw the Turkish commandos departing for Imia.

⁷⁸ Interview with Cesur Sert by Stratis Balaskas in *Eleftherotypia*, "Imia: I Was the Flag-bearer in a Comedy", 19.01.99.

What was Cesur Sert thinking when he took the Greek flag and replaced it with the Turkish flag?

Have you ever been beaten by a woman in front of 5 thousand people? And the whole of Turkey saw what had happened in the photos published the next day in the newspaper. For me the Imia story started in April 1991. It is not related to the Greek side but it is related to something very important to me, personally. At that time I was a sports journalist at *Hürriyet*, 21 years old and only two years on the job. I had to take photos of the losers in a game, and when this specific game finished, the Greeks were the ones who had lost the game. I saw that a Greek player had started crying. I went close to take a picture of her. Her name was Deli. But when she saw me taking photos of her, she pushed me away and started hitting me in front of five thousand people. I did not react. What else could I do anyway? She was a woman... My Turkish colleagues took photos of that, too. The next day all the Turkish newspapers had a picture of Deli hitting me.

Sert's narrative about the hoisting of the Turkish flag and the way it occurred demonstrates that this action, as it happened with the mayor's action, emerged as the reduction of the complexity of the situation. That complexity included organizational patterns of action like the media routines, social and cultural patterns and the meaning world of the specific psychic systems. The event of the hoisting of the flag enabled the continuation of communication about the Figen Akat incident. Social and psychic systems observed it - that is they selected to observe it - and thus they attributed causality that is responsibility according to their schemes of interpretation. By doing that they decreased complexity and they were enabled to continue their operations. The observation of the Turkish flag by the Greek warship patrolling in the region activated established mechanisms of action within the system of the Greek navy. It was also 'news' for the Greek media. Furthermore, it developed into a major problem for the system of Greek politics.

5. The De-escalation of the Crisis

In this part of the chapter, I will discuss the de-escalation process and the role of the American intervention. Conventional theories of international relations and politics focus on power as the means that parties in a crisis employ, in order to avert the other and achieve their aims. Analyses of the crisis of 1996, that employed this perspective, argue that the American intervention was a characteristic case of mediation with muscle where the use of threat and power was very important. Here, two main points are made. First, that reflexive communication played an important role in the de-

escalation of the crisis. Second, the development of the crisis and its de-escalation was a contingent development, that is it was neither necessary nor impossible it was only one of the possible developments of the crisis.

Although the American administration had closely followed the developments in Greek - Turkish relations during the last days of January, it was only in the morning of the 30th that they realised how critical the situation was.⁷⁹ At that point they decided to intervene, establishing contacts on different levels. The United States Secretary of Defence, William Perry, called the Greek Minister of Defence, Yerasimos Arsenis. The United States Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, called the Greek Foreign Minister, Theodoros Pangalos, as well as the Turkish Foreign Minister, Deniz Baykal. The United States Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General John Shalikashvili, became also involved in the effort to avert the possibility of war in that region. By late the same night several contacts had been made at the level of Ministers of Defence, Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Commanders-in-Chief of Armed Forces. In addition to these contacts, the American President, Bill Clinton, called both the Greek Prime Minister Simitis and the Turkish Prime Minister Ciller in person, at 1:00 a.m. Tuesday night. The role of Richard Holbrooke, the US Undersecretary of State for European and Canadian Affairs, as co-ordinator of the negotiations was also very important.

Initially, the American intervention attempted to clarify each side's allegations about the other side. Turkey had argued that Greece had planned these events in order to expand its territorial waters to 12 miles, and Greece's perception was that Turkey had instigated the crisis in order to dispute Greek sovereign rights in the Aegean once again. The Turkish view was reflected on the second *note verbale* addressed by the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Greek Foreign Ministry on January 29th.⁸⁰ There, reference was explicitly made to Greece's plan to bring Greek settlers to deserted Aegean islands, a plan launched, as it was already discussed above in September 1995.⁸¹ When the Greek Foreign Minister, Theodoros Pangalos, presented the situation later on, in a press conference, he said about the negotiations of that evening the following: “[US Secretary of State Warren] Christopher told me [on the

⁷⁹ Interview with Alexis Papahelas, correspondent in Washington of the Greek television channel Mega. Papahelas conducted an interview with Richard Holbrooke in the aftermath of the crisis. Athens, 27.06.02.

⁸⁰ See the chronicle of the crisis, Appendix, p.253.

phone] that the Turks are saying that you have started the expansion of your territorial waters to 12 miles. I replied to him that I am very happy because I spent the afternoon talking in the Parliament about the government's programme, and I repeated the invariable Greek position that this, the 12 miles issue, is our non-negotiable right, that we will exercise it when we wish, and that in any case we will not exercise our right now".⁸²

The goal of the American efforts was to assure both sides that neither of the two would proceed with a *fait accompli* and that there would thus be an immediate return to the *status quo ante*. The American administration tried to function as a guarantor with regard to the basic assumption upon which the communication between Greek and Turkish authorities was taking place: the threat of a change of the status quo. Furthermore, the important aspect of this mediating effort was reflexive communication, that is communication *about* the way the parties had been communicating and the interpretation of their signals. Basically, the American intervention tried to make up for the lack of trust between the two sides.

On the last night of the crisis, the crucial issue in the negotiations was not the sovereignty over the islets. The American intervention did not take a position vis-à-vis the problem of the islets' sovereignty *per se*. It kept an equal distance from the legal arguments of both sides. Furthermore, the Greek and Turkish politicians did not try to solve the problem of the dispute over the islets either. In any case, both governments had made their positions about the legal status of the islet clear before the crisis escalated. Turkey had argued that Imia/Kardak is part of the Turkish territory, and Greece argued that according to international law, those islets constitute part of its own territory.

The mediation efforts that took place during that evening were not about the sovereignty issue. They were about the lowering of the flag and they were about the subsequent withdrawal of the fleets from the region of the islets. Specifically, they were about when exactly the Greek flag would be taken away from the islet. "What Holbrooke was basically saying to Ankara was 'We ask you to have a little patience; we can assure you that the Greek forces will withdraw, but that cannot happen now, for as long as the government has not yet taken the vote of confidence'. To Ankara's

⁸¹ See the second *note verbale*, 29 January 1996, on the website of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs, <http://www.mfa.gr/>

⁸² Hristos Lyberis, *National Strategy..*, p.168.

question about how long they would have to wait, Holbrooke answered ‘about two weeks’”.⁸³ What made the situation difficult was that both sides had already taken a clear position on television - Greek politicians had assured the Greek people that “the flag will stay” and Turkish politicians had assured the Turkish people that “the flag will go”.

On the other hand, while the negotiations were going on, the military forces on both sides had already been mobilised, and that mobilisation had taken their own dynamics. The Turkish Special Forces had already started out for the area of the islets. The decision to occupy the second islet, close to the one where the Greek forces were stationed and the Greek flag had been hoisted, was taken two days before the peak of the crisis, in the first Turkish National Security Council meeting. Tansu Ciller after the briefing she had with Oynur Oymen suggested the re-occupation of the islet where the Greek forces were. The Turkish military is reported to have reacted hesitantly and carefully, saying that the meaning of this act would be declaration of war with Greece and that this kind of decision was the responsibility of the political authorities. Then, Ambassador Inal Batu suggested the occupation of the adjacent islet as an alternative solution.⁸⁴

The execution of the operation started the night of January 30th. However, around midnight, before the Turkish Special Forces left the port of Bodrum for the islets, Ciller, after the discussions she had with the American mediators tried to stop the operation by calling Admiral Erkaya and asking him to suspend the operation. The answer was that this would put the success of the operation at risk, as time was critical and tiredness and stress could undermine the performance of the soldiers.⁸⁵ At the end, the Turkish occupation of the islet gave an advantage to Turkey regarding the demand of the simultaneous withdrawal of both sides’ flags, forces and fleets.

When the Greek decision-makers were informed about the occupation of the adjacent island by the Turkish television and the American mediators, they contemplated the

⁸³ This is quoted in Alkis Kourkoulas's book. The information was collected from discussions Alkis Kourkoulas had with Greek officials and Holbrooke himself. p. 54.

⁸⁴ See the programme by Mehmet Ali Birand “32nd Day” on Atv, 20.05.96.

⁸⁵ "Again a phone call [by Turkish Prime Minister Ciller] asking to postpone the operation and again I told her to discuss it with the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. She then asked what would happen if we postponed the operation. We had planned that our team would stay in the sea one and half hour that is from twelve o' clock to one thirty. The more you postpone it, the more the boys will stay in the water and that means that the risk of giving in and the risk of the failure of the operation increase." Interview with Admiral Güven Erkaya who was the Commander-in-Chief of the Navy during the crisis, by Mehmet Ali Birand for the Programme “32nd Day”, Atv, 20.05.96.

possibility of a military reply. The Greek Prime Minister asked Admiral Lyberis about how long the operation of the re-occupation of the adjacent islet would take. The decision to negotiate a solution rather than to re-occupy the island was finally determined by time limitations. If Greece had had the capability to react quickly to the Turkish Special Forces' occupation of the islet, then a limited or more expanded war could have developed and another solution could have been negotiated.

Conventional analysis argues that the American intervention was decisive as to the de-escalation of the crisis, making the point that America's supreme power imposed a solution. This however cannot be substantiated, as neither Turkey was prevented from proceeding with the occupation of the islet, nor was Greece stopped from considering the possibility of the re-occupation of the islet. In that sense, the crisis did not de-escalate because of the threat of force by the USA. Furthermore, the development of the crisis proves that there could have been a different turn of events. Power within this context can be seen as a medium of communication that increases the selectivity of already made selections.

The American intervention was framed within the rationale of the paramount strategic importance the USA attached to the Aegean Sea region. It was in accordance with the plans and institutionalized aims of the American government. First, a Greek-Turkish war would put at risk the Southeast flank of NATO with multiple consequences for the region. Furthermore, the Turkish army is considered to be an important asset in this area for the United States. The position of Turkey, in control of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, and also Turkey's vicinity to the Persian Gulf and to Southeast Asia, are all very important. On the other hand, Greek air and naval facilities contribute to the American control over the Mediterranean.⁸⁶ Finally, both countries are near the Balkans, an area already in turmoil during those years.

6. The Autonomy of the System of the Crisis of 1996

In the previous sections, I explored the emergence of crisis through self-referential processing of meaning by various social and psychic systems. In this section, I will further elaborate on the mechanisms of communication that enabled the constitution

⁸⁶ See Haass's observations as regards the American interests in this region. Haass, Richard, *Conflicts Unending: The United States and Regional Disputes*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990, pp.57-58. For the importance of Turkey for the USA see Fuller, Graham E., "Conclusions the Growing Role of Turkey in the World", in Fuller, Graham, E., Lesser Ian O., *Turkey's New Geopolitics*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1994, pp.164-166.

of the crisis of 1996 as an autonomous system independent of the control of other systems; the argument being that the self-referential processing of meaning is possible by means of generalisation and re-specification. Communications are complex self-referential systems generalised in all three dimensions of meaning, the factual, temporal, and social. Generalisations enable connectivity as every element of the system frees itself from the specific and concrete events - the factual dimension - that took place at a specific time. Furthermore, it makes itself available for connections, which can refer to both the past and the future - the temporal dimension - and be accomplished through contributions by various social participants - the social dimension. Thus, a process emerges and is crystallised into systemic structures, when chains of references are formed to which quick contributions can be made, suppressing others that need deliberation. Factual, temporal, and social references independent of each other are complex enough to adapt themselves to complicated interdependencies with other factual, temporal and social meaning references.

The information about the *Figen Akat*, for example, was picked up by different social and psychic systems, which interpreted and reproduced it according to their own rationale, attributing different selectivity and connectivity to this event. References to the events surrounding the *Figen Akat* incident detached themselves from the time and place of their occurrence and sought connections to references within the Greek-Turkish conflict. The personal political interests of politicians and bureaucrats, the perceptions or misperceptions of the other side's intentions, all these did not matter. Ultimately, the specific incident with the *Figen Akat* and its presentation on the Antenna channel did not have any importance any more.

The linking device for the structural couplings that enabled the autopoiesis of crisis was language. The language employed here was the language of the conflict. The communication about the *Figen Akat* incident found further connections in the themes derived from the history of the long-standing Greek-Turkish conflict. Many incidents that had occurred in Greece and Turkey's long and eventful history were recalled in this instance as bearing similarities to the current incident. The historical roots of the Greek-Turkish conflict go back hundreds of years, basically back to the years when the Ottoman Empire, the historical ancestor of Turkey, occupied for four hundred



years what is today the land of Greece.⁸⁷ The Greek War of Independence, which resulted in the founding of a Greek state, the memories of the Balkan Wars and the war in Asia Minor, are all part of a past that still plays an important role in how present situations are perceived. Furthermore, the Greek trauma over the invasion of Cyprus in 1974, the Turkish view of the events that preceded this invasion, and thus justified it, and the dispute in the Aegean which had given rise to three serious crises since the mid-70's - all these issues were connected to the current crisis.

References that built up the crisis unified the past, present, and future, and a specific causality was attributed to them. Generalisation on the temporal dimensions means that past events are recalled and connected to present occurrences and future expectations are formed through extrapolations from the past and the present. A system of crisis is explained as something that is always imminent. In the interpretations of the developments the adverb "always" (alternating with "never") indicated a lasting existence over time. News media reports were constructed in that way. For example, on January 28th, the Turkish channel, Kanal D started its news bulletin with a scene recalling the events in Izmir in 1922, after the "War of Salvation" (as Turks call the war fought against the Greeks in Asia Minor.) The newscaster's introduction started as follows: "74 years ago we lowered the Greek flag in Izmir. Now we have lowered the Greek flag from our island and we have raised the Turkish flag".⁸⁸ The Greek television channel Sky, for example, replayed the scene with the changing of the flags six times in only 1 minute and 25 seconds, as well as parts of the interview with one of the Turkish journalists who hoisted the flag, Aykut Firat, saying:⁸⁹ "In 1932 a Convention was signed between Turkey and Italy. This island belongs to us..." Similar episodes in which the Turkish flag was hoisted on other small Greek islands in the past were presented again and again by the Greek news media, concluding that "Turkey's ultimate goal is to repeat the events of Cyprus, Istanbul, Izmir, etc".⁹⁰

⁸⁷ For further information regarding Greek-Turkish relations see Clogg, Richard, *A Concise History of Greece*, 1992, Cambridge University Press.

⁸⁸ Canal D, News bulletin at 7:30 p.m., 28.01.96.

⁸⁹ Sky News bulletin at 8:00 p.m., 29.01.96.

⁹⁰ See the newspaper *Apoyevmatini* 26.01.96 which reported on a similar incident which had occurred in 1985, and also the newspaper *Eleftherotypia* 30.01.96 reporting on two other incidents that had occurred in 1975 and 1995 respectively.

The legal language that was used to describe the conflict offered further possibilities for connection.⁹¹ Issues of constant friction between the two countries such as the delimitation of the continental shelf, the dispute about the territorial waters, and airspace were all themes connected with the incident of Figen Akat.⁹²

Generalisation on the social dimension means that there is no constrain about who is going to make what contribution and when that will happen. Different social partners can make a contribution to the new order. Various personalities, from "realist" professors of international relations to politicians of the opposition party, to columnists and ordinary citizens from nearby islands who felt extremely concerned, participated in the reproduction of communication about the perceived crisis and thus in the crisis itself. "The aim of Turkey is the reconsideration of Greek-Turkish relations on the basis of the negotiations that took place in 1913 between the then Greek government and the government of Young Turks" argued Professor of History, Neoklis Sarris.⁹³ Scholars in Greece employed strategic approaches to explain Turkish expansionist plans and Turkey's ultimate goal of changing the *status quo*, as they saw it. Politicians and especially members of the opposition used this issue to attack the newly elected government for not being able to cope with a serious threat to Greek territorial integrity. News reports started reflecting the feelings of ordinary people - the fear of war, a fighting mood - about the events, which had their roots in the television broadcasts and press stories. The Greek government itself could not avoid contributing in turn to this cyclical self-reproduction of the crisis, as it was obliged to answer the questions that the media posed. Although governmental officials initially tried to stop this re-cycling of the uproar over the crisis, in truth, they actually fed it, and eventually they were swept away by its tide. An apt illustration of this is the statement of the Greek Foreign Minister Pangalos, who said, "the *Figen Akat* incident itself is not important" - a statement which then gave rise to a fierce attack on him by

⁹¹ Statements of the Minister of Foreign Affairs on Antenna evening news at 8:30 p.m., 26.1.96.

⁹² According to the Turkish point of view, if Greece eventually decides to extend its territorial waters, the Aegean will become a Greek lake. On the other hand, Greece has so far reserved its right to expansion that derives from the 1982 Convention of the Law of the Sea. Research in the continental shelf was the cause of the 1976 crisis, which led Greece and Turkey to resort to the International Court of Justice. Finally, the Flight Information Region (F.I.R.) of Athens in the Aegean Sea has been another continuous source of tension.

⁹³ *Eleftherotypia*, 26.01.96. For comments about the strategic and historical importance of the islets which were made by the same professor as well as by other international relations experts see *Eleftherotypia*, 30.01.96.

the opposition party. Similarly, in Turkey the same issue was news for the Turkish media and was also a field of battle for the highest ratings.

The system of crisis was autonomous and independent of the various social and psychic systems that contributed to its emergence. The political system or any other system could not, by itself, control and plan the crisis so as to use it as the means to force the other into some specific attitude. Furthermore, the examples above illustrated the independence of communication vis-à-vis the specific events that produced it. The *Figen Akat* incident was a trigger for all these themes to emerge and increase complexity. The crisis of 1996 was the system that reduced complexity and enabled psychic and social systems to continue their autopoiesis.

7. The Re-entry of the Crisis to the Greek-Turkish Conflict

The crisis did not end with the withdrawal of the two fleets from the region of Imia/Kardak on January 31st. After its de-escalation it was interpreted according to the meaning of the Greek-Turkish conflict. Academic discourse, journalistic accounts and political rhetoric reproduced it making it an integral part of the conflict through which it emerged in the first place.

Here, I will explore the way that the function system of science contributes to the reproduction that is self-constitution of conflict through the mechanisms of construction of scientific knowledge. The argument being that what is claimed to be a “scientific” explanation of reality is only a construct of the system of international relations theory coupled with other social systems like cultural patterns and pre-established knowledge about Greek-Turkish relations. As a case study, I will use a characteristic example of academic analysis of the 1996 crisis, an essay published by Eustathios Fakiolas and Panayiotis Mavrides.⁹⁴ The authors analyse the crisis from the point of view of the strategic approach. This means that they consider the use or threat of use of power as the most important factor in the 1996 Greek-Turkish crisis, the factor that determined the development of the crisis.⁹⁵ The authors, nevertheless, do not justify the adoption of this perspective. However, their choice can be explained by

⁹⁴ Panayiotis Mavrides, Eustathios Fakiolas, "Strategic crisis management and the Greek-Turkish Dispute", in Hristodoulos Giallourides, *Greece and Turkey after the End of the Cold War*, Sideris 1999, pp.133-176. This is one of the most thorough presentations in the narrow Realist strategic tradition.

⁹⁵ *ibid.*, p.135.

the fact that the authors are familiar to this approach, as both of them have been specialised in strategic studies.⁹⁶

The main position of their essay is that the 1996 crisis “signals a change in the way Turkey pursues its aims”.⁹⁷ The authors argue that this specific incident was the first incident of this kind in which Turkey used military power to dispute its borders with Greece. This thesis is justified as follows: “the bloodless occupation of the western islet of Imia, the way that this was expressed in the military field, and later on its political legitimisation, justify the conclusion that Turkey's leadership has started to adopt new policies to achieve its aims”.⁹⁸ Clearly, here the authors have deduced their main argument from what they define as “the results of the crisis” and not from empirical research. In the section “analysis of the events” there is not a presentation of what had happened, but rather an interpretation of certain events, based on articles from the daily, periodical, and electronic press of those days.⁹⁹ The main theme that they present is how Greek deterrence operated and the reasons for its failure. Therefore, the authors select those actions, which they can interpret them as acts of deterrence. These acts included the dispatch of the Greek squad to the islet, and the invitation given to the ambassadors of the 15 European Union member states, as well as the American and the Turkish ambassadors, to attend a meeting at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on January 28th. The second section of the essay has the title “explanation of the events” and starts with the question of “how the events of the crisis are connected with each other”. Nevertheless, this section, instead of providing an answer to this question, it puts forth two other questions based on their qualification of the above acts as acts of deterrence: “Why did Greek deterrence collapse in this case, and why did Greece finally compromise?”¹⁰⁰ The answer to the first of these two questions is that political and military actions were not co-ordinated, and thus there was a lack of coherence in these actions. In response to the second question, they suggest that Greek ‘actions’ did not follow a strategic rationale. The authors argue that what determined the positive result for Turkey, was its strategic

⁹⁶ See the background of the authors, *ibid.*, pp.521-522.

⁹⁷ *ibid.*, p.133.

⁹⁸ *ibid.*, p.133.

⁹⁹ See footnote 69 of the essay, *ibid.*, p. 175. The authors do not clarify the source of their information and in particular whether Turkish sources are included, but it becomes evident from the analysis that follows that they collected their information from mainly Greek sources.

¹⁰⁰ *ibid.*, 190.

logic, its aim "to win the crisis with strategic management of the crisis" whereas Greece wanted to "win in peace or win in a war".¹⁰¹

Fakiolas and Mavrides' essay assumes without question that there was a crisis from the very beginning of the incident with the vessel *Figen Akat* and the subsequent Turkish claims. It further assumes, then, that the different stages of the crisis were well thought out and organised by both countries' governments from the beginning to the end. The existence of a Greek or a Turkish system of strategic logic to cope with this crisis is another assumption they make. Based on this assumption they argue that Greece, therefore, made strategic mistakes because it was trapped in the strategic logic of the dilemma "peace or war". Turkey, on the other hand, followed a strategy that in this matter proved to be more flexible, changing positions with ease, moving gradually among the different stages that exist in between the two extremes war and peace. This argument ignores the process of the development of the crisis. It conceals the statements made by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Pangalos that he did not know about the regiment sent to the islet, and if he had been asked he would not have let this happen, as he said. The essay also does not discuss the efforts of the Greek government and the Turkish bureaucracy to keep a "low profile" at the beginning. It does not examine the motives behind the decision of the Greek government to bring third countries like the EU countries into the issue, which was shown above to be a reaction addressed to the internal constituency rather than another clear message of deterrence for Turkey. The authors do not examine any of the other actions that were important in the building up of the crisis, like for example the hoisting of the Greek flag and the role that the news media played in it. For this framework of analysis, only two actors exist and these are Turkey and Greece.

Furthermore, the authors, using arguments from their own analysis of the 1996 crisis, and based on the existing international literature,¹⁰² argue that the Greek-Turkish crises of 1976, 1987 and 1996 are all connected with each other. The element that connects them is Turkey's aim to force Greece into total negotiations on the status of the Aegean Sea.¹⁰³ This argument illustrates the self-referential operation of

¹⁰¹ *ibid.*, p.134.

¹⁰² I assume that they are based on the literature because the authors do not substantiate this view for the crises of 1976 and 1987 with any reference to literature.

¹⁰³ "...the crises over Imia and the crisis of 1976 and 1987 ..are connected with each other as regards their political aim, which is to force Greece into unlimited negotiations concerning the status of the Aegean Sea...."Panayiotis Mavrides, Stathis Fakiolas., p.165. On the other hand the editor of foreign news of *Hürriyet Ferai Tinc* was writing about the crisis from a Turkish viewpoint: "Greece is not

communication by means of generalisation in the factual, temporal, and social dimensions of meaning.

This analysis is static because it ignores the actual process of the emergence and development of the crisis. It cannot describe the crisis as a phenomenon of 'becoming'. Adopting an ontological determinism, it assumes that the consequences of the crisis had been Turkey's ultimate aim from the very beginning. The authors assume the existence of some Turkish designs as the driving force behind the events of the crisis.

Nevertheless, it is the authors who select the events and construct purposeful actions through meaning attributions *they* make *aposteriori* according to their analytical tools, namely the theory of strategic studies. This framework of analysis based on two "rational" actors, Greece and Turkey, is too simplified and most importantly it is restrictive in terms of empirical research. This is manifested in the empirical material used for this article. First, the information about the crisis was mostly gathered from the daily, periodical, and electronic press.¹⁰⁴ Having discussed above the way the news is constructed in Turkish and Greek news media, many questions should be asked about the validity of this material. Media reports do not reflect a mirror image of reality. They too select information, which they interpret according to their own rationale, programmes and aims. This means that they construct the information the present. Second, reading carefully the footnotes of this essay we see that from the 80 footnotes that support the article and substantiate their arguments, about 70 refer to strategic studies literature: Thomas Schelling, Liddell Hart, John Baylis, John Garnett, and other strategists. This literature describes aspects of the strategic management of crisis and is used in the essay to explain the events the authors have chosen according to this theory at the first place. The theoretical framework guided the selection of information, the attribution of meaning to it, and constructed causal relationships, which reinforce the framework of analysis. The construction of this analysis is thus self-referential. The other reference, that is, the events of the crisis, is interpreted through the self-reference of the system of strategic studies. The product of this self-

satisfied with Holbrooke's proposal for Cyprus and creates this crisis in order to expose Turkey internationally". Ferai Tinc, *Hürriyet*, 29.01.96.

¹⁰⁴ See the footnote of the essay number 69. Nevertheless, the authors do not clarify whether the press they refer to includes the Turkish press too. Panayiotis Mavrides, Eustathios Fakiolas, "Strategy of ...", p.175.

referential process is a highly artificial, esoteric construct of the system of strategic studies.

This example offers an apt illustration of the autopoietic constitution of conflict. The new system became a constitutive element of the system of the Greek-Turkish conflict through which it was initially emerged. Fakiolas and Mavrides' essay can provide the language for further structural couplings within Greek society. It can become an element for the structural couplings of the system of Greek-Turkish conflict with other social systems like the educational system, the political system, and the media system. This essay became part of one of the most recent and respected works on Greek-Turkish issues. It could thus become part of the curriculum of university courses, courses on international relations and foreign policy. It is this kind of analysis that is often published in newspapers. Finally, it could also constitute a guide for political decision making, as often scholars become advisors to politicians. The proclaimed aim of Fakiolas and Mavrides's essay was to point out the weaknesses of Greek policy and/or strategy. The authors assume that since the result of the crisis was not in favour of Greece, a change in Greece's strategic logic should be made. Extrapolating from the assumed difference in the strategic culture of the two states, they argue that Greek political and military leaders, in order to face the Turkish threat, must "change their strategy into highly strategic crisis management with the aim of preventing [conflict by] using the defensive logic of limited war".¹⁰⁵

Conclusion

The argument substantiated in this chapter was that the 1996 crisis did not arise because of the dispute about sovereignty over the two islets in the Aegean. The analysis of the crisis, through modern systems theory perspective, demonstrated that communication processes not actions and/or decisions constituted the crisis in an autopoietic way. The crisis emerged as a "butterfly effect" through morphogenetic processes of evolution. Once information relevant to the crisis was transmitted through the news media, it was immediately dispersed and thus multiplied, increasing the complexity of the situation and the need for a selection within a number of social and psychic systems.

¹⁰⁵ Panayiotis Mavrides, Eustathios Fakiolas, "Strategy of ...", p.167, See also statement by Yerasimos Arsenis, then Minister of Defence: "The problems between Greece and Turkey could only be resolved

In a condition of infinite complexity, social and psychic systems make selections guided by previous determinations of meaning such as social and cultural patterns of behaviour and institutionalised practices. Here these selections were performed under the limiting condition of an institutionalised Greek-Turkish conflict that operated as an attractor. The various social systems selected and interpreted information according to the structures of the conflict that is the expectations Greeks and Turks hold for each other. Nevertheless, they could not see that they were introducing their own distinctions, in the emerging order of crisis. They could not see that they could not see what they could not see - their own *blind spots*. Paradoxically, they constituted the crisis in their effort to avoid it!

The crisis of 1996 emerged as enforced selectivity. Selections made simultaneously by a multitude of social systems constrained complexity towards the direction of crisis. Each selection was reinforcing the selectivity and connectability of the emerging order. The dynamics of crisis is found in the connectivity of communication rather than in the purposefulness of action. The crisis of 1996 was the result of the dynamics of uncoordinated structural couplings. These couplings were largely accidental, which means that they were not motivated by the advantage of couplings themselves. This aspect of social systems' operation places the emphasis on the contingent and not the necessary nature of crisis.

Another important conclusion drawn from this analysis is that the emergence of the crisis of 1996 involved the whole of the Greek and Turkish societies and not only the decision-makers. The systems of Greek and Turkish politics, media, the military, civil society and psychic systems contributed to the constitution of the crisis simply by following their own rationale and implementing their functions within society. The crisis emergence and escalation cannot be attributed to specific individuals for one more reason. The constitution of the semantics employed by various systems in their operations cannot be attributed to rational processing of information by a subject. They are evolutionary achievements of society.

The above analysis also shed new light on the role of news media in the context of an international crisis. In the crisis of 1996, news media did not 'decide' and/or 'construct' the crisis 'on purpose'. It was rather through their normal functions as

by the deterrent of a strong army." CHA, "Screams of War from Athens", Doğan Ertuğul, 28 March 1996.

those who provide society with irritations and amplify them that they contributed to the autopoiesis of the Imia/Kardak crisis.

This further illuminates in a new way the key issue of whether international crisis can be controlled. The conclusion being that the political system did not have the capacity to control other function and psychic systems in society. The emergence and escalation of this crisis did not reflect the intentions of the governments. The crisis emerged despite the initial conviction of the authorities of both countries that an issue that could produce a crisis did not exist in this matter, and despite their initial efforts to prevent the escalation. The argument put forth here differs from conventional theories, which define the problem of crisis management as lack of co-ordination. It is argued that co-ordination is not possible anyway. One system cannot gain complete and constant control over all the other systems. The autopoiesis of this crisis was enabled through the stimulating power of accidents and paradoxes.

Finally, the Greek argument that the crisis was employed by Turkey in order to advance its position in the Aegean Sea, which stems from the "rational actor" framework of analysis cannot be substantiated for one more reason. Turkey in the aftermath of the crisis had to face the predictable Greek reaction within the EU with regards to the Turkish candidature to become a member of the EU and profit from the European funds. Furthermore, with regards to the dispute over the Imia/Kardak, Greece, in the aftermath of the crisis, insisted on the arguments used on the 10th of January 1996, that the two islets are part of Greek territory and that if Turkey disputed the status of the islets it should take the issue to the International Court of the Hague.

The victims of the crisis, however, were the three young Greek military officers whose helicopter crashed during the most critical evening of the crisis, in a reconnaissance flight. Furthermore, the mobilisation of the armed forces cost the budgets of the two states hundreds of thousands of dollars. Finally, as it was demonstrated in the last section of this chapter, the crisis that employed the structures of the conflict for its autopoiesis, re-entered the conflict through academic discourse, the political rhetoric and journalistic accounts, reproducing and reinforcing it.

Nevertheless, paradoxically, the same crisis became an irritation, which resulted in a new stage of bifurcation and the emergence of peace initiatives, which I will explore in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV

1996-1999: PEACE PROCESSES AS AUTOPOIETIC SYSTEMS

In this part of the thesis, I will examine examples of peace initiatives undertaken by governmental and non-governmental organizations from the aftermath of the crisis of 1996 until the earthquake of 1999. The relevant literature of Greek-Turkish relations is confined mainly to the analysis of initiatives undertaken by governmental agents and it places the emphasis on bargaining processes. An argument frequently cited to explain the failure of these initiatives to produce some progress with regard to the issues of the conflict is that politicians themselves understand these processes through a realist perspective and their sharply opposed national interests of the parties.¹ Mainstream Greek-Turkish literature assigns a secondary role - if at all - to civil society initiatives, due to the belief that these initiatives cannot produce a major breakthrough in interstate relations. Another additional reason that seems to reinforce this argument is that the contribution of civil society initiatives cannot be easily evaluated.

The relevant literature does not ask how - if at all - these processes are connected with each other and with their environment that is the society within which they emerge and develop. It does not put forth the question how it comes that several peace initiatives have been launched over the last years but no progress has been made with regard to the issues of the conflict. It has not questioned what practitioners say lowering their voice namely that an important obstacle to the success of governmental peace initiatives is the resistance of the Greek and Turkish societies to accept a compromise with regard to the issues of the conflict and the every time contingencies.²

Here, I examine peace processes of negotiation and mediation undertaken by governmental authorities - of the two countries or a third party - and non-governmental initiatives such as conflict resolution workshops, and conferences with Greek and Turkish academics, journalists and other professionals. I will explore the

¹ Nimet Beriker discussing the Turkish policy vis-à-vis Greece maintained that the realist framework of decision-making employed by Turkish foreign policy designers accounts for the lack of some kind of progress in Greek-Turkish relations over the last years. Nimet Beriker, Assistant Professor of International Conflict Analysis in Sabanci University in Istanbul, Seminar given to MA students of International Conflict Analysis and International Relations, University of Kent at Canterbury, 09.01.03.

² Byron Theodoropoulos, a retired Greek Ambassador who served in important posts in the Greek Ministry as well as abroad said characteristically that when Greece was ready for an agreement there was political instability in Turkey and vice versa. Interview with Byron Theodoropoulos, Athens, 10.09.01.

emergence and development of these initiatives without making a hierarchical distinction as to their importance. These initiatives are considered to be essentially similar from the perspective of their constitutive elements, their nature and their potential to bring about a change with regard to the conflict.

Following Luhmann's assumptions, as in the previous chapter on the crisis of 1996, society is considered functionally and not hierarchically differentiated. Accordingly, peace processes are approached as highly complex social systems of communication constituted on the level of communication. They come about through the a-causal synchronization of parallel on-going processes, multiple connections of selective occurrences of communication. The task, from a second order observation perspective, is to disentangle these connections. Here, I will explore the semantics with which various systems refer to the system/environment distinction and how these semantics affect their information processing that is their orientation towards peace and co-operation.

This approach makes a shift in the focus of analysis from the outcome of peace initiatives to the process of their emergence and development. The commonsensical generalisation that peace initiatives stem from the desire for peace, which often implies a mechanistic process of rational calculation therein, is challenged. Detailed empirical research seeks to explore the complexity that gave rise to each of these initiatives and the operations involved.

Negotiations, mediation efforts, problem solving workshops and other meetings among Greeks and Turks oriented to some sort of co-operation are considered as systems of interaction. Placed within the system/environment perspective of the theory of social autopoiesis they appear as a field of experimentation for Greek and Turkish society rather than the means to resolve conflicts. This shift of perspective can help us to cope with the fundamental problem of the complexity of modern society and the increase of contingency. It will be demonstrated that this approach can also deal with the features of non-linearity and discontinuity that characterise peace processes and the crucial problem of linking a concrete peace initiative with its broader environment.

The chapter is divided into four sections. The first section demonstrates that the crisis of 1996 was a stimulus for Greek and Turkish societies which set in motion a number of information processes and thus gave rise to a bifurcation moment, that is a moment of increased complexity that enabled the emergence of the difference co-

operation/conflict. The second part discusses the processes of the amplification of this difference on the side of co-operation³ through connections with existing social systems such as politics, science, and civil society organizations. This emerging complexity yielded various peace initiatives such as negotiation and mediation processes as well as PSWs and conferences among Greeks and Turks. The development of these processes is described as a process of a-causal synchronization of parallel on-going recursive processes of communication. These processes are defined as a field of experimentation for Greek and Turkish societies. The fourth section elaborates on the structural changes that peace processes have brought about in Greek and Turkish society.

1. A Stage of Bifurcation

As noted above conventional analyses do not question the process of the emergence of peace processes. Rather, they immediately seek to explain their outcome. Here it is argued that the stimulus for the emergence of peace processes is very important and it reveals a great deal about the nature of these processes. Furthermore, it will be demonstrated that the stimulus for various Greek-Turkish peace initiatives governmental and non-governmental was the crisis of 1996. The crisis as played out in the media, was an irritation for a multitude of social and psychic systems in Greek and Turkish societies. It set in motion recursive processes of communication, which increased the complexity of the situation and enabled the emergence of a bifurcation stage, which produced the difference co-operation/conflict. This difference found connections on both sides. Thus, we can observe the reinforcement of the existing system of conflict as well as the emergence of alternative ways of thinking about Greek-Turkish relations and a re-interpretation of the conflict and its causes.⁴

In the chapter on the crisis of 1996, I described the recursive processes of communication, which reinforced the conflict. I explained, in particular, how the

³ It should be noted here that the same difference found also connections on the side of the conflict and it was eventually crystallised into structures of organizations like "The Central Team 21 - Network 21 - Movement of Patriotic Awakening". Interview with Failos Kranidiotis, member of the "Network 21..", Athens, 12.10.01.

⁴ This is a paradox that cannot be explained by conventional analysis, which argues on the basis of a uni-linear causal rationale, that the crisis of 1996 had only detrimental effects. Gül den Ayman writes "[O]n the contrary adversarial attitudes were toughened, official theses were opposed, feelings of non-confidence were deepened, negative images were strengthened and the prejudicial judgements of Turks

crisis re-entered the system of conflict through academic analyses guided by, - and thus further reproducing - the existing expectations - that is the structures - of the Greek-Turkish conflict and the pre-established structures of the system of science. Re-entries of the crisis in the system of conflict are reflected in Greek and Turkish journalistic accounts, the political rhetoric and civil society initiatives. A characteristic example of this kind of initiatives in Greece is the establishment of the Greek NGO "The Central Team 21 - Network 21 - Movement of Patriotic Awakening".⁵ This initiative emanated from a specific interpretation of the crisis. Founding members of the Network maintain that the Imia Kardak crisis was the decisive point that compelled them to undertake this initiative and set up this organization.⁶ More precisely, they were motivated by what they perceived as failure of the Greek government to protect the interests of their country. According to them, the crisis was designed, instigated and escalated by Turkey, and Greece failed to effectively deter Turkey from its plans. Additionally, they perceived the decision of the Greek government to withdraw the Greek flag as humiliating Greece. The constitutional act of the NGO provides that the organization was established in order to promote discussion about the protection of Greek national interests and activate civil society for that purpose. Members of this NGO are academics, ex-politicians, military officers and journalists.

While the withdrawal of the Greek flag was the crucial 'action' selected and interpreted in a specific way to become the point for connections leading to the 'Network', other systems selected other 'actions' according to their own pre-determined distinctions, rationale and programmes. For example, some journalists perceived the hoisting of the Turkish flag by journalists as breaking the code of conduct of journalism and this 'action' became another connective point for the emergence of a journalists' peace initiative. The inability of the system of politics to control the escalation of crisis was an irritation for the system of Greek and Turkish governments which experienced very embarrassing moments during the crisis. The 'actions' of representatives of civil society, like the mayor who hoisted the flag, was the stimulus for civil society peace initiatives. International organizations like the EU

and Greeks towards each other were encouraged". Ayman, Gulden, S., "The Kardak (Imia) Crisis and Turkish-Greek Relations", *Hellenic Studies*, Volume 9, No 2, 2001, p.66.

⁵ Interview with Failos Kranbidiotis, member of the "Network 21..", Athens, 12.10.01.

⁶ *ibid.*.

and NATO and members of these organizations 'saw in the events of the crisis the potential of a Greek-Turkish war. The expectation that Greece and Turkey are considered allies so they must forego military confrontations was seriously challenged and it alarmed those who were interested, for their own reasons, in ensuring peace between the two allies.

In short, in what follows it will be demonstrated that organizations like the EU, the American administration, Greek and Turkish governmental authorities, civil society organizations, academic institutes, and individuals reacted to their own selected - that is constructed - aspects of the crisis of 1996. The 'disappointment' of different expectations various systems held until now enabled the emergence of new distinctions, which were connected with existing strata of meaning in society. Differences such as the unity of EU and NATO v disruption to their unity, Turkey's accession to the EU v Turkey's exclusion from the EU, civil society v politics, journalists as reporters v journalists as instigators of crisis, female v male approach to international politics were successful in finding further connections and forming chains of selections, which eventually constrained complexity towards the direction of co-operation.

2. The Emergence of Peace Processes

The focus of this section is the emergence of peace initiatives undertaken by governmental and civil society organizations from 1996 to 1999. The aim of this section is to explore the distinctions that guided various systems' selections and led to the emergence of peace initiatives as the unity of the system/environment difference. Only after we will have examined the complexity that brought about these initiatives we can take a step further and explore their development and their transformations.

This perspective signifies a definite departure from uni-linear, cause-effect relationships towards the exploration of multiple causality. Instead of assuming a general simple cause for all these initiatives such as the value of peace for example, here each initiative is examined separately as to the environmental and internal complexity that enforced its constitution. It will be demonstrated that there is not one path or specific conditions necessary and/or natural to bring about a peace initiative. There are multiple paths, formed by different combinations of interconnected meaning nexuses, institutionalized practices, social patterns of behaviour and contingencies. While conventional theory approaches these initiatives in terms of rational

actions/decisions, “actions” in this context of analysis they are considered to be simplified self-descriptions of complex social systems and their environments.

2.1. Governmental Initiatives

In this section, I will examine initiatives launched by the Greek and the Turkish governments, the EU and NATO, members of the EU such as the United Kingdom and Germany, and the USA.

The crisis of 1996 was the stimulus for the peace initiative launched by the Turkish Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz in a press conference given on the 24th of March of 1996. He invited Greece to enter into negotiations with Ankara on all the outstanding issues between the two countries, without preconditions. Additionally, he stated that Turkey was ready to “discuss with good will, appropriate third-party methods of settlement” and would not, “from the beginning, exclude any method of settlement including third party arbitration”.⁷ Although Yilmaz did not refer directly to the International Court of Justice, which was Greece's demand, his statement marked an important change in the traditional Turkish stance. Turkey's official stance regarding the resolution of the Aegean dispute was that it should be resolved through bilateral negotiations, that is, political and not judicial means.

The initiative was a reduction of the complexity of the Turkish politics and its environment. Yilmaz was elected Prime Minister of a coalition government two months after the crisis.⁸ As it was demonstrated in the previous chapter, he had criticized both Ciller and the Turkish bureaucracy for escalating the Imia/Kardak crisis for political reasons.⁹ This initiative reflects Yilmaz and his advisors' perception of their environment too. They felt that the crisis increased the awareness that war between the two countries was possible and thus it created a basis of support for a peace initiative by a broader constituency in Turkey.¹⁰ Additionally, Yilmaz, as the new Prime Minister, had to deal with the repercussions of the crisis and Turkey's failure to gain EU funds due to a post crisis Greek veto. Nevertheless, this proposal fell through after a negative Greek reply, a development that will be extensively

⁷ Angelos Syrigos, *The Status of The Aegean...*, p.365.

⁸ The two parties that formed the new Turkish government were Mesut Yilmaz's Motherland Party (Anavatan Partisi) and Çiller's The Party of the Right Path (Doğru Yol Partisi).

⁹ See Chapter III, p.87.

¹⁰ Interview with retired Ambassador Yalim Eralp who was Yilmaz' s advisor at that time, Istanbul, 04.05.02.

analyzed in the next section. In this part of the chapter, I confine the analysis only to the process of the emergence of the various initiatives.

The Greek Prime Minister, Costas Simitis, took the next step during his visit in Washington. Simitis stated that Greece would be willing to discuss the question of air space and air-control over the Aegean with Turkey. On the 27th of April, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs met in Bucharest, where they agreed to explore the possibility of bilateral negotiations and they arranged to meet in May in Berlin. The new leader of the PASOK government, Simitis, was determined to make Greece an integral part of the European Union. Full membership in the single currency (Euro), economic and monetary union, were an important challenge for Greece's economy and the Greek-Turkish conflict was a serious impediment on the road towards the EU.¹¹ In the context of their bilateral problems and the Cyprus problem, Greece has often sought to put pressure on Turkey through the institutions of the EU. This has resulted in a constant Greek-Turkish diplomatic war over the years, adding another dimension to the Greek-Turkish conflict, apart from the problems in the Aegean and Cyprus. Turkey has frequently accused Greece of an obstructionist role with regard to its efforts to enter the EU.¹² Firmly committed to the EU, Simitis, after his accession to the Greek premiership in 1996, has sought for ways to overcome this problem. Nevertheless, these first efforts were destined to fail due to the Gavdos crisis. This crisis broke out when a Turkish military officer in a meeting of NATO, in Napoli, disputed the Greek sovereignty over the island of Gavdos.

Apart from the two governments, initiatives were also launched by other states within the parameters of international organizations like the EU and NATO. Hans Van Mierlo, President of the EU Council of Ministers and Dutch Foreign Minister, proposed the establishment of a "Committee of Wise Men" to resolve the Greek-Turkish differences. The proposal was made in April 1997 in the Maltese capital, during the Euro-Mediterranean Conference. After each side clarified its approach to this initiative and their expected outcomes, it was decided the two parties should

¹¹ Greece has been a member of the European Union since 1981. Turkey submitted its application for EU membership in 1987. The Greek-Turkish affairs within the EU involve also the Cyprus problem. One of Greece's main goals since 1989 has been to secure Cyprus accession to the European Community. The Nicosia government submitted its application for accession in June 1990. That has further strained the Greek-Turkish relations and has increased the diplomatic skirmishes within the EU bodies. For the history of Greece and the EU see www.mfa.gr/english/foreign_policy/eu/greece/history.html

¹² According to former Foreign Minister of Turkey Hikmet Cetin, "Greece has been the main obstacle in Turkey's course to the EU". Interview with Hikmet Cetin, Ankara, 12.06.01.

proceed. The results of their work would be submitted to the President of the EU Council of Ministers.

The European initiatives for facilitation of a Greek-Turkish rapprochement should be examined in the context of the implications Greek-Turkish relations have for the triangular Greek-Turkish-EU relations.¹³ As Greece's policies towards Turkey often appear to conflict with the interests of the European Union, the EU countries have tried to strike a balance between the policy of the EU toward Turkey, and the policies of Greece, one of their allies.¹⁴

In 1998, German officials exerted pressure on the Greek government to lift its veto of the financial protocol for Turkey, which had been a constant source of friction between the two countries after 1996.¹⁵ The reply of the Greek government was that they expected Turkey to first undertake a move of good will. In addition, the Greek government demanded that Turkey lodge an appeal over Imia/Kardak to the International Court of Justice or accept the general jurisdiction of the International Court for the resolution of the Greek-Turkish disputes in the Aegean. By exerting pressure on the Greek government, the German government wanted to make the EU's Luxemburg decision (12-13 December 1997) more attractive to Turkey. Britain and France suggested at the Summit of Cardiff in 1998 that the Luxemburg decision should be reconsidered, while Germany resisted this proposal.¹⁶ The pressure exerted on Greece by the German administration reflects the dynamics of domestic German politics. Germany is reluctant to precipitate the accession of Turkey to the EU

¹³ The German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel in an article he wrote on "*Frankfurter Allgemeine*", underlined that the key for Turkey-EU relations is Greek-Turkish relations. See *Ta Nea*, 16.02.98.

¹⁴ See statements by Commissioner Van den Broek about this development, where he points out that the release of the MEDA funds for Turkey is considered very important for the relations of the EU with Turkey, the economic interests of the EU as well as for the problems in the Aegean and Cyprus. *Eleftherotypia*, 23.10.96.

¹⁵ This is also reflected in the statement made by the German Foreign Minister, Klaus Kinkel, saying that "détente is imperative, but it is clear that both sides must get over themselves (get over their shadow)... Greece could give an important push towards that direction with the unblocking of the funds the EU promised to Turkey since 1995 and Turkey should seriously examine the thoughts my Greek colleague, Pangalos, expressed in January 1995 regarding the jurisdiction of the International Court of the Hague for a decision over the Greek-Turkish dispute for the continental self and other problems in the Aegean...", *Ta Nea* 6.02.98. See also articles on this matter in the same Greek newspaper *Ta Nea*, 16.02.98.

¹⁶ The Luxemburg decision excluded Turkey from the list of the countries with which the EU would initiate membership talks. For the stance of the French and British leaders vis-a-vis Turkey in the Luxemburg Summit see *Ta Nea*, 13.12.97. For the Cardiff Summit and the stance of the different European countries see *Ta Nea*, 16.06.99.

considering the impact that development can have with regard to the minority of Turkish immigrants living in Germany.

In late May 1997, the American administration and NATO entered the scene launching a new peace initiative. The Secretary General, Javier Solana, stated the Atlantic Alliance would be ready to mediate between Turkey and Greece in order to search for a solution to their problems. He proposed Confidence Building Measures which included an emergency telephone line between Greece and Turkey connected to NATO headquarters in Brussels, with a view to prevent the escalation of crises. Solana proposed two more measures. First, he proposed the use of Airborne Warning Control Systems during NATO maneuvers in the Aegean to monitor flights and prevent violations of national air space. Second, he suggested the revival of the 1988 Greek-Turkish protocol, under which both sides had pledged to abstain from provocative actions. The NATO initiatives reflected the practical needs of the organization. The different bodies of NATO offered another field for diplomatic skirmishes between Greeks and Turks.¹⁷ In particular, discussions about the operational limits of NATO in the Aegean became extremely intricate at certain points. The complexity of the Aegean Sea, with more than three thousand Greek islands and islets and the open Greek-Turkish dispute over the demarcation of the continental shelf and the territorial waters, made the planning of NATO military exercises in this area extremely difficult. Additionally, the need for unity and coherence in the organization was threatened by a conflict between its allies.

In the NATO Summit of Madrid, 8 July 1997, the US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, hosted a meeting of the Greek and Turkish Foreign Ministers. The statement of Madrid, which was an important step towards rapprochement, was an American initiative. For the USA, Greek-Turkish relations were a political nuisance, as it had bearing upon both American foreign policy and domestic affairs. The location of the two countries, between the Balkans and the Persian Gulf, also made the conflict paramount to American interests. Furthermore, the role of the Greek lobby in the USA

¹⁷ "Within NATO Greece and Turkey vetoed each other's 'country chapters' at the NATO Defence Review Committee and each country raised objections to NATO infrastructural spending towards the other. Greece once again boycotted the annual NATO 'Display Determination' manoeuvres in October [1988]. More recently there has been disagreement over responsibility for search-and-rescue operations in the eastern Mediterranean, with Turkey claiming responsibility for the area east of the median line, and Greece maintaining that her search-and-rescue responsibilities extended to the whole of the Athens FIR." Clogg, Richard, "Greek-Turkish Relations in the Post-1974 Period", in Conostas, Dimitri, (ed.), *The Greek-Turkish Conflict in the 1990s - Domestic and External Influences*, London: Macmillan Press, 1991, p.21.

had another input by actively advocating Greek causes be it the Cyprus question or the Aegean dispute, and playing a crucial role in elections. On the other hand, the USA has been the main arms provider to both countries.¹⁸ Further increasing the complexity are the American military bases in both countries, which have been used by the USA more frequently over the last years since the Gulf War and the increased tensions in the Balkans.

Turkish-European relations were further complicated during the last months of 1998 and the beginning of 1999 when the Kurdish leader, Abdullah Ocalan sought refuge in Europe. Turkey accused Europe of condemning terrorism in its documents but supporting it in practice.¹⁹ The situation was further complicated when Ocalan went secretly to Greece and members of the Greek government (in fact no lesser figure than the then foreign minister Theodoros Pangalos) send him to the Greek Embassy in Kenya. In February 1999, after an operation of Turkish, American and Israeli secret services, Ocalan was arrested there. This situation brought Greek-Turkish relations to a very low point and resulted in a stormy political crisis within Greece. The Ocalan crisis gave rise to nationalistic rhetoric in both countries. Turkish officials, politicians and journalists interpreted this event as the ultimate evidence of the truth of Turkey's previous accusations against Greece, namely that it offers support to separatist Kurdish guerrillas, undermining Turkey's integrity and stability. Greece argued that Ocalan's presence in the Greek Embassy in Kenya was the result of contingencies rather than designs against Turkey. The Greek response did not find a sympathetic hearing and these events led to an internal crisis in Greece, resulting in major changes within the government. Three important ministers - the ministers of Foreign Affairs, Public Order, and Internal Affairs - were dismissed. The change in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with the new Minister George Papandreou as a moderate and supporter of the Greek-Turkish rapprochement, proved to be important for the developments in Greek-Turkish relations.²⁰

¹⁸ For the importance of Greece and Turkey for the American interests see Haass, Richard, *Conflicts Unending: The United States and Regional Disputes*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990, p.58. Ekavi Athanassopoulou writes that it is also possible that arms dealers would have a particular interest, and thus lobbying in favour of a relative stability in the region because in such a case their contracts would not be in danger and the two rivalries would continue their race of arms. Athanassopoulou, Ekavi, "Blessing in Disguise? The Imia Crisis and Turkish Greek relations", *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 2, No. 3, Winter 1997, p.85.

¹⁹ See the statements made by President Demirel on a Turkish channel, Ta Nea, 01.12.98.

²⁰ Alexis Heraclides, after interviews he had with Greek foreign ministry officials, maintains that George Papandreou, after his appointment as foreign minister "had prepared the ground for the thaw in

The Ocalan crisis in February was followed by the crisis in Kosovo, which escalated with NATO's military intervention in March 1999. A stream of refugees fleeing Kosovo towards the neighbouring countries was one of the consequences of the crisis affecting both Greece and Turkey. This occasion offered an opportunity for close co-operation between the newly appointed Greek Foreign Minister George Papandreou, and the Turkish Foreign Minister, Ismael Cem. Initially, they coordinated their activities regarding refugee camps and the dispatching of aid to refugees, as neighbours to the crisis and members of NATO.

On the 24th of May 1999, the Turkish Foreign Minister sent a letter to his counterpart, George Papandreou, proposing the conclusion of "an agreement to combat terrorism" in the framework of a broader plan of Greek-Turkish reconciliation which would include all the peaceful means referred to in the UN Charter.²¹ Nevertheless, the way the proposal was formulated covered a trap for Greece, as it implied Greece's intentional involvement in the Ocalan issue.²² Turkey would appear to the world as the initiator of reconciliation, scoring an easy point against Greece in the diplomatic arena. The more so, because terrorism was an international concern - even before the 11th of September.

Papandreou's reply to the Turkish Prime Minister's letter came about one month later. It counter-proposed the signing of an agreement, not only on terrorism, but on a number of issues which could be of common interest including: culture, tourism, the environment, economic co-operation, organised crime, drug trafficking and illegal immigration. Five days later, the two ministers met in New York on the occasion of a UN meeting concerning Kosovo. At this meeting, they decided to initiate a dialogue on the above issues. The earthquakes in Turkey and Greece in August and September 1999 were followed by a dramatic change in Greek-Turkish relations at the level of civil society and in the news media, and "moved to a highway what had started in a narrow street".²³

the Greek foreign ministry (predictably not without difficulty)". Heraclides, Alexis, "Greek-Turkish relations from Discord to Détente: A preliminary Evaluation", footnote 11, p.31.

²¹ See the letter from the Turkish foreign minister Ismail Cem on the web site of the Greek-Turkish Forum, www.greekturkishforum.org.

²² Heraclides, Alexis, "Greek-Turkish relations from Discord to Détente: A preliminary Evaluation", p.21.

²³ This is how the Turkish Ambassador to Athens, Ali Tuygan, described the impact of the earthquakes upon the discussions. Interview with Ambassador, Ali Tuygan, Athens, 18.07.01.

The peace initiatives examined above were not motivated by the improvement of Greek-Turkish relations or the value of peace as such. The 'actions' through which these initiatives are identified are simplified descriptions of the system of politics and its complex environment. In the section below on the development of these initiatives I will argue that these initiatives did not constitute a solid foundation for further decision-making and action. Rather, they provided a field for experimentation in a self-organizing society and their development was determined by the complexity of their environment. Whether they were successful in connecting and developing to chains of communications crystallizing to some sort of structural formation will be examined in the next section. At this point however, it should be emphasized that their emergence cannot be reduced to individuals. 'Actions' were constituted socially, that is through the structural couplings of social and psychic systems, multiple connections of institutionalized practices of conflict resolution practices, institutionalized interests of organizations and persons as politicians. In other words 'actions' were socially constituted rather than being constitutive of the social.

2.2. Civil Society Initiatives - Some Examples

Civil society initiatives, as used here, refer to problem solving conflict resolution workshops (PSWs), but also conferences and meetings between journalists, academics, business people and other professionals. Conventional analysis begins with the general assumption that these initiatives are based on a rationale for peace. Although this might not be totally wrong, I will argue that it is necessary to investigate the details of the timing, the specific rationale and the conditions that set in motion each initiative, as I did with the intergovernmental initiatives.

2.2.1. Helsinki Citizens Assembly

The Helsinki Citizens Assembly (HCA) is an institution born in 1990 in Prague, from the euphoria generated by the developments in Eastern Europe at that time. It is an international NGO with national branches in Europe. Its aim is to promote European integration and to serve the causes of democracy and human rights by reinforcing civil society initiatives.²⁴ It was the Greek HCA that undertook the first initiative in the aftermath of the crisis, to create a space for communication between Greek and

²⁴ www.paremvassi.gr.

Turkish societies. The president of the Greek organization contacted her counterpart in Turkey and together they organized a meeting following the crisis, in March 1996. The meeting was attended by about 50 Greeks and Turks in Nauplio, a Greek city two hours from the Greek capital of Athens.

The President of the Greek Helsinki Citizens Assembly, Paulina Lampsas, explained the rationale of this initiative as follows:²⁵

...Until that time, Greeks and Turks were cooperating in the framework of the international organization, Helsinki Citizens Assembly, at the level of civil society, basically in multiparty activities. We had neither thought about nor aimed to promote some kind of bilateral activity. This may be because the nature of the problems were technical and gave the impression they required a specialized knowledge or that some problems were frozen between the two countries When the crisis of 1996 happened, some of us thought the frozen problems were not only the concern of the governments and the military, but these were problems that can concern our personal, everyday lives, and our interests, the interests of ordinary citizens. We could not stay indifferent, especially because of the way the crisis happened in Imia. It was not a crisis where a military aircraft enters and violates the national airspace and there is a quarrel, which is somehow clearly military. It was a crisis caused partly by journalists and the mayor of Kalymnos, people who belong to the civil society. And we realized that this concerns us and we could not leave it without any reaction. From that point, we could start a more systematic contact of people who shared the same thoughts.... The idea behind it was that precisely because we were confronted with a dangerous crisis, it was time for voices to be heard to transform the prevailing climate. We believed that a strong, public reaction was required or things were at risk of getting much worse. Bridges would be cut and that would be very dangerous at the official level.

The initiative undertaken by the Greek HCA is a simplified description of the system of the organization and its environment. The above narrative described the semantics that guided the system in its operations of self and other observation and in its autopoiesis. Her evaluation of the situation as “dangerous” and concern about the role civil society had played and should play in the developments between the two countries, led to the emergence of this peace initiative. Furthermore, the existing structures of the organization and its pre-established co-operation with the Turkish branch of the HCA further constrained complexity towards the direction of co-operation. The Greek HCA contacted the respective Turkish organization because as Lampsas says “we co-operated with them in the past and we trusted them... They made the choice of the Turkish participants...”²⁶ At this point it is important to stress

²⁵ Interview with the President of the Greek Helsinki Citizens Assembly, Paulina Lampsas, Athens 01.09.01.

²⁶ *ibid.*

that these meaning constituting processes were set in motion after the irritation of a contingent development, the crisis of 1996.

The organizers of this meeting did not have any official help or the approval of the government. On the contrary, pressure was exerted on them to abandon their plans concerning this meeting. Officials were afraid of the consequences such a meeting could have, especially in the after crisis climate marked by high, nationalistic passions. Nevertheless, several politicians participated as individual citizens. Former and current members of the Greek parliament, who had in the past expressed their belief in the co-operation of the two peoples, were present at this meeting. For example, a former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mihalis Papakonstantinou, joined the two-day meeting.²⁷ George Papandreou, founding member of the HCA, Minister of Education at the time, and later appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs, gave a dinner for the Turkish participants on the last evening of their stay in Athens.

Although there were no other meetings organized by the Greek and Turkish national branches of HCA, the meeting represented an important contribution to processes of rapprochement. Some of the participants continued organizing similar meetings and activities.

2. 2.2. Journalists for Peace in the Aegean and Thrace

The movement “Journalists for Peace in the Aegean and Thrace” was initiated in February 1996 and since its foundation has a long record of meetings and contacts between the two sides on the Aegean Sea. These contacts are not confined to journalists, as the name of the organization might indicate. The movement has developed a network of people and organizations, working for the promotion of co-operation and friendship in the region of the Aegean Sea and Thrace.

The idea for this initiative was conceived by two Greek journalists, one from the Greek island Lesvos, Stratis Balaskas, and the other, Giannis Tzoumas, from Chios, which is another island in the same region. They took the initiative to contact Turkish colleagues and open a channel of communication. It is interesting to explore further the emergence and motives of this initiative.

After living through the crisis of 1996, Balaskas and Tzoumas felt that they were concerned with the developments in Greek-Turkish relations both as journalists and

islanders. They were concerned as journalists, because it was the first time they realized journalists were not only reporting but also creating events. They were also concerned as islanders thus they were more sensitive to what happens in their region. Suffice it to refer to Balaskas's words: "the night of the crisis we were called on by the army and dressed in a military uniform. Although the next morning we were dismissed, this was enough. If I am to die, I want to know why. For what should I die?"²⁸ This initiative also reflects the perception of the initiators of their local environment. Having traveled on the Turkish coasts opposite their islands, Balaskas explains, "they knew the geography and the history of the region and met people from both sides. They have realized that Turks and Greeks hold a similar, mirror image of the enemy, which does not reflect reality".²⁹

Here, the initiative of the journalists as a simplification of itself and its environment reflects multiple connections of different semantics like the journalist's professional code of conduct, the sudden awareness of the possibility of a journalist forced into the role of soldier and the background of a culture of peaceful conflict resolution and cooperation that allowed him to analyze the situation in terms of mirror images and stereotypes.

It was around the end of February, that they decided to send a fax to the "Yeni Asir", a newspaper published in Izmir, the biggest city on the Turkish coast opposite their islands.³⁰ Their stimulus was an article in the Greek newspapers about a statement made by Turkish journalists, condemning the attitudes of some of their colleagues during the Imia/Kardak crisis. "When we read that, we evaluated it as an conduit to the other side, that - if nothing else - it could be fertile ground for the discussion of issues of common interest".³¹

The "Yeni Asir" newspaper was chosen because it was the biggest newspaper in this region. The founders of this NGO did not want Athens or Ankara to interfere. They preferred to have "eye-to-eye contact with the other side".³² They did not know the receiver of their fax. As Balaskas said "we sent it to nowhere".

²⁷ Interview with Mihalis Papaconstantinou, former minister of foreign affairs of Greece, Athens, 09.07.02.

²⁸ Interview with Stratis Balaskas, journalist in Eleftherotypia, Athens, 20.09.01.

²⁹ "We believed and we still believe that citizens can be informed beyond the prevailing in the journalists' world stereotypes, 'here a bad Turk there a bad Greek'. I think that Greek-Turkish relations should at last be demystified one day." Interview with Stratis Balaskas, Athens, 20.09.01.

³⁰ *ibid.*.

³¹ *ibid.*.

³² *ibid.*.

The person who received our fax was the best possible person to receive that letter, Suleyman Yonsel. Yonsel is a descendant of Turk-Cretans. His origins and his family's memories motivated him to learn more about Greek-Turkish relations. He lived in Athens for some time and learned Greek. Furthermore, he had conducted research on the co-existence of Greeks and Turks during the 19th century."³³

Yonsel's reply to the fax, coming from Greek colleagues, was positive and sent the very same day. Other journalists in Greece, like Ioannis Tzanetakos, joined the movement. Tzanetakos became the Director of the Greek State Radio Station in 1998. He launched another initiative there, for co-operation among journalists in the Balkans, where Greek-Turkish co-operation was an important part of the effort.³⁴

2.2.3. Businessmen

Businessmen have been in the forefront of efforts to improve Greek-Turkish relations. The reason for this is that there is a great opportunity for economic co-operation between the two countries and for making economic profit. Nevertheless, this is conditional on a stable political climate.³⁵

The crisis of 1996, in particular, endangered the plans businessmen had made for the immediate future. The Custom Union Agreement signed between Turkey and the EU in 1995, which should have been activated after 1.1.1996, raised high expectations for joint ventures and economic co-operation, increasing profits for businessmen on both sides. The crisis of January 1996, however, created a climate unfavourable to any entrepreneurial activity.³⁶ Their reaction to this situation was a series of meetings to discuss ways to overcome the seemingly endless political obstacles to the development of trade and economic relations.³⁷ Their first meeting took place in Athens in December 1996. Their goal was the development of a climate of mutual trust, as well as discussions about enhancing co-operation. In the fourth Greek-Turkish Business Forum in 1998, the Vice-President, Sarik Tara, emphasized that Turkish businessmen "were pressing both political and military leaders in their

³³ Discussion with Suleyman Yonsel, Komotini, 27.03.02.

³⁴ Interview with Ioannis Tzanetakos, Athens, 7.03.02.

³⁵ According to Haralambos Tsardanidis, an expert on this subject, economic relations follow political relations. Haralambos Tsardanidis, "The Greek-Turkish economic relations, 1999-2000", in *Review of Defence and Foreign Policy 2000 - The Greek-Turkish relations 1999-2000*, Couloumbis, T., Dokos, T., (eds), ELIAMEP, Athens 2000.

³⁶ Interview with Costas Zeppos, retired Ambassador, Athens, 14.09.01.

³⁷ For the first Greek-Turkish Business Conference that was held in Athens from 10-11 December 1996 see the Daily Bulletin of the Athens News Agency, 10.12.96 and the Turkish newspaper *Radikal*, 11.12.96.

country to improve Greek-Turkish relations. Furthermore, he called upon his Greek counterparts to do the same”.³⁸

The sudden awareness of the possibility of a Greek-Turkish war, its potential impact upon their plans and the detrimental consequences the crisis had on their prospective profits, led business people to initiate these exchanges. Apart from their capacity for lobbying and their efforts to enhance co-operation in the economic field, they also financed many academic conferences, scholarship programmes, journalists' meetings and research programmes. The structural couplings among different systems like the system of the economy, the system of education and the system of media enabled new possibilities of communication and speeded up structural change.

2.2.4. International Peace Research Institutes

Several recognized international academic and research institutes have also been involved in the reconciliation efforts between Greece and Turkey from 1996 until 1999. Among them we find the well-known names of the Carnegie Endowment, the RUSI and PRIO in a joint project, Harvard University, the Fletcher Legal Diplomats School, the Conflict Research Group at Yale, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation and the Search for Common Ground Foundation. Some of them organized conferences and workshops with Greeks and Turks on a regular basis. Many of these activities were organized by academics of a Greek and/or Turkish origin, who were staff members of the universities or institutes involved. Furthermore, these projects were implemented in co-operation with Greek and Turkish academic institutes and think-tanks. Other times professionals from established institutes of conflict resolution were invited to attend and facilitate meetings organized and by Greek and Turkish civil society organizations.³⁹

These initiatives emerged through the structural couplings of institutionalized practices of conflict resolution, the interests and the routines of the organizations, a specific approach to the phenomenon of international conflict, and the interests of those who fund these programmes. The process of the undertaking of these initiatives is specific. After an idea has been fully developed as a programme proposal, funds are sought to enable its realization. The main sources of financing are large international

³⁸ See the Daily Bulletin of the Athens News Agency, 24.10.97.

³⁹ The yearly summer conference of the Greek think tank ELIAMEP in Chalki, was facilitated by a professional from George Mason University. Interview with Kemal Kirisci, Istanbul, 03.10.01.

organizations, government organizations or NGOs, states and individuals such as the Greek and Turkish business people as discussed above. This presupposes that the programme conforms to the needs of the sponsor too.⁴⁰ I will present here the details of a joint programme, organized by RUSI and PRIO, which gave birth to the Greek-Turkish FORUM, a civil society initiative that has a special place in the Greek-Turkish process of reconciliation.

The Greek-Turkish Forum⁴¹

The Greek-Turkish Forum was born out of an initiative by the director of the Robert's Center James Bruce Lockhart.⁴² Lockhart initially proposed the project to the English institution RUSI. Later, the Norwegian Peace Research Institute of Oslo (PRIO), was also invited to participate in the project.⁴³ RUSI initially hosted a meeting of some 30 opinion leaders from the two countries. Among the participants of the first meetings were journalists, academics, ex-politicians, ex-diplomats and ex-military officers. Most of them were familiar with this type of exercise, as they had previously participated in workshops of that kind. Furthermore, most of them had been involved in the conflict because of their past professional positions. The first meeting was held in 1997, at Wilton Park.

Today, four years later and after several transformations, the active part of this large group of people is the Political Analysis Group (PAG), with 15 members and a productive role in the reconciliation process. The Forum has discussed complex issues such as the demarcation of the continental shelf in the Aegean Sea, coming up with elaborate proposals for its resolution.⁴⁴

Here I should clarify the aims of the founders of the Forum. According to Dan Smith, "the goal of the first meeting was simply to find ways of building bridges between Greece and Turkey. The feeling or analysis of that moment, was that the situation was so bad, any contact was better than the existing situation".⁴⁵

⁴⁰ Interview with Professor of International Relations, Theodore Coulombis, Director of the Greek Institute of European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP), Athens, 03.09.2001. Interview with Dan Smith, PRIO's Director for 8 years and currently Senior Advisor of PRIO, Istanbul, 14.10.01.

⁴¹ From this point forward, we will call it just Forum. For information regarding the Greek-Turkish Forum you can visit its website www.greekturkishforum.org.

⁴² Interview with Dan Smith, Istanbul, 14.10.01.

⁴³ *ibid.*

⁴⁴ See the paper they produced on their web page, www.greekturkishforum.org.

⁴⁵ Interview with Dan Smith, Istanbul, 14.10.01.

The stimulus for James Lockhart, a retired, British Foreign Commonwealth Office (FCO) diplomat, who became director of the Robert's Center after his retirement, was the crisis of 1996. He conceived the initial idea, which he proposed to RUSI, and also found the sponsor for its realisation, the British FCO. For Britain, the prevention of an open conflict in the Aegean, between two NATO allies, was important. The crisis of 1996 was perceived as an alarm signal. After the end of the Cold War, there was no longer a common enemy to bind Greece and Turkey together under NATO's umbrella. In this new international environment, a Greek-Turkish war appeared to be possible.⁴⁶ After the first meeting, PRIO was invited to join the project to offer its experience in facilitation of problem solving workshops. Norway then undertook the burden of financing this project. The rationale for Norway was twofold. On one hand, it was simply an altruistic move. On the other, it matched the profile Norway was developing over the recent years as an important actor promoting peaceful conflict resolution in the world. After the negative referendum on Norway becoming a full member of the EU, Norway sought alternative methods of influence and leverage in the international arena.⁴⁷

The above analysis illustrates the complexity of themes, institutionalised practices and contingencies that gave birth to the Greek Turkish Forum.

2.2.5. Other Initiatives

Women for Peace⁴⁸

In the aftermath of the crisis of 1996, Margaret Papandreou, ex-wife of Andreas Papandreou - former Prime Minister of Greece - sent a letter to a Turkish friend of hers, who was an academic. The letter protested against the traditional "male"

⁴⁶ This is how members of the forum, as well as Dan Smith, perceive the involvement of the British FCO in this initiative.

⁴⁷ Norway became known for promoting peace and conflict resolution facilitation after the back channel communication it provided with two old enemies, the Israelis and Palestinians, in 1993. However, at that time, Norway's role was neither perceived nor planned as such. The Oslo process was more the result of the personal initiatives of individuals than a governmental decision. It was later on that Norway decided to capitalize on this. Three factors played an important role in this decision: the first was the publicity the Oslo process gained as a successful peace initiative and thus the prestige Norway gained. The second factor was the negative result of the referendum for Norway's membership in the EU. It was in 1995 when Norway, which has a particular national interest in energy matters, found itself out of the Ministerial Council of the EU on energy. That was a traumatic experience, which pushed Norway to seek for a new place in the international community. This led to investment and further institutionalisation of the peaceful conflict resolution section. Last, but not least important, peaceful conflict resolution fits the Norwegian idiosyncrasy, which is characterised by a low and dialectic profile. Interview with Dan Smith, Istanbul, 14.10.01.

⁴⁸ www.geocities.com/win-peace/.

management of Greek-Turkish relations. It was a call for active participation in a search for alternative methods of action in order to enhance chances for peace by improving understanding and co-operation. This movement brought together many educated women from both countries under the umbrella of the NGO "Women for Peace" (WINPEACE). The members of the organization come from different professional fields. WINPEACE has organized conflict resolution workshops in Athens, Ankara and Istanbul. Within the context of this activity, academics try to nurture a culture of dialogue and reconciliation with their students by organizing exchanges and summer camps with Greek and Turkish students. Journalists advocate these causes through their articles.⁴⁹

Greek and Turkish academic and research institutes

Until 1996, Greek and Turkish academics mainly met at international conferences, which were taking place outside of Greece or Turkey.⁵⁰ After 1996, the initiatives undertaken by Greek and Turkish institutes and universities were multiplied. Two Greek institutes, ELIAMEP and IDIS, organize a one-week summer conference on two islands, Halki and Ydra respectively, which offered the opportunity for an exchange of views among academics.⁵¹ Panteion University in Athens and Sabanci University in Istanbul have also organized various events.

Individuals

Artists, intellectuals, academics and journalists, as individuals, contributed to the change in the conflict environment. Mikis Theodorakis, the Greek composer whose music inspired the Greek people's resistance against the dictatorship of Papadopoulos, was always in the forefront of efforts for the Greek-Turkish rapprochement. Along with his Turkish friend, composer and writer, Zulfu Livaneli, he propagated friendship and solidarity between the two peoples. He organized or participated in

⁴⁹ See the article written by Zeynep Oral in *Milliyet*, 03.05.98.

⁵⁰ Interview with Professor Ersin Kalaacioğlu, Istanbul, 09.10.01.

⁵¹ The "Southeast European Joint History Project" brought together the Greek Association for Democracy in the Balkans, the Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe and ELIAMEP. That was realised after the generous financing of the British government but also a contribution from the Austrian Government and the Governments of Switerland and Norway. See preface in the book, Christina Coulouri ed., *Clio in the Balkans - The Politics of History Education*, Thessaloniki, Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe, 2002, p.11.

many initiatives aimed at strengthening the bonds of friendship and increasing knowledge and understanding of the other.⁵²

Pavlos Moschakis, a Greek painter from Istanbul, used his art to promote peace and co-operation. His paintings demonstrated the quiet, harmonic, multicultural life of his city's past.⁵³

Alkis Kourkoulas, the Greek correspondent for the Athens News Agency, wrote a book on the crisis of 1996, focusing on the Turkish factor. His incentive was frustration about the way the crisis was instigated and developed and in particular, the detrimental role played by news media.⁵⁴

Alexis Heraclides, Associate Professor of International Relations at the Panteion University in Athens, started working on Greek-Turkish relations because of the Imia/Kardak crisis: "The crisis of 1996 impelled me to work on Greek-Turkish relations and this book is the result of it".⁵⁵ The book is titled "Greece and the Danger from the East".⁵⁶ This is a comprehensive analysis of the hostile perceptions Greek elites and intellectuals hold vis-à-vis Turkey based on nationalism, religious nationalism and deterrence theories. The author demonstrates how this thinking has not only influenced the way Turkey is perceived in Greece but it has also seriously impaired empirical research.

To these initiatives, I should add the activities of a group of Greeks who have a personal relationship with Turkey. They were born in Istanbul, but had to leave Turkey in the 1960s.⁵⁷ They speak the Turkish language and understand the Turkish culture. Most of them, leftists and well educated, have developed contacts with Turkish intellectuals and have followed closely the social and political developments

⁵² In May 1997, Theodorakis and Livaneli gave a concert in Berlin for Greek-Turkish friendship. 4.000 Greeks, Turks and Germans attended this concert. *Eleftherotypia*, A. Galanopoulos, 06.05.97.

⁵³ See article on *Hürriyet* about Pavlos Moschakis, .12.06.98.

⁵⁴ Interview with Alkis Kourkoulas, Istanbul, 05.10.01.

⁵⁵ Discussion with Alexis Heraclides, Associate Professor of International Relations, Athens, 15.06.01.

⁵⁶ Alexis Heraclides, *Greece and the "Threat From The East"*, [in Greek] Polis, 2001.

⁵⁷ Tens of thousands of Greeks, who could no longer bear the heavy taxes, legislation and discriminatory practices against the Greek minority of Istanbul, left Turkey in 60s and 70s. Most of them had large fortunes, which were confiscated or blocked by the Turkish state. Back in Greece they had to start their lives from the beginning. Many of them joined the anti-Turkish and sometimes extreme nationalist rhetoric within Greece. They started publishing newspapers and periodicals in order to inform the Greek society about their painful experience and they supported tough anti-Turkish policies. Nevertheless, the group of people to whom I refer here, distanced themselves from the bipolar restrictive framework of the Greek-Turkish conflict. For the Greek minority in Turkey see Alexis Alexandris, *The Greek Minority in Turkey 1918-1956 and Greco-Turkish Relations*, Athens, 1983.

in Turkey.⁵⁸ Given the advantage of fluency in both languages, they translate Turkish books, participate in the organization of events and facilitate communication in many ways, thus contributing to the remediation processes.

Also, the internet has become a place for virtual civil society diplomacy. Personal websites appeared on the internet to provide a place for active dialogue on Greek-Turkish issues.⁵⁹

3. Peace Processes as a Field of Experimentation

In the previous section I explained the governmental and non-governmental initiatives as simplified descriptions of the systems themselves and their environments. This section explores their development. The literature on peace processes has given much attention to the results of peace initiatives, that is a declaration, statement, an agreement and not to the processes that led to the every time result. Indeed, less effort has been made for example to explain the many failures of these initiatives to generate positive change in societies in conflict. The outcome of peace initiatives is assumed to ensue from a linear cost/benefit calculation. Uni-linearity is further reflected in the conventional conceptualization of the relationship between governmental and non-governmental peace processes as hierarchical. The way the various peace initiatives are connected - if at all - and their relationship with their environment, that is the society within which they develop, is a problem that conventional theory has difficulties to address through a comprehensive theoretical framework.

The argument put forward here is that the above presented peace initiatives offered a field of experimentation to the Greek and Turkish societies, which are functionally and not hierarchically differentiated societies. Whether these initiatives were successful or not to find connections and develop further to a process was conditioned by their own complexity and the complexity of their environment, which consists of pre-established social and cultural patterns, institutionalized practices and psychic systems. It will be demonstrated that there was not a super-system that organised this complexity according to some supreme rationality, such as a rationality of peace or a convergence of rationales of the various systems that can justify the assumption of

⁵⁸ Interview with Frango Karaoglan, correspondent of the Greek newspaper, TA NEA in Istanbul since April 2001, and translator of many books of Turkish literature and politics in Greek, Istanbul,

⁵⁹ See Greece-Turkey Peace Links, compiled by Nejdret Bas, a Turkey-Greece Brotherhood and Peace Page, created by Mustafa Cavusoglu, a Personal Web-site dedicated to Greek-Turkish Peace and Co-operation constructed by Dimosthenis Yagcioglu, <http://mason.gmu.edu/~dyagciog/>

uni-linearity. Rather the various social and psychic systems link-up through structural couplings. Furthermore, the theory of social autopoiesis provides us with the analytical tools to explore the role of time in the development of peace processes. It is argued that coincidental structural couplings of different time frames is a further constrain of double contingency in social interaction.

Thus, while conventional theory sees negotiation, mediation and PSWs as a narrowly defined process of interaction among individuals, here these interactions are conceptualized as episodes in the course of society's autopoiesis. As modern society is in constant movement, continuously shaping and reshaping its elements, processes and structures through communication processes, peace processes are the means of society to expand its boundaries and change them. The development of peace initiatives is portrayed below as a continuous testing of the 'boundaries' of society. It is argued that the results of interactions like negotiations, mediation and meetings among Greek and Turkish professionals, such as declarations, programme for further action etc., are emergent orders, which reduce infinite complexity through selectivity.

3.1. Governmental Initiatives

In the previous section, I presented examples of initiatives launched by governmental authorities, namely the Greek and Turkish governments, the EU, the USA and states like Germany and the United Kingdom. In this part I will further investigate the actual development of these peace processes.

The peace initiative launched by the Turkish Prime Minister received an official negative reply. The Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs, Theodoros Pangalos, replied that "apart from positive points, there were many inaccuracies and remarks made for the sole purpose of making an impression on international public opinion".⁶⁰ Furthermore, Greek officials accused Turkey of insincerity. The invitation for talks coincided with the meeting of the EU-Turkey Association Council and many analysts in Greece perceived it as "targeted at getting Greece to lift its veto over EU credits of the Customs Union Accord with the EU".⁶¹ Nevertheless, the unofficial Greek reply was different. The Prime Minister, Costas Simitis, sent a message through Turkish businessman, Sarik Tara, to the Turkish Prime Minister, Mesut Yilmaz, saying that he

⁶⁰ See Athens News Agency, Daily Bulletin, 26 March 1996. Furthermore, about three months later, the Greek government came back to this proposal to add that it would assess it, if Turkey takes the Imia issue to the International Court of the Hague. See Athens News Agency, 18 June 1996.

could not undertake any action prior to his next party congress, which was to take place in June.⁶² This can also explain the statement made by Turkish Foreign Minister, Emre Gönensay, that "Turkey should have the patience to wait for a reasonable period".⁶³

The Greek answer to Yilmaz's initiative, and thus the development of the initiative, was based on the Greek government's perception of its environment in the aftermath of the crisis.⁶⁴ When the Turkish Prime Minister made this proposal, Simitis was still under pressure from the opposition, not only the opposition to his government but also the opposition within his own party. He was being accused of yielding to Turkey during the Imia/Kardak crisis. Additionally, Yilmaz's proposal was made only three months before the elections for the leadership of PASOK at the party congress. If Simitis had shown signs of reconciliation with Turkey under these circumstances, he would have committed political suicide.⁶⁵ The selection of the unofficial envoy to communicate with Yilmaz, illustrates acknowledgement by the Greek Prime Minister of the existent 'boundaries' within Greek society, what could be possible.

When Simitis was ready, after his election as the president of his party, Tansu Ciller had already succeeded Mesut Yilmaz in the Turkish Premiership and there was no follow up to the initiative. Ciller, who was the leader of the main opposition party, when Yilmaz announced his proposal to Greece, now she rejected it for political reasons.⁶⁶

⁶¹ Angelos Syrigos, "The Status of the Aegean", p.367.

⁶² Interview with Ambassador Yalim Eralp, Istanbul, 04.05.02.

⁶³ Interview of Emre Gönensay by Mehmet Ali Birand, for the TV programme "32nd Day", 27.03.96.

⁶⁴ Angelos Syrigos examines the same initiative, as well as Greek-Turkish relations in general from 1950-1990s from the International law perspective. His study is a laborious one and includes many details regarding Greek-Turkish relations. Nevertheless, it cannot explain the non-legal aspects of the conflict. In his attempt to apply the legal framework to every official interaction the author ends up justifying legally the Greek actions - even sometimes using pettifogging arguments. For example, for the proposal made by Yilmaz, he argues that some of the statements like "Turkey's respect for the territorial integrity and inviolability of borders of all its neighbours" should be disregarded because of the Cyprus issue and its attitude in the Kurdish problem. Angelos Syrigos, "The Status of the Aegean Sea", p.367.

⁶⁵ This is the evaluation of analysts and journalists. Interviews with the Greek journalist Nikos Georgiadis, Athens, Alkis Kourkoulas, Istanbul. See also Ekavi Athanassopoulou, "Blessing in Disguise? The Imia Crisis and Turkish-Greek Relations" *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol.2, No.3, Winter 1997.

⁶⁶ According to people who were close to Tansu Çiller, she wanted to present a similar proposal to Greece when she would become Prime Minister. Nevertheless, when Yilmaz undertook this initiative she took the opportunity to attack him for not protecting Turkey's interests. Interview with [4]

This initiative, however, was also a test of the internal Turkish front. Yilmaz was attacked by the hard-liners from within his own party,⁶⁷ as well as by the opposition. One of the leading figures of the hard-liners, Mumtaz Soysal, portrayed Yilmaz's proposal as representing defeat.⁶⁸ Nevertheless, despite these reactions this initiative revealed at the same time a broader consensus within Turkish society, which had emerged after the crisis of 1996.⁶⁹

The initiatives undertaken by the Greek and Turkish authorities, after Simitis's statements in Washington and the first meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, failed after the emergence of the Gavdos crisis. On the 30th of May, the Turkish representative to NATO, in planning the military exercise "Dynamic Mix", suggested that Turkey considered the island of Gavdos to be a disputed area and for that reason it should not be included in NATO's operational planning. Gavdos is not in the Aegean, it is located hundreds of miles away from Turkey, south of Crete, and hence it could not explain the Turkish interest. Its size is 30 sq. km and the last census showed that 115 Greeks live there. The Greek sovereignty over Gavdos is indisputable. According to Article 4 of the London Peace Treaty of 1913, Turkey renounced all sovereign rights over Crete and Gavdos.

The dispute of the Greek sovereignty over the island was an initiative of a Turkish military officer in NATO, which had not been preceded by previous communication or preparation within the Turkish Foreign Ministry. In fact, it caught Turkish officials by surprise.⁷⁰ Turkish officials found themselves in a difficult position and tried to play down this incident. The Foreign Minister made a statement maintaining that "the Turkish representative at the NATO meeting had not made a political statement but a technical announcement".⁷¹ Nevertheless, the issue immediately gained publicity. This piece of information, once disseminated in Greece, was immediately structurally coupled with the themes of Turkish expansionism and the plans of the Turkish military. It provided these themes and thus the system of conflict from which they

⁶⁷ See statements made by Kamran Inan on the Turkish Daily News, 26.03.96.

⁶⁸ Hürriyet, 24.03.96.

⁶⁹ Interview with Ambassador Yalim Eralp, Istanbul, 04.05.02.

⁷⁰ The incident about the island of Gavdos was not planned by the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This is also confirmed by people within the ministry. Interview with [4] See also article on Milliyet, 17.06.96, regarding this issue, written by the retired Ambassador of Turkey to Washington, Sukru Elegendag. "Every time there is a political gap in Turkey, governments do not inspire respect and confidence to the military and there emerges a diarchy..."

emanate, with further complexity for their autopoiesis. Once the issue passed through the media, the Greek government had to demonstrate a determined attitude to protect Greek national interests. The Greek government expressed a strong reaction and pulled out of the talks. Furthermore, it used this episode to expose Turkey in the international community as aggressive, and not respectful of International Law and the agreements it has signed.⁷² As a matter of fact, the Greek authorities' attitudes were framed by existing social structures and practices.

The Gavdos incident was not immediately related to the initiative for rapprochement that was underway at that time - at least not for the initiator and participants in that interaction. Nevertheless, this incident illustrates the element of unpredictability in the evolution of social systems and their dependence on their perceived environment.

As for the proposals made by the USA and NATO, the Greek government accepted NATO Secretary General Solana's proposal to prolong the two-month moratorium on military exercises in the Aegean through the summer, with a four-month period of monitoring military flights over the Aegean as a confidence building measure. It proceeded with the establishment of a hot-line between the Ministries of Defence and Foreign Affairs and Solana's office in Brussels.

The initiative of the European Presidency on the establishment of the Greek-Turkish Committee of "Wise Men" was never concluded. The development of this initiative is described by Professor Couloumbis, a member of the Committee as follows: "it was December 1997, just prior to our first meeting, which was meant to be a discussion on procedural matters. The Luxemburg Summit was convened at that time. The decisions of the 15 about Turkey were a real blow".⁷³

On the 16th of December 1997, the EU made it clear that Turkey was not on the list of the countries with which the EU would initiate membership talks. Meanwhile it confirmed that negotiations on the accession of Cyprus to the European Union were to start in 1998. The Turkish response was an increase in the number of flights over the 6

⁷¹ See the Turkish Daily News, 6.06.96, as well as the written statement of the Turkish Foreign Minister, Emre Gönensay, that the Gavdos issue was a "military technical" matter and not a political one. Turkish Daily News, 12.06.96.

⁷² Ambassador Elegdağ in his article in *Milliyet* continues: "Our position on the issue of Gavdos was wrong and costed a lot to Turkey. Not only did we give an advantage into the hands of our adversaries but we created a situation which could harm our interests in the Aegean dispute and it could mar the image of Turkey... The only viable move left to us would have been to recall our representative at the headquarters of NATO in Napoli, saying that "he transgressed his orders" and to definitively close this matter". *Milliyet*, 17.06.96.

⁷³ Interview with Professor Theodore Couloumbis, Athens, 03.09.01.

to 10 mile zone, part of the Greek Flight Information Region, which is contested by Turkey. Turkish officials also threatened to proceed with the integration of occupied Cyprus to Turkey if pre-accession negotiations with Cyprus started.⁷⁴

“The Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, reacting to that decision, intervened in the process of the Committee. It asked for the activation of the committee of “Wise Men” between the two governments and their Embassies, not through the ‘evil’ EU. The Greek government did not reject this proposal but said this was an initiative undertaken by the EU. Finally it was never activated”.⁷⁵ In this case as well, the parameter of time emerged as an important structural constraint of the process.

The statement from Madrid, issued by the President of Turkey, Suleyman Demirel, and Prime Minister Costas Simitis on the 8th of July 1997, included a mutual commitment to peace, security and good neighbourly relations, respect for each other's sovereignty and for the principles of international law and international agreements. In a joint declaration, the two sides promised to improve their bilateral relations. Greece accepted a freeze on its right to expand its territorial waters during discussions. Furthermore, the two parties agreed to refrain from unilateral acts on the basis of mutual respect and willingness to avoid conflicts arising from misunderstandings. Additionally, they were committed to settle their disputes by peaceful means.⁷⁶ This was an initiative undertaken by the American administration and the statement included a special reference to the name of the US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, underlining her role in the process. In Athens this statement caused a heated debate. Thirty-two parliament members of the government's party, PASOK, and a few members of the cabinet, signed a declaration against the results from Madrid. Nevertheless, any analysis of the Madrid statement should also take into consideration its timing. Simitis proceeded with the signing of the Madrid statement after his election as leader of PASOK and the consequent strengthening of his position.

The Kosovo crisis was an occasion for close co-operation between the two Foreign Ministers. This initiative emerged due to the proximity of the two countries to the crisis and constraints imposed by existing institutional structures like NATO.

⁷⁴ See the Greek and the Turkish press of the 15th of December 1997.

⁷⁵ Interview with Professor of International Relations Theodore Couloumbis, Athens, 03.09.01.

⁷⁶ For the full text of the statement see <http://www.usia.gov>.

Furthermore, "rumors that the crisis could expand to a Greek-Turkish war further motivated the two foreign ministers towards the direction of co-operation".⁷⁷

Therefore, at the end of this section, the conclusion is that the development of these processes and their results - declarations, decisions and programmes of co-operation - or their failure to generate a result were not directly related to a particular rationale such as the objective of peace and co-operation. Rather, each and every outcome of these interactions was a contingent emerging order constituted of selections carried out by various social systems according to their own rationale. As such, their function was the reduction of complexity. The above analysis illustrated also another aspect of social systems operation in modern functionally differentiated society: time is a functional equivalent to social and cultural patterns. When different time frames are structurally coupled with each other, this has the effect of increasing contingency and constraining complexity. For the political system, time was structured by election, for the press, by the next edition and for a peace initiative by dates that had been set. Time frames constrained the domain of communicative possibilities for further connections of emerging peace processes. The change in the Turkish premiership doomed to failure Yilmaz's peace initiative, the Gavdos crisis undermined the process that had been initiated by the two governments and the decision of the Luxembourg Summit was an impediment for the initiative undertaken by the European Presidency.

3.2. Civil Society Initiatives

This section seeks to explore the development of peace initiatives undertaken by civil society organizations. It focuses on workshops, conferences and other meetings among Greek and Turkish professionals. These meetings are considered to be interaction systems. As such, they constitute episodes in society's course of autopoiesis and their result is a reduction of the complexity of themselves and their environment through selectivity. It will be argued that environmental conditions that function as structural constraints upon the emergent order of the interaction are trust, themes, persons, social and cultural patterns, psychic systems, and time.⁷⁸

Mainstream theory discusses problem-solving workshops separately from other initiatives, like conferences for example, due to the special rules of organization and

⁷⁷ Interview with Ambassador Ilter Türkmen, Istanbul, 13.11.01.

⁷⁸ Within the framework of systems theory the environment is not less important than the system. For the discussion of the system/environment relationship see Chapter II, p.47.

conduct applied to the workshop. In this study, however, I do not distinguish them from the other interactions. From the social systems perspective these rules of conduct are considered as social structures, part of the complex environment of the interaction that guide social and psychic systems' selections and constrain infinite complexity.

The results of empirical research demonstrate that most of these meetings, whether they were called PSWs or whether they were conferences among academics or meetings of organizations like the "Journalists for Peace in the Aegean and Thrace" or "WINPEACE", included elements of conflict resolution workshop theory. By that I mean that either the organizers invited a facilitator from a conflict resolution institution to facilitate the meeting or the meeting was organized by one of the big conflict resolution institutions or the participants had experience of this kind of workshops and applied these rules.⁷⁹ Additionally, the name of the workshop or the organizer should not be considered as an indicator of the rules that would be applied. In other words, even meetings organized by reputable institutions of conflict resolution did not follow the rules of contact that every basic conflict theory handbook includes. Among the complaints raised by Greek and Turkish participants to several PSWs was that these rules were disregarded. Some of the workshops organised with Greek and Turkish participants were not successful either in terms of facilitation or of organization. In some cases, participants felt they were rushed to sign a document that would ultimately justify the role of the organisers.⁸⁰ Lack of preparation, which is often connected to the careless choice of participants, has been evaluated as another factor contributing to the failure of PSWs.⁸¹ At other times, meetings were successful even though they were not facilitated. The key feature of these meetings was the relationship that had been developed among the participants.⁸²

Examples from these initiatives will provide an insight into the multiple causality involved in the constitution of peace processes. Kemal Kirişçi's observations from a conference organized by ELIAMEP and facilitated by a professional from George Mason University point to the internal environment of the interaction. Kirişçi tries to explain why this meeting did not produce a paper reflecting some progress, as it had

⁷⁹ Some of the WINPEACE meetings but also yearly conferences of the ELIAMEP, were facilitated by professionals from George Mason University.

⁸⁰ Interviews with Paulina Lampsas, Athens, 19.02.01, Costas Zeppos, Athens, 14.09.01.

⁸¹ Interviews with Assistant Professor of International Conflict Analysis in Sabanci University, Nimet Beriker, 14.03.02, Ambassador Costas Zeppos, 14.09.01, Paulina Lampsas, Athens, 19.02.01.

⁸² An exemplary case is the Journalists for Peace in the Aegean and Thrace, where the friendly and collegial atmosphere helped the progress of their work.

been aspired. His description emphasizes in particular, that persons and themes also function as social structures that constrain the selectivity of the emerging order. “From discussions I had with participants, I understood that some of them were intimidated or deterred from expressing their ideas in front of people they knew to be hard-liners.... It was unfortunate that persons, who could have balanced the discussion, personalities known as moderates or soft-line, did not come to the workshop because they had other commitments... For example, it was unfortunate that Professor Couloumbis was not there. Couloumbis's presence, because of his position, his status and his line of thinking, could have been crucial in salvaging the workshop from drifting into an aura of pessimism”.⁸³

Trust is one of the first conditions participants in these meetings refer to when they discuss their experience of these meetings.⁸⁴ Pavlos Tsimas, a Greek journalist and participant in many workshops, says: “There was a strong distrust. Were there journalists of a different national identity or people from the other position? Are they agents? That was the problem to overcome. Last October there was not a sign of the old distrust; on the contrary there was a warm-hearted spirit. The test of time is required. It is long contact that forms a relationship of trust”.⁸⁵ This description illustrates the boundary testing and the experimental character of the interaction. The difference agents/journalists, friends/enemies was being continuously tested.

The constant process of testing the boundaries of the systems is illustrated in participants' narratives about these processes. Tsimas again says: “We had thought to do a common journalistic research about the origins of the Cyprus problem. We started with the finding that there is a lot of ignorance about the events and history of the 60s, especially about the Cyprus problem. But we concluded that it is still very early to proceed with the project”.⁸⁶ Ioannis Tzanetakos talks about another workshop with journalists where again the issue of Cyprus came up. “It was suggested we discuss the Cyprus issue and we avoided it because it was an issue fraught with pitfalls and traps. We thought the group conditions had not matured enough for this discussion. There was another proposal to hold this meeting in Cyprus. There were many implications. Where would each of us enter Cyprus and from where would we

⁸³ Interview with Kemal Kirişçi, Istanbul, 03.10.01.

⁸⁴ See Interviews with Pavlos Tsimas, Athens, 19.03.01, with the President of the Greek HCA, Paulina Lampsas, Athens, 01.09.01.

⁸⁵ Interview with Pavlos Tsimas, Athens, 19.03.01.

⁸⁶ *ibid.*

leave? Were passports necessary, etc”.⁸⁷ The existing institutionalised practices and the drawn boundaries of conflict become an impediment for the new systemic formations. Alexis Papahelas maintains the programme he produced on Turkey for the Greek TV channel Mega in July 2002, would not have been possible 3 years ago; the managers of the channel for which he works would not have accepted it.⁸⁸ Alkis Kourkoulas also argues that “the change of a comma” in his book about the Imia/Kardak crisis could have put him in trouble.⁸⁹

The development of these initiatives is dependent upon contingent factors like fund raising, or constraints emerging from their broader environment such as the state of Greek-Turkish relations in general.⁹⁰ The HCA did not continue its activities after the meeting in Nauplio, due to financial constraints. The Turkish HCA, despite the efforts of its members, could not find the resources to organize a meeting in Turkey.⁹¹ Meetings of other organizations were postponed or even canceled because of environmental conditions. A characteristic example was the annual meeting of the NGO “Journalists for Peace in the Aegean and Thrace” which was planned to take place in Komotini, at the end of January 1999.⁹² This meeting was initially postponed until April, after the organizers received warnings from hard-liners who believe this kind of activity harms the national interests of the country.⁹³ A car bomb destroyed the car of one of the organizers, when another bomb was placed opposite of the General Consulate of Turkey in Komotini. The climate of tension the Ocalan crisis created in mid-February 1999, was a reason for a further postponement of the meetings, this time without a specific date being set. However, this group did continue its work, in contrast to other groups, which interrupted their activities after the arrest of Ocalan.

Ocalan's arrest and the crisis it created within Greece, as well as in Greek-Turkish relations, had a considerable impact upon these efforts. Many of the cited groups did not manage to survive the rampant consequences of this incident. One of the most

⁸⁷ Interview with Ioannis Tzanetakos, the then Director of the Greek State Radio Station, Athens, 07.03.02.

⁸⁸ Interview with Alexis Papahelas, Athens, 19.06.02.

⁸⁹ Interview with Alkis Kourkoulas, Istanbul, 05.10.01.

⁹⁰ The Turkish columnist Sami Kohen participant in many workshops with journalists stresses the emphasis on the general state of Greek-Turkish relations as a determining factor of the development of these initiatives. Interview with Sami Kohen, Istanbul, 23.08.01.

⁹¹ Interview with the President of the Turkish HCA, Professor Murat Belge, Istanbul, 27.09.01.

⁹² The date of the meeting is also symbolic as it reminds the crisis of January 1996.

active groups of this kind, which was created and propelled by businessmen from both sides of the Aegean Sea, stopped operating. It was the President of the Turkish side of the Greek Turkish Chamber of Commerce, Rahmi Koc, who denounced continued co-operation, declaring that it would stop every co-operation “with Greek businessmen in protest of the aid Greece offered to the Kurdish leader”.⁹⁴ This reaction was framed by the environment created after Ocalan's arrest within Turkey, marked by fierce polemics in the Turkish media against Greece, enraging Turkish public opinion. Rahmi Koc could not ignore his environment, particularly as he had exposed himself in pursuing the development of Greek-Turkish co-operation. The activities of the Greek-Turkish Business Council had seen the full blaze of publicity from 1996 until February 1999.⁹⁵ This decision reflected the interests of Turkish businessmen, which at that moment, conflicted with the rationale of Greek-Turkish rapprochement. As such it was an emergent order constituted as the unity of the system/environment difference. Although it was not directly related to the businessmen' peace initiative it affected it.

The Greek-Turkish “WINPEACE” was another civil society initiative affected by this crisis. After the Ocalan crisis, when Greek and Turkish participants met in Istanbul, they realized that they could not communicate and therefore, they did not complete their two-day meeting.⁹⁶

The Greek-Turkish Forum has managed to get over the obstacles cast in its way from the time of its inception in 1997 until the earthquakes in 1999. The Ocalan crisis has been a turning point for the group. It reinforced its bonds of trust and solidarity. At the first meeting after the crisis, they decided they should meet more often. The Greek members of the Forum and the facilitator, Dan Smith, agreed on the important role Turkish members played in this meeting, pointing in particular to Ambassador Ilter Türkmen's stance. Ambassador Türkmen was the coordinator of the Turkish section of the Forum and his stance was determined by two main factors. One was his previous professional experience from Greek-Turkish crises from within the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and his experience as representative of Turkey to the United Nations. These experiences had formed his firm belief that at the most critical times,

⁹³ Interview with Jenny Katsarea, publisher of the local newspaper of Komotini Paratiritis, Komotini 01.11.01.

⁹⁴ Nautemporiki 25.02.99.

⁹⁵ Interviews with Alkis Kourkoulas, Istanbul, 05.10.01 and Ilter Türkmen, Istanbul, 13.11.01.

communication should be sustained. Another factor was that the Forum, and thus its Turkish members, had not been exposed to publicity in Turkey. That helped them to continue their work quietly, without the risks of being accused of co-operation with the “enemy”.⁹⁷

The earthquake that occurred in August 1999 has been another turning point in the development of these initiatives. As we shall see, initiatives that had slowed down or even died out were re-activated and reinforced after the earthquakes.

The above exploration of these interactions from the perspective of social autopoiesis provides us with an original insight to the multiple causality involved in their development and the contingent and dynamic nature of these initiatives.

4. Morphogenesis v Conflict Resolution

In the previous two sections, I sought to explore the emergence and development of governmental and non-governmental peace processes. It was demonstrated that they emerge as autopoietic systems in a self-organising world society, as combined selectivity, which reduces the complexity. The focus of analysis was on the conditioning in the environment of peace processes pointing to various structural constraints of complexity such as institutionalised practices, patterns of behaviour, persons, themes, and time frames. In this section, I probe into the changes these initiatives brought about in their environment and thus in the environment of conflict. Conventional theory and in particular theories of conflict resolution argue that PSWs can resolve a conflict. On the other hand, conflict transformation theories acknowledge the complexity involved in these interactions and maintain that PSWs can enable the emergence of a new language and a “shared reality”. Galtung’s more recent TRANSCEND approach makes the argument that a conflict can be transformed through the increase of complexity. Finally, participants in this kind of interaction point to the expansion of their knowledge about the ‘other’, the complexities of the societies, the participants as persons, but also about themselves.⁹⁸ They often use the

⁹⁶ Interview with a member of the movement, chief editor of foreign news in *Hürriyet*, during the crisis of 1996, now columnist in *Hürriyet*, Ferai Tinç, Istanbul, 19.02.01.

⁹⁷ Interview with Ambassador Ilter Türkmen, Istanbul, 13.11.01.

⁹⁸ *ibid.*

expression “these meetings opened a window to the other side” and two different worlds could communicate.⁹⁹

In this section it will be demonstrated that the new input, the structural gain ensured through these processes of interactions, is not accumulated with time in a linear way. The perspective of social autopoiesis emphasises multiple causality complexity and contingency and further breaks down the assumption of uni-linearity. Furthermore, the analysis below will illuminate the processes involved in the transformation of conflict and advance our theorizing about conflict transformation.

Three main points will be made. First, social change is self-change that comes about through morphogenetic evolutionary processes. Morphogenetic processes are not uni-linear and accumulative processes, which imply some kind of effective rational calculation. Learning processes are examples of morphogenesis. Second, peace processes are reflexive processes. Reflexivity increases the complexity of the environment of conflict because it enables the emergence of new social structures like a new language, themes, roles, programmes, persons and institutions. Third, the increase of the complexity speeds up the self-observation and self-description of social and psychic systems and their structural couplings. This enables a reorganizing of complexity in a self-referential way. Nevertheless, it is argued that structural changes are not planned or announced, they can even remain latent to social systems themselves until a new decisive point is reached and they are uncovered.

4.1. Conflict Transformation as Self-change

Conflict transformation theory makes a strong argument that only the parties in the conflict can transform the conflict. Luhmann's theory corroborates this view and illuminates the processes involved in this change. Here I will examine in particular learning as a morphogenetic process of structural change. Conventional theory conceptualizes learning as a generator of change, equating communication with understanding. Luhmann's understanding of learning, as a self-referential process of structural change, approaches learning processes as neutral which can both reinforce the structures of conflict and transform them too. This is better understood once we treat expectations as knowledge. Social systems observe information reinforcing their

⁹⁹ These are the words Alkis Kourkoulas, a well-known Greek correspondent in Turkey, used to describe the impact of this process. Interview with Alkis Kourkoulas, correspondent of Athens News Agency, and the national newspaper To Vima, Istanbul, 05.10.01.

meaning world, what they already know. When expectations are disappointed, social structures may change. But again, it is the system that selects information that will change its state. Often social and psychic systems ignore information that may contradict their previously acquired knowledge. In what follows, I will highlight the neutrality of learning processes by presenting specific examples from systems of Greek-Turkish interactions (problem solving workshops and conferences) where the structures of the conflict were reinforced instead of changed and other meetings where a structural change took place.

The meeting of Greek and Turkish journalists in Paris, under the auspices of UNESCO, is a characteristic example of a meeting, that was not productive.¹⁰⁰

Although a facilitator was present, the meeting was not facilitated and at a certain point, "it turned into a battlefield"¹⁰¹ where participants walked out of the conference room. An openly expressed lack of trust for the other side and the Kurdish issue were the trigger points of a chain of exchanges which led the workshop to failure. Participants argued they did not learn anything new from this workshop, nor did it help their understanding of the other side and the situation of the conflict. Furthermore, they admit that they left the workshop with a feeling of despondency for the situation. Soli Ozel, one of the participants in this meeting, said characteristically "when I came back, I thought that's it, we are going to have a war with Greece. The situation is really bad."¹⁰² The paradoxical and contingent nature of this interaction is further exposed if we take into account that many of the participants of this meeting had participated in other, successful initiatives launched by journalists. At another meeting among journalists and academics held in Athens a speech by a hard-liner was sufficient to spark a fight and led to an exchange of personal accusations.¹⁰³

Nevertheless, in cases like these, participants underwent a learning process.¹⁰⁴

Learning involved drawing conclusions, which reinforced existing schemas of

¹⁰⁰ 13 journalists from each country were invited to participate in this workshop organised by UNESCO, in May 1998. See relevant web page <http://www.unesco.org/opi/eng/unescopress/98-101e.htm>.

¹⁰¹ Interview with Nur Batur, correspondent in Athens of the Turkish newspaper *Hürriyet*, and participant in the meeting in Paris, Athens, 10.09.01.

¹⁰² Interview with Soli Ozel, member of the teaching staff of the University of Bilgi, advisor of the President of Turkish Industrialists and Businessmen Association (TUSSIAD), Muharrem Kaya, and columnist in national newspapers, Istanbul 18.10.01.

¹⁰³ Interview with the journalist of *Cumhuriyet* Leyla Tavsanoğlu, Istanbul, 16.10.01.

¹⁰⁴ Interviews with the diplomatic correspondent of *Eleftherotypia*, Kyra Adam, Athens, 07.03.02, Soli Ozel, Istanbul, 18.01.01, Leyla Tavsanoğlu, Istanbul, 16.10.01.

interpretation about the conflict and the 'other'.¹⁰⁵ The meaning attributed to the experience of this workshop was that there was no change.

Communication is never an event with only two points of selection - such as giving and receiving. Rather, it involves a synthesis of three selections namely information, utterance and understanding, which includes misunderstanding. Another example from one of the meetings between Greek and Turkish academics, illustrates the highly complex and selective nature of these interactions. Kemal Kirişçi participant in this workshop describes the following incident: "One of the participants from the Turkish delegation, during a presentation regarding the admission of Cyprus to the EU, said that if the admission is not accompanied by a solution to the Cyprus problem, it would be unsatisfactory for both sides. He said this would be less than satisfactory for the Turkish side and will cause problems. This was interpreted [by the Greek side] as a threat. I think the point the person tried to make was that if Cyprus is admitted to the EU without a satisfactory solution it will play into the hands of Turkish hard-liners and this has to be taken into consideration. That part of the message got left out and the meaning was misinterpreted as a threat by the Greek participants of the workshop".¹⁰⁶

Understanding is the specific form of observation suited to the social dimension of meaning. It requires observation with the help of the system/environment difference. In other words, it requires that we look at the system as a system operating in its own environment. Greek and Turkish participants observed - that is selected - the same piece of information but attributed a different meaning to it according to their own pre-established distinctions. Turks were concerned with the developments in Turkey after a possible admission of Cyprus in the EU without a sustainable solution for the divided island. Greeks were sensitive to anything would appear as a threat from Turkey. The above example illustrated that social and psychic systems are oriented to their environment and thus they remain opaque and incalculable to each other.

In the next two sections I will further explore the structural change involved in these interactions.

¹⁰⁵ Interview with Kyra Adam, Athens, 07.03.02.

¹⁰⁶ Interview with Kemal Kirişçi, Istanbul, 03.10.01.

4.2. The Emergence of New Structures of Co-operation: Themes, Roles, Persons, Institutions, Programmes of Action/Goals

Communication is a reflexive process that is a process applied to itself. Reflexivity is a tool in the differentiation of society and thus in the increase and reduction of complexity. It enables the emergence of new structures like a new language, themes, persons, institutions, programmes of action and programmes of goals. Reflexive processes are autocatalytic processes, re-entries into the complexity of the unity of what is complex.

The interactions that emerged after the crisis of 1996 were based on a particular kind of reflexivity. This section presents examples of the reflexive and thus creative nature of the communication process in these interactions. These interactions did not attempt to solve the causes of the Greek-Turkish conflict. Participants in meetings organised by civil society organizations discussed the way Greeks and Turks communicate and they were learning how to learn, or deciding about how to decide. Their organizers aimed to do something in order to change the environment.¹⁰⁷ The Greek journalist, Pavlos Tsimas, maintained:

Of course the disagreements in the meetings of recent years still exist when we pass from journalistic issues to diplomatic issues. Who is right and who is wrong. But we are committed to discuss the process and not the essence of the conflict. We do not discuss in order to solve the problems but in order to discuss about the problems.¹⁰⁸

The function of reflexive communication consists in that it allows the formation of new semantics for the processing of information. Processes of reflexive communication enabled the emergence of a new language. Members of the Greek-Turkish Forum point to language as an aspect of structural formation. Ambassador Zeppos put it very succinctly when he said that through the process within the Forum “I am searching for a new language. A philological not a legal language. All this is about the difficulty of eliminating stereotypes, the language patterns”.¹⁰⁹

Furthermore, the members of the Forum argue that the technique of facilitation employed by the facilitator, Dan Smith, played an important role in the emergence of

¹⁰⁷ Interviews with Paulina Lamposa about the HCA, Athens, 01.09.01, Soli Ozel about businessmen' initiatives, Istanbul, 18.10.01, Dan Smith about the Greek Turkish Forum, Istanbul, 14.10.01.

¹⁰⁸ Interview with Pavlos Tsimas, Athens, 19.03.01 Ambassador Zeppos, in one of the Greek-Turkish meetings of the NGO Black Sea Platform, in Istanbul, December 1998, proposed this toast "to the dialogue that is to communication about communication".

¹⁰⁹ Ambassador, Costas Zeppos, Athens, 14.09.01.

the new language and the formation of an environment conducive to co-operation.¹¹⁰ Dan Smith describes this technique as follows: “What I did was to attack certain bad habits of the participants. Every time one would step up and read or give a semi-prepared statement, I would immediately stop him and give the floor to another participant”.¹¹¹ The facilitation did not allow the interaction to be bounded by language patterns, legal and historical constitutive and thus reproductive of the conflict. Journalists too argue that “the words ‘Greece’ and ‘Turkey’ themselves have acquired a new content” and even they have been redefined through these experiences, contacts and research.¹¹²

The new language reflected and further enabled structural couplings among different social systems. The language of Greek-Turkish relations before 1996 was basically confined to the patterns of the legal argumentation and references to the history of the conflict. Now, it included elements of sciences like psychology, sociology and mass communication, but also the system of economy, media and the military as most of the meetings between Greeks and Turks included journalists, politicians, scholars, retired diplomats, military officers and civil society representatives.¹¹³

Reflexivity gave rise also to new themes of communication such as the roles of stereotypes in communication between the two countries, the way history was written, the Greek and Turkish news medias' contribution to the exacerbation of the conflict by means of the construction and reproduction of enemy images, and the way the educational systems of the two countries are oriented to construct the image of the other as enemy. Civil society organizations reflected upon their role in peaceful conflict resolution and they sought new ways to enhance the knowledge and the understanding about the other. The development of economic co-operation, as well as co-operation in the field of science and arts and how this can affect the relations between the two peoples also became an important theme. Another category of themes concerned the European orientation of Turkey including issues concerning the development of Turkey and the structural changes necessary for the convergence of

¹¹⁰ Interviews with Paulina Lampsas, 01.09.01, Costas Zeppos, 14.09.01, Theodore Couloumbis, 03.09.01, Ilter Türkmen, 13.11.01.

¹¹¹ Interview with Dan Smith, 14.10.01.

¹¹² Interview with Nur Batur, Athens 10.09.01.

¹¹³ See for example the first meeting organised by the Greek and the Turkish HCA in Nauplio in May 1996, the meetings organised by the Journalists for Peace in the Aegean and Thrace, in June 1996 and January 1997, the meeting under the auspices of UNESCO in May 1998, the meeting organised by the Black Sea Platform in December 1998 and the meetings organised by the NGO Greek and Turkish Women Journalists for Peace.

Turkey and European expectations e.g. changes in its constitution and the improvement of its human rights record. Furthermore, a new question often raised in this context was how Greeks could assist Turks in their pursuit of EU membership. The third category of new themes was related to the domestic politics of the two countries and the way they influence relations between the two states.¹¹⁴

Themes correspond to the factual dimension of meaning which enables connectivity and thus structural change. The emergence of new themes expands the 'boundaries' of the systems, what systems perceive as possible to communicate about. In social systems' new environmental condition, systems can carry out the transformation of input into output by action; they can summarise their own selections in this way. This occurs in the form of programmes of action and goals.

Many of these interactions produced some sort of declaration or programme of action and goals. Business people and media organizations made plans of action and set goals to be achieved. For example, they signed agreements for technical support and exchange of information. The media designed training projects in order to improve co-operation among young Greek and Turkish journalists.¹¹⁵

Nevertheless, as Tzanetakos argues, in the case of media co-operation, discussions about training programmes for young journalists, exchange of articles, and other similar activities were not realized because of practical and technical difficulties, such as the lack of secretarial assistance. What happened, however, was that many journalists from both countries, in the framework of these initiatives, started traveling and developing contacts with colleagues from the other country. These initiatives then enabled the emergence of a network of personal relationships. Tzanetakos describes this development as follows: "When I write about Greek-Turkish issues, I think about what we have said to establish a climate of mutual trust. If I come out very aggressively, I always think what Turks are going to think about me if they read it".¹¹⁶

The identification of persons with specific expectations is another social structure that guides selections. Security is acquired and complexity is reduced through acquaintance. In the section above I referred to persons as social structures that may both constrain and enable the emergence of a new order. I presented an example with

¹¹⁴ The programme followed in the meetings of the Greek-Turkish Forum reflects the institutionalisation of a process that enhances reflexivity. The first day the members of the Forum meet they discuss the domestic developments, the complexities and particularities of the two countries. This discussion introduces complexity into what is complex.

¹¹⁵ Interview with journalist Ioannis Tzanetakos, Athens, 07.03.02.

Professor Couloumbis. The Turkish journalist, Mehmet Ali Birand, could be another example. Another case of expectations related to a specific person is the Greek Foreign Minister, George Papandreou. As Minister of Education, he participated in the organization of the first meeting of the Helsinki Citizens Assembly (March 1996). As Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, he consistently expressed moderate views regarding Greek-Turkish relations and a culture of peaceful resolution of the Greek-Turkish disputes. Finally, after his appointment as Minister of Foreign Affairs, in February 1999, he closely cooperated with his counterpart, Ismael Cem.¹¹⁷

The Greek-Turkish Forum is an example of an institutionalization of an initiative. The Forum, after successive transformations, has been recognized in both countries and by their governmental authorities, as an institution that facilitates the search for a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

Another aspect of the institutionalization of the processes within society is that participants in these activities gradually started getting important institutional positions within the state apparatus. For example, Paulina Lampsas, the director of the Greek HCA, became advisor to the Minister of Macedonia and Thrace and the Minister of Foreign Affairs after 1997. Stratis Balaskas, journalist of *Eleftherotypia*, and founder of the Journalists "Movement for Peace in the Aegean and Thrace", became spokesman and advisor to the Minister of the Aegean after 1998. Nikitas Lionarakis, director of the Greek radio station and participant in the movement, undertook the office for NGOs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs after 1999.

To sum up this section the understanding of peace processes through Luhmann's theory as reflexive processes provides us with the analytical tools to theorize and explore the process of complexification as emergence of new social structures like a new language, themes, institutions, roles, persons and programmes. These emerge through a process of constant boundary testing as it was described in the previous section. The emergence of new themes expands the boundaries and the thematic repertoire of the existing systems hence opening a new horizon of possibilities through 'impossible' structural couplings among different systems. The process of the emergence of these new systemic formations is not an accumulative or an automatic linear process. The emergence of new systemic formations depends on their

¹¹⁶ *ibid.*.

complexity, the complexity of their environment and their sensitivity to information. Therefore it is neither necessary nor impossible; it is contingent. In what follows, I will present examples that highlight this aspect of self-change in particular.

4.3. Latent Social Structures

The argument of this section is twofold: First, elaborating on the non-linearity of peace processes it is argued that the autopoiesis of peace processes and thus, the emergence of new systemic formations, do not even require the operations of self-observation and self-description of social systems. Second, and in connection to the first point, although changes may occur they may remain latent to the systems themselves until a decisive point is reached and they are uncovered.

The operations of self-observation and the change of self-description of social systems are achievements, which may or may not emerge later after structural changes have occurred. In other words, social systems do not describe themselves accurately or even objectively. The Greek journalist, Pavlos Tsimas, says, "... at the end of these meetings, we had the feeling that nothing tangible had been produced through this process".¹¹⁸ The Turkish columnist, Cengiz Candar, when he was first asked about the utility of these meetings said, "they do not offer anything".¹¹⁹ This evaluation of these interactions was explained by the fact that they "have not solved the conflict".

Nevertheless, the same person, Cengiz Candar, offers another dimension of this process, which concerns the emergence of a new self-description that remains latent to itself. Candar described a very lively process of demystification that came out of his participation in these processes.

What I've learned through these meetings is this: For many years we ran after these people (politicians and diplomats) when there were negotiations or something similar, in Athens, Ankara... 'Mr. x, undersecretary, deputy minister, tell us Mr. minister, one word.' We have been waiting for them to give us one word and make a whole story out of that. We have been waiting in the rain, snow, and under the hot sun. Now, I understand what they have been talking about in these meetings. One was taking a position and the other a counter position. They were captives of their own inflexible, 'rational' policies and dogmas and very keen not to be on the half way for domestic purposes. What I understand now is that we attached great

¹¹⁷ As member of the Helsinki Citizens Assembly and at that time, Minister of Education, Papandreou offered a dinner to the Turkish participants of the first meeting organized by the HCA, after the crisis of 1996.

¹¹⁸ Interview with Pavlos Tsimas, Athens, 19.03.01.

¹¹⁹ Interview with Cengiz Candar, Istanbul, 10.11.01.

importance to them ... They are very mediocre... Now we could actually see them conducting their relationship.¹²⁰

These meetings provided another environment and new roles for the participants. Journalists could discuss issues with politicians and diplomats in an environment other than a press conference room where each one has a specific role to perform, one as speaker and the other reporting on the speech. Now politicians had to explain and justify their policies to their new audiences and they had to publicly discuss them with their colleagues. The modeling of complexity within complexity provided by these interactions, intensified the operations of the system, which are self-observation and self-reflection and enabled the emergence of new self-descriptions.

Now journalists had a concrete idea about what they were writing, whereas before, they had a general image of this process and they relied on what politicians and diplomats were saying to them. A Turkish diplomatic correspondent in one of these meetings repeated precisely the same expression “before, politicians were saying a word to us and we were making a story out of it”.¹²¹ This very sentence illustrates the process of generalisation and respecification in the construction of reality through news media. Journalists reporting on Greek-Turkish, were employing their own pre-established knowledge to compensate for the lack of information.

Peace processes that emerged in the aftermath of the crisis of 1996 increased complexity and speeded up structural couplings, which created zones of contacts among different social and psychic systems. This increase of the complexity enabled a reorganization of the complexity and resulted to a further functional differentiation of society and the emergence of new structures.

Nevertheless, the realization of the emergence of new systemic formations by different systems is an evolutionary achievement that is not necessarily synchronous to the change. Journalist Tsimas says: “[A] posteriori we realize that there was a preparation of the ground through these meetings. First, when the Ocalan crisis happened and then when the earthquake occurred”.¹²² The Ocalan crisis was a decisive point in Greek-Turkish relations. Bringing Greek-Turkish relations again at a low ebb, it was an irritation, a motive for some Greek and Turkish journalists who had

¹²⁰ *ibid.*

¹²¹ This is what the Turkish correspondent told to Ambassador Korantis in the opening ceremony of one of the big events organised in Athens at the aftermath of the earthquakes with Greek and Turkish journalists. Interview with Ambassador Ioannis Korantis, Ankara, 8.06.01.

¹²² Interviews with Pavlos Tsimas, Athens, 19.03.01.

participated in many workshops to co-operate and attempt to discuss publicly this crisis, both in Greece and in Turkey. This decision emerged through the routines of journalists connected with the new systemic formations of reflexive communication and the contingency of the Ocalan crisis. A debate on the Turkish channel Atv with Greek journalists as guests and two other programmes in Greece, contributed significantly to the development of these processes.

These dialogues among journalists from both countries were decisive moments that made them realize the changes that had occurred. These interactions provided good ground for the employment of the institutionalized structures of peace and co-operation, which had emerged through the interactions examined above such as the new language and the themes. More precisely, these new interactions provided a test for the robustness of these systemic formations. The test proved to be successful. Greek journalists who went to Turkey in order to participate in this programme felt that this initiative was a breakthrough. The reactions of Turkish colleagues, as well as the reactions of the people in the streets of Istanbul the next day, after their presence on Turkish TV, confirmed and reinforced that a change had been accomplished over the last years.¹²³

Nevertheless, this sudden realization of the change that had been accomplished through peace processes from 1996-1999 concerned only the few journalists who had participated in these meetings. The earthquake was another occasion that amplified these new self-descriptions. It triggered similar processes of communication on a large scale and speeded up structural couplings enabling the emergence of a new attractor in Greek-Turkish relations, a system of co-operation.

Conclusion

The above analysis provides a different conceptualization of peace processes. It demonstrated that peace processes emerge as an increase of selectivity towards the direction of co-operation and peace through morphogenetic processes of communication. There was not some kind of objective historical law that guided systems' operations determining the conditions and the course of their development in an uni-linear way. There was no necessity that forced the emergence and development

¹²³ Interviews with journalists Nikos Georgiadis, Athens, 15.03.01, and Pavlos Tsimas, Athens, 19.03.01 and Stelios Berberakis, *Sabah's* correspondent in Athens, Athens, 15.05.00.

of the various peace processes from 1996 until 1999. Rather, it was the increase of complexity and the need for its reduction that enforced their emergence.

Contingent events like the crisis of 1996, the Kosovo crisis or the Ocalan crisis set in motion meaning determination processes which led to the disappointment of existing expectations and the emergence of new differences. Whether the new differences would find connections to develop through deviation-amplifying processes of communication depended on the interconnection of system's complexity, contingencies and sensitivity to information. Peace processes developed through contingent structural couplings of different social and psychic systems in world society through the a-causal synchronization, the linking up of institutionalized practices of peaceful conflict resolution, aims of the EU, RUSI, PRIO and other organizations. The dynamics of peace processes depended on the selectivity and connectivity of the emerging structures.

That analysis illustrated that there are multiple paths to peace, which cannot be identified and mapped down. The assumption of a general rationale of peace as a point of departure for mainstream analysis of these processes is a counter-productive simplification because it immediately simplifies the complexity involved in the autopoiesis of these processes.

The application of Luhmann's theory of social systems advances Galtung's conceptualization of peace process as a process of complexification. Galtung conceptualised peace processes as a process of complexification. He argued that the conflict worker should introduce more issues, more goals and more perspectives in order to disembed the conflict from its restrictive dual framework. This proposal is mainly based on empirical observation and cannot theorize about the processes involved. Luhmann's theory demonstrates that **complexity is both the fundamental problem of functionally differentiated society and also where solutions lie.** Reflexivity enabled the further differentiation of society through a process that increases and reduces complexity. It generated new structural formations, themes of communication, institutions and programmes of action and goals, and speeded up structural couplings that formed new self-descriptions.

Mainstream theory adopts an instrumental approach to peace processes focusing on interactions among individuals, as the means to resolve the conflict and create "a shared reality". The above analysis of peace processes through Luhmann's theory of social autopoiesis challenged this perspective. The conceptualisation of various

interactions as a field of experimentation for Greek and Turkish societies, which can test and expand its boundaries, is more fruitful. The system/environment perspective, within which interactions as systems of communication are placed, emphasises the contingent nature of these meetings and the impossibility to control their outcome. The processes were independent and autonomous from one social system or a particular rationale like for example the rationale of peace.

This analysis joins conflict transformation theory in its argument that the transformation of conflict cannot be imposed from outside but involves the societies in conflict. More precisely, it is a selection made by the whole of the society. Nevertheless, this is not a rational choice. Rather, it makes part of society's blind evolution, which is based on the selection and variation of communication. It illuminates the processes of transformation as non-accumulative, non-linear but self-referential processes. The exploration of latent changes in Greek and Turkish societies emphasized further the blindness and unpredictability of modern society's evolution.

The involvement of international organizations, both governmental and non-governmental stresses the emphasis on the nature of world society as a multi-centered, functionally differentiated society, which does not recognize territorial boundaries.

The new arrangements that emerged after the crisis of 1996 were transformed into a system of co-operation after another accidental event, the earthquakes of 1999. The earthquakes further increased the selectivity of these systemic formations towards the direction of co-operation. The morphogenetic evolutionary processes triggered by the earthquakes of 1999 in the Greek and Turkish societies are the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER V

THE EARTHQUAKE OF 1999: ANOTHER "BUTTERFLY EFFECT" IN GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS

On 17 August 1999, Turkey's Marmara region was ravaged by one of the century's most devastating earthquakes. This accidental event had an unprecedented impact on Greek-Turkish relations. It seems that it have brought Greeks and Turks closer to co-operation than ever. Initially, Greeks were mobilized to gather aid for the victims of the earthquake. The months after the earthquake however, this expression of solidarity was transformed to co-operation in a number of fields such as politics, business, trade, arts, education and sports taking some institutionalized form too.

There are not many analyses in the literature of Greek-Turkish relations that attempt to explain and evaluate the impact of the earthquake and the emergence of the phenomenon that followed it. Practitioners, like politicians, journalists and diplomats, are puzzled by the phenomenon that followed the earthquake. Some have employed traditional theoretical approaches to explain it. Isolating the rapprochement process on the level of inter-governmental relations, they seek to establish continuity in the aims each government held before and after the earthquake and they base their analysis on an assumed rational calculation made by the Greek and Turkish decision-makers. Thus, they do not consider the earthquake an important factor in the emergence of these positive developments in Greek-Turkish relations.¹

Other approaches suggest that peace initiatives, both governmental and non-governmental, that developed between 1996 - in the aftermath of the crisis over the Imia/Kardak islets - and 1999, prepared the ground for and built up this phenomenon.² Analytical tools from conflict resolution theory have also been employed to describe this phenomenon. This approach attempts to consider and evaluate developments on different levels of society, such as politics, media, and civil society organizations. Nevertheless, it fails to establish links among the different levels and cannot explain

¹ This is the approach adopted by some journalists and diplomats in Greece and Turkey. Interviews with the Turkish journalist Ferai Tinc, Istanbul, 19.02.01 and interview with the Greek diplomat Theodoros Theodorou, Komotini, 08.03.99.

² Alexis Heraclides provides the most comprehensive, academic analysis of this phenomenon. In his study he employs the conflict transformation theory and functionalist approach to conflict as tools of research and analysis. Heraclides, Alexis, "Greek-Turkish Relations from Discord to Détente: A Preliminary Evaluation", *The Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 1, No. 3, Spring 2002. Furthermore,

the timing of the developments and the dynamics that emerged after the earthquake. In the end, this analysis too, returns to governmental politics, frustrated by its inability to provide an explanation for the complexity involved.

In this section, I examine the phenomenon that emerged after the earthquake as a dynamic process of morphogenetic social change in the Greek and Turkish societies. It is argued that the earthquake was the decisive point for a shift from the existing self-description of Greek and Turkish societies, according to the system of Greek-Turkish conflict, to a new self-description, which developed around themes of co-operation. The earthquake was the irritation, the stimulus that triggered fast-moving meaning constitutive processes in a multitude of social and psychic systems in Greek and Turkish societies. Communications structurally - that is a-causally - coupled with each other increased the complexity which then enforced the emergence of a new emerging order, a new attractor: a social system of Greek-Turkish co-operation.

This new attractor emerged as another “butterfly effect” in Greek-Turkish relations through deviation-amplifying mutual causal processes of communication. The initial interactions of co-operation, the Greek mobilization in support of the earthquake victims in Turkey, operated as a field of experimentation for Greek and Turkish society. New links emerged, were tested and eventually established, guided for their connective operations by previous determinations of meaning, already established structures, such as existing themes, programmes and institutions. The social structures of co-operation created from 1996 to 1999 made an important contribution to the emergence of the new order. They became operational in the new situation brought about by the earthquake and were transformed through improbable connections into structures of co-operation.

This chapter is divided in five main parts. The first part presents the “butterfly effect” describing the autocatalytic chain reactions the earthquake triggered in the Greek and Turkish societies. The second part seeks to explore the self-referential and thus paradoxical nature of the operation of social and psychic systems, which produced the new attractor. It exposes the blind spots of self-referential systems by examining the semantics they used in order to describe the system/environment distinction. The third part describes the transition from the stage of bifurcation that is a stage of increased

representatives of civil society who had participated in many peace initiatives after the Imia/Kardak

complexity to the emergence of the new attractor of co-operation. Here, we probe into the mechanics of communication in order to demonstrate that the new order emerged after the establishment of new differences through a process of generalization and simplification. The last part argues that the new system is autonomous from the other social systems.

1. The Earthquake of 1999 as a 'Butterfly'

The previous two chapters described the emergence of the crisis of 1996 and the various peace initiatives as the result of "butterfly effects". The transmission of information about an event, the accident on one hand and the sudden emergence of the crisis on the other, provoked simultaneous autocatalytic reactions on the part of various systems in Greek and Turkish societies enforcing in both cases the emergence of a new order. Here the initial condition for the emergence of the new system of co-operation, the 'butterfly', was the devastating earthquake that occurred in Turkey at 3:02 a.m., on the 17th of August of 1999.

The earthquake registered 7.4 on the Richter scale. Its effects amounted to more than 30.000 people dead, hundreds injured and innumerable private houses and public buildings completely destroyed. It hit an expanding area of Turkey, which stretches from Istanbul to Izmit. Both cities are metropolitan centres in Turkey and are densely populated, which means that hundreds of thousands of lives were immediately affected by the earthquake.

Although the earthquake was not directly related to Greek-Turkish relations it triggered a chain of spontaneous reactions within a multitude of social systems and their subsystems in Greek and Turkish societies.³ Contrary to what happened in the other countries neighbouring Turkey, not only the Greek government, but particularly Greek civil society - individuals, municipalities, professional associations, and other organizations - promptly responded to the needs of the earthquake victims, gathering humanitarian aid through a massive mobilization. The Greek mobilization projected on the news media provoked positive reactions within the Turkish society amplifying communication about co-operation. This section seeks to describe the autopoiesis of

crisis, argue in favour of this interpretation. Interview with Paulina Lampsas, Athens, 01.09.01.

³ The information presented here was mainly gathered from the Greek newspapers *Eleftherotypia* and *Ta Nea* and the Turkish newspapers *Sabah* and *Hürriyet*. In the sections below I mainly used material gathered through interviews with representatives of the social systems which I discuss here.

communication about co-operation and its autocatalytic nature through concrete examples of social systems' operations during those days.

The media was the first system that reacted immediately to the stimulus of the earthquake. The earthquake became a front-page headline in the Greek news media for the first days afterwards. Greek media organizations sent reporting teams to Turkey, but also co-operated with the Turkish media. On the 17th and the 18th Greek newspapers devoted tens of pages to the situation in the area struck by the earthquake, and Greek TV channels adapted their everyday programming to the earthquake. Starting from the early morning, they showed live coverage of scenes from the rescue operations and extensive coverage of the consequences of the earthquake.

The first telegram of support from Greece to Turkey was sent in the afternoon of the first day after the earthquake, August 17th, by the President of the Greek-Turkish Chamber of Commerce, Panayiotis Koutsikos. The letter was addressed to the leadership of the Turkish entrepreneurial world. Koutsikos proposed to his Turkish colleagues who had suffered damage from the earthquake to continue their production in Greek territory, for as long as that would be deemed necessary.⁴

The Greek Prime Minister, Costas Simitis, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, George Papandreou, expressed their sympathy to the Turkish government on August 18th. The first official Greek mission of people and humanitarian aid arrived in Istanbul in three C-130 airplanes, in the early afternoon of the 18th.⁵ This mission also included members of a Greek rescue team for urgent situations, a team of doctors and nurses trained for emergency situations with ambulances, as well as expert seismologists and the general Secretary of Citizens' Protection, Dimitris Katrivanos.

On August 19th, the Turkish Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit thanked Greece and the Greek government "for the important aid, both in quantity and also in quality, offered to Turkey".⁶

⁴ Interview with the Managing Director and Official Spokesman of the Greek-Turkish Chamber of Commerce, Harry Caloudis, Athens, 20.07.01.

⁵ Many countries from all around the world sent humanitarian aid and trained teams equipped for the rescue works. Among them were Russia, Israel, Germany, the USA, France, Spain, Canada, Denmark, Belgium and Italy. For lists of the countries and information regarding the humanitarian aid they offered, see the articles "Rain of Aid", *Hürriyet*, 18.08.99, "The World Runs to Help", *Hürriyet* 19.08.99.

⁶ *Ta Nea*, 19.08.99.

From August 18th, initiatives were undertaken by Greek civil society organizations in order to gather money as well as primary necessities for the victims of the earthquake. Organizations, associations, municipalities, academics, and ordinary citizens were mobilized. On the 19th a group of Greek Red Cross doctors, professional and volunteer nurses, and members of the Samaritans left for Istanbul. Their mission was to distribute humanitarian aid to the victims of the earthquake and participate in the rescue operations.

The Municipality of Athens was among the first organizations to launch a campaign asking people to participate and offer what they could for the victims of the earthquake. Athenians replied positively and gathered money, food, clothes, and other basic necessities, which they brought to the centers that had been set up for that purpose.

On the 19th this mobilization reached the Turkish news media through Stelios Berberakis's articles to the Turkish newspaper *Sabah*. The title of his article was "Get Ready, Folks, We're Coming". There he referred to the humanitarian aid sent by the Greek government to Turkey and described the mobilization of the municipality of Athens and other civil society organizations for the gathering of aid. He also pointed out the fact that "Greek newspapers devote 10-12 pages every day to the tragedy, emphasizing the human obligation to the victims of the earthquake".⁷

On the 20th, medical and pharmaceutical supplies were sent to the area affected by the earthquake by the Greek branch of the international non-governmental organization "*Médecins sans Frontières*" (Doctors Without Borders). A team of this organization with its president, Odysseus Voudouris, went to Turkey in order to co-ordinate the distribution of the humanitarian aid that had been gathered.

By the 20th the mobilisation of Greek civil society had already received the name "Operation Solidarity" from the Greek news media. The newspaper *Ta Nea* itself started a campaign for Turkish homeless and orphaned children. It opened a bank account at the National Bank of Greece to gather money for these victims. The people working at the newspaper offered the amount of nine thousand dollars and the publisher of the newspaper, Hristos Lambrakis, offered another nine thousand dollars.

⁷ *Sabah*, 19.08.99.

Stelios Berberakis presented all these initiatives on August 20th in the newspaper *Sabah*, in a more detailed article. This article specifically referred to the various non-governmental organizations and the news media mobilization. It was on August 21st that the mobilization in Greece appeared on the front page of the Turkish newspaper *Sabah*. The title clearly expresses the surprise the Greek stance caused on the other side of the Aegean Sea: “Neighbour, We Could Not Have Known You Are Like That”. After this article, news from the area of the earthquake took the lead. On August 21st, at the time that a Greek rescue team had brought a young boy out from the rubble, the Islamist newspaper *Zaman* wrote “The image of the Greek who could not control himself and started crying when he saved the Turk will never be erased from our memory”.⁸

The news media started observing themselves and the change in their own attitudes and projected it as ‘news’. A spontaneous dialogue was initiated among the Greek and Turkish news media which also became ‘news’. The initiatives undertaken by the Greek newspaper *Ta Nea* were news for the Turkish *Hürriyet*. On the 22nd of August *Hürriyet* was writing about an “Earthquake in the Media...Aid Account from *Ta Nea*”.⁹ “Thank You Very Much, Neighbour” was the leading article of *Hürriyet* on the 23rd, and even more importantly, it was written in Greek.¹⁰ The Greek press expressed its surprise. Until those days, it was used to seeing only what were called “provocative articles” on the part of the Turkish media. The reply from the Greek media was in the same spirit. On the 23rd we read in *Hürriyet* “The Thanks of *Hürriyet* Touched our Neighbour”, referring to the positive reactions in Greek articles on the previous day. On the 25th of August the headlines of the newspaper *Ta Nea* became front-page news for the newspaper *Hürriyet*. Another title on the front page of *Hürriyet*, “Bravo, Neighbour”, referred to the proposal made by the Greek side of the Greek-Turkish Chamber of Commerce to its Turkish members.

On August 23rd, the Greek Ministry of Health and Welfare sent by plane 2,000 blankets, 100 tents designed for six people each, and large amounts of medical supplies. The President of the Greek Parliament contacted his Turkish counterpart to

⁸ *Zaman*, 21.08.99.

⁹ *Hürriyet*, 22.08.99.

¹⁰ *Hürriyet*, 23.08.99.

tell him that the Health Service of the Greek Parliament was also willing to contribute to helping the wounded people.¹¹

On August 24th the Mayor of Athens, Dimitris Avramopoulos, went to Istanbul himself, where he met with his counterpart, Ali Mufit Gurtuna. In their meeting, they discussed details of the dispatching of the humanitarian aid that had been gathered in Athens. The decision for support was also unanimous in the City Council of Thessaloniki, the second largest city of Greece. More than 20 tons of food, pharmaceutical supplies, tents, and clothes were gathered and sent to the area damaged by the earthquake on August 24th. In addition, a special phone service was installed in the Municipality of Thessaloniki to provide information about the campaign. The Greek Red Cross, in co-operation with the International Federation of the Red Cross and the Turkish Red Crescent, opened an account where people could offer money for the buying of tents, blankets, electric generators, and other necessities.

The blood donation centres in Greek public hospitals issued statements requesting blood that would be sent to Turkey, because the need for blood had increased after the disastrous earthquake. The Ministry of Health and Welfare also issued a request for the donation of blood.

On the 25th of August alone, seven articles in *Hürriyet* referred to this new situation. The topics were the humanitarian aid from the Municipality of Athens and the Municipality of Kavala, and financial aid from Simi - a small Greek island opposite the Turkish coast - an article written by the columnist Mihalis Mitsos in the newspaper *Ta Nea*, another article in the Greek newspaper *Rizospastis* and articles in *The Times* about this radical change of attitudes. Additionally, the same issue included extended reports on the visit of the Chief of the Greek Naval Forces, Vice-Admiral Georgios Ioannides, on the 24th in order to be present at the ceremony where his Turkish colleague Selim Dervisoglu was succeeded by another admiral, Ilhami Erdil. This became a big story in the newspapers, because it was “the first time that such a warm welcome was reserved for a Greek officer”.¹² Finally, to the above articles it should be added an article reporting on the letter of a retired employee of the Greek

¹¹ *Ta Nea*, 19.08.99.

telecommunications organization sent to the Turkish Ambassador in Athens offering fifty thousand drachmas from his monthly pension for the victims of the earthquake. That was reported in the Turkish *Hürriyet* on the 25th of August under the title: “Uncle Yiannis Gives a Lesson”.

The Labour Centre of Thessaloniki, in coordination with the other authorities of the city and in co-operation with the Turkish authorities, sent humanitarian aid to the people affected by the earthquake. Smaller municipalities like Peristeri and the Organization of Social Solidarity called on people to participate in this humanitarian aid campaign. The Municipalities of Agioi Anargyroi and Piraeus also sent humanitarian aid to Turkey on August 24th. The Municipality of Korydallos joined this campaign, informing its people about the kind of aid needed and coordinated volunteers. It also opened a bank account for the same purpose. The Municipality of Sapes in Rodopi Province organized a voluntary blood donation in order to send blood to the area of the earthquake, and especially to the Municipality of Ereğlisi, which was Sapes’ “sister city”.

The Greek Orthodox Church entered the campaign on August 24th. The Archbishop of Athens and All Greece, Hristodoulos, contacted the Ecumenical Patriarch and both agreed that humanitarian aid was to be gathered in Athens and distributed by the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Istanbul. Archbishop Hristodoulos sent a letter to all the dioceses for the gathering of humanitarian aid. The Bishop of the island of Rhodes, the head of the Prefecture, and other local authorities also started a campaign gathering humanitarian aid for the victims of the Earthquake. The Prefecture of Kefallinia and Ithaki (two Greek islands) opened bank accounts for the victims.

By a unanimous decision, the Rector and the academic community of the National Kapodistrian University of Athens decided to send medical and other aid to the victims of the earthquake. The Greek left-wing political party *Synaspismos* launched its own initiative in order to gather medicine and clothes at the offices of the party in Thessaloniki. The Association of Journalists of the Daily Press (ESIEA) sent a letter of sympathy to the associations of journalists of Ankara and Istanbul, expressing their sorrow for the tragedy that had befallen the Turkish people. The Athens Bar and the

¹² *Hürriyet*, 27.08.99, See also articles about the same issue in the Turkish newspapers *Milliyet* and *Sabah*, and the Greek newspapers *Ta Nea*, *Eleftherotypia*, and *Ethnos*.

Pharmacists' Association of Attica Province started buying medicines and other material on the 24th of August, in order to send them to the victims.

The same day, an article in *Sabah* had the title "Help the Turks". That was the central message that the Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs Papandreou had addressed to Greek citizens.¹³

Hundreds of Greeks visited the Turkish Embassy in order to express their sympathy and donate money for the Turkish victims of the earthquake. Others called the Embassy in order to learn how they could help or sent letters with cheques. The Turkish Embassy issued a statement expressing its gratitude for Greek support in light of the great disaster. The Turkish vice-consul in Thessaloniki, Aida Eroglu, warmly welcomed the mobilization of the people of Thessaloniki to help the Turks stricken by this natural disaster through a statement given to the Greek news media.

The attitudes of the Greek people triggered further reactions of ordinary people from Turkey and all over the world who started expressing their gratitude to Greeks in various ways. They sent e-mails and letters to the Greek news media and the correspondents of the Turkish news media in Athens, asserting their personal friendly feelings and the feelings of the Turkish people towards the Greeks. The Greek news media published dozens of electronic messages and letters of thanks that had been sent to them by Turks.¹⁴ Greeks who happened to be in Turkey those days experienced this sudden change of attitudes in their interactions with Turks. That, in turn, reached the Greek news media as 'news'. On the 23rd, the newspaper *Ta Nea* wrote about the way its crew in Turkey was being treated by Turks in the streets or in cafeterias and other public places. "The owner of the small shop outside Agia Sophia did not accept money and the owner of the café, whose grandfather was a Turk from Crete, burst into tears. The owner of a café in the centre of Istanbul, in Taxim, insisted on offering free beers to the Greek journalists. Yesterday was a day of celebration for the members of the Greek team. Wherever they went they were accepted with a warm welcome".¹⁵ Turkish citizens sent flowers to the Greek Consulate in Istanbul. "An historical day", *Hürriyet* wrote, referring to the fact that, in front of the door of the General Consulate of Greece in Istanbul "where we usually see a black wreath of

¹³ *Sabah*, 24.08.99.

¹⁴ The messages displayed here are chosen in random among many messages, which appeared in the Greek news media.

protest, now there are wreaths with thanks for the efforts by the Greek rescue team, which showed a great deal of self-sacrifice".¹⁶ On the 28th *Hürriyet* also published a story about a Turkish taxi driver who had not accepted money from a Greek diplomat.¹⁷

Foreign news media also observed these changes of attitudes between Greeks and Turks. This unusual process of communication and its effects, was news for them too and thus they started writing about it. *Corriere della Sera*, the *New York Times*, and the *Boston News* all published articles on this new situation, reproducing parts of articles from Greek and Turkish newspapers, and also publishing letters sent to them by their Greek and Turkish readers. This was fed back to the Greek and Turkish news media, which started reflecting on how foreign news media were examining this phenomenon in Greek-Turkish relations.

Official state authorities from other countries noticed and supported this change. The American Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and the German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder praised the Greek Prime Minister Costas Simitis and the Foreign Minister George Papandreou for the Greek help to Turkey.¹⁸ EU officials kept on encouraging Greece to help its neighbour.

The Prefecture of Xanthi and the Greek State Radio organized a concert with George Dalaras and Thanassis Gaifiliadis, two popular Greek singers, on August 30th, in the stadium of the city of Xanthi, for the victims of Izmit. The GSEE (General Confederation of Workers of Greece), in agreement with Turkish labour unions, organized two large concerts in Athens and Istanbul respectively, featuring the famous Greek composer Mikis Theodorakis, the Greek singer Maria Farantouri, and the Turkish artist Zulfu Livaneli.¹⁹ The funds raised by these concerts were offered to the victims of the earthquake.

¹⁵ *Ta Nea*, 27.08.99.

¹⁶ See also on the same issue a story on the way the Greek rescue team was treated in Istanbul. When it was recognised in the closed market in Istanbul people came out of their shops to applaud them, shake their hands, and thank them for their help. *Hürriyet*, 26.08.99.

¹⁷ *Hürriyet*, 28.08.99, p.4.

¹⁸ For the letter the USA Secretary of the State, Madeleine Albright, sent to the Greek Foreign Minister George Papandreou, see *Hürriyet* 29.08.09, and for the letter the German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder sent to the Greek Prime Minister Costas Simitis, see *Eleftherotypia* 28.08.99.

¹⁹ Mikis Theodorakis and Zulfu Livaneli have been in the forefront of efforts for co-operation before the earthquake and even in the most difficult times for Greek-Turkish relations.

Dimitris Kouselas, President of the Association of Bank Employees in Greece, visited Turkey with a committee on the 30th of August in order to offer hospitality to about 100 children of Turkish bank employees, all victims of the earthquake. These children could stay in summer camps near Athens. Furthermore, they offered financial support and the organization of a school in Athens for about 50 children as well as their teachers, for the whole school year.

The Onassis Foundation Board of Directors donated one hundred thousand dollars to the Turkish University of the Bosphorus. On the 31st, the Turkish newspapers reported on the offer made by the Greek football team Panathinaikos to hold a friendly match with the Turkish team Besiktas. All earnings would then go to the victims of the earthquake.

Apart from the above-described reactions the earthquake triggered in both countries some the following processes that contributed to the change of the attitudes each side held about the other. In Greece, suddenly the focus of the public debate became the issue of the financing of Turkey by the EU, and the stance of Greece in this matter. The earthquake of the 17th of August created a totally new situation as inter alia it paralysed the backbone of the Turkish economy. The EU immediately responded to Turkey's need for aid allocating funds out of the above institutional framework. Thus, in the new context, the Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs undertook an active role for Turkey's financial support by the EU on August 25th. This gesture was welcomed by Turkey and reinforced the climate of solidarity and co-operation. The Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ismail Cem, thanked the Greek Foreign Minister warmly for the Greek proposal to the EU requesting generous financial support for Turkey.²⁰ Then, the question centred on what the Greek stance at the Helsinki Summit in December 1999 would be, regarding Turkey becoming a candidate for full membership in the EU. Greece had agreed to the Customs Union between Turkey and the EU in 1995, under the condition that the process of accession of Cyprus to the EU would start at the same time. An implication of this agreement was that the EU would support Turkey's development through a financial protocol of 375 million euros. Nevertheless, after the Imia/Kardak crisis of 1996, Greece blocked the protocol as a

²⁰ In an interview he gave to the newspaper *Al Kabir*, on the 27th of August, he expressed his wish that "this process [the rapprochement between the two peoples] could be continued and that all the problems between Greece and Turkey should be examined and solved".

means of exerting pressure on Turkey. Moreover, Greece had set certain preconditions that had to be fulfilled before the Greek veto of the Turkish candidature for full membership could be lifted. These preconditions were the following: some progress in the negotiations on the Cyprus question and some improvement of the climate in the Aegean Sea. The Greek veto was an issue that kept Greek-Turkish relations in the limelight until December, when the Helsinki Summit was convened and Greece finally lifted its veto.

On the other hand, another debate had broken out in Turkey which although seemed to be irrelevant to Greek-Turkish relations it had an important bearing upon their development as it provided with points for further connections of the communication about co-operation. In the wake of the earthquake severe criticisms were expressed against the Turkish state both by Turkish people and by the Turkish media. The criticisms centred on the Turkish state's inability to deal with the disaster that had struck the country and it led to a reconsideration of the role of the state in Turkey over the years. This process contributed to the demystification of the role of the state and the breaking down of important aspects of the national myth including the stereotype of the Greek 'enemy'.

As it will be discussed in the section below, this was another contingency that had a reinforcing effect upon the emergence of the system of co-operation. For the Greek news media and the Greek people these openly expressed criticisms was something surprising. Used to talk about the censorship imposed on the Turkish media and the subjective way the latter treat the Greek media and society, now they were faced with a different reality. Thus, extensive reporting on these criticisms too kept communication between the two sides of the Aegean Sea going on.

2. The Blind Spots of Social Systems

In the previous sections I described the chain reactions that occurred simultaneously, in a multitude of social and psychic systems, in Greek and Turkish societies, after the earthquake. Nevertheless, this description cannot explain how these reactions came about, nor can it explain their effects.

This section demonstrates that the above described actions and events were simplifications of complex processes of meaning determination carried out within various social systems, such as the media, civil society organizations, and politics.

Furthermore, it is argued that every action, after its occurrence, becomes autonomous from the conditions that brought it about and acquires informational and connective value for other systems which will in turn select it that is interpret it for their own self-reproduction. This further means that the same element is used by more than one social system and it has different meaning -different selectivity and connectivity- for each of them.

It is demonstrated that the earthquake was not only a disaster which left thousands of people dead in the broader area of Izmit, but this event was also an element employed by various social and psychic systems for their further autopoiesis. It was "news" for the Greek and Turkish news media, the stimulus for expressing philanthropic sentiments which drove Greek civil society organizations to action, a profit opportunity for certain humanitarian aid organizations, a publicity opportunity for Greek politicians, an unexpected opening for a long-sought change of policy for a part of the Greek government etc.

Images of the damage the earthquake had caused, projected by the news media, provoked a spontaneous reaction on the part of all of these different organizations and individuals. However, each social and psychic system remained opaque and incalculable to the others. It could access complexity only selectively and only through reference to itself, that is through its pre-established schemes of interpretation. By acting, it introduced its distinctions back to the emerging order. Nevertheless, it could not observe this re-entry and its consequences. It could not see that it could not see what it could not see. Systems cannot problematize their own *blind spots*. In what follows, I will highlight this mode of operation of social systems and I will present examples of structural couplings that occurred after the earthquake among various social and psychic systems within the Greek and Turkish societies.

2.1. The System of News Media

The news media is an observing system, which makes distinctions according to the binary code news/not news. The selection of the issues, that is, the construction of news, after the earthquake in the Greek and Turkish news media, followed the rules and the rationale of news production. The aim of the Greek and Turkish news media was not the propagation of friendship and co-operation. They only implemented their normal functions guided by their previously institutionalized practices and patterns of

behaviour. These practices in some cases included also institutionalized themes of co-operation established from 1996 to 1999 among the Greek and Turkish media.

The earthquake in Turkey had all the characteristics of news for the Greek and Turkish news media: it was surprising and unusual and it referred to the life and death of thousands of people.²¹ In the course of the developments that followed the first days of the earthquake, new issues were assigned the identity of "news," such as the spontaneous reaction of Greek civil society organizations and the emergence of a media dialogue of friendship and co-operation. These too had the above characteristics of 'news'.

Greek and Turkish journalists and editors emphatically insist on the day-to-day development of the media agenda. There was no central planning about the way the earthquake or the other issues that emerged in the course of the first days after the earthquake should be presented. In what follows I will present examples of news construction, exploring the emergence of news items, as complex nexuses of meaning, structural couplings of various social and psychic systems. These examples are taken from the Turkish television channel *NTV*, the Turkish newspaper *Sabah*, the Greek newspapers *Eleftherotypia* and *Ta Nea* and the Greek state radio station.

The Turkish news channel *NTV* was one of the most important and reliable sources of information about the situation in the earthquake area in Turkey. It had organized its own crisis management group and had offered an important service, with accurate and constantly updated information about the situation in the area. Many news programmes had references to the Greek relief workers in the area of the earthquakes as well as the developments within Greece. According to the foreign news editor, Mustafa Asçioğlu, three main reasons explain why the Turkish news media made news out of the Greek aid story.

First the Greek aid was news because it was unusual and surprising. Second, we saw that CNN-Turk [the other important news channel in Turkey] had a story about a Greek rescue team, and so we asked our own reporter to work on a similar story... Third, it was a good opportunity, a way to make up for past mistakes. We had all understood the bad role the news media had played in the Imia/Kardak crisis and the mistakes we had made and there was an opportunity to make up for that as well.²²

²¹ For the characteristics of news see the basic handbook of mass communication theory, Denis McQuail, *Mass Communication Theory, an Introduction*, Sage, 1987, p.204.

²² Interview with Mustafa Asçioğlu, editor of foreign news at the News Channel *NTV*, Istanbul, 20.08.01.

Stelios Berberakis's articles from Athens for *Sabah* and his reports on the Turkish TV channel *ATV* provided the Turkish public with the first descriptions of the developments within Greece. It is from the newspaper *Sabah* that this news was passed on to other Turkish newspapers as well.²³ Berberakis described his own attitude as follows:

There were two important things for me at the time; one was the Greek television and the second an article in *Eleftherotypia* noticing a sudden radical change. After that I realized this is something different, this is important and I immediately took a camera, and went to the hospitals to take pictures of the people who were giving blood.²⁴

The article in *Eleftherotypia* that motivated Berberakis was written by Anna Stergiou. The title of this article was "Weapons Have Not Brought Happiness" and the author pointed out the sudden change of Greek attitudes. Stergiou at that time was not a columnist at the newspaper; she was a young reporter. Nevertheless, that day she felt like writing this article to which nobody paid attention when she turned it in.²⁵ In subsequent days, however, everybody started talking about it. It was reproduced by Berberakis in the Turkish newspaper *Sabah*, and by the American newspaper *The Boston News* too. Furthermore, messages kept on reaching the newspaper from different parts of the world continuing the dialogue that she had initiated without having any intention to do so, surprising the newspaper's director, Seraphim Fyntanidis, and herself as well. Some of these electronic messages were published in the newspaper.

Another incident which exemplifies the operation of communication through the structural couplings among different social and psychic systems is the following: one Greek rescue team left Athens on August 17th, and another followed some days later. The Turkish news media had dispatched many crews in different areas hit by the earthquake, who were providing live coverage, and were also recording the rescue activities taking place during the entire day. One of these crews caught the Greek team rescuing a little boy. That was shown on the TV screens the moment the same Greek team was travelling back to Istanbul by ferry. When the passengers saw the faces of the Greeks on the screen they recognised them immediately and offered them a place to sit. That was passed on to the Greek newspapers:

²³ See *ZAMAN*, 25.09.99.

²⁴ Interview with Stelios Berberakis, Athens, 11.03.01.

²⁵ Interview with Anna Stergiou, Athens, 07.03.02.

A group of tired men and women of slovenly appearance were sitting on the ferry's deck, a ferry that was going from Istanbul to Yalova, another area hit by the disastrous earthquake. The other passengers ignored the presence of the team and continued watching TV. Some moments later the faces of the members of the team came on the screen of the TV and then almost immediately tens of passengers embraced them; they shook their hands and offered them their places. The men and women were the members of the Greek Rescue Team, which succeeded in bringing little Güven, a 9-year-old Turkish boy, out of the ruins of a three-floor building.²⁶

The reporting of the Turkish news media on the rescue work was part of their everyday routine for the first two weeks after the earthquake. The image of the Greeks in the rescue operations provided an 'irritation' for the passengers on the ferry, who reacted to it. The Greek news media were interested in the way Greeks are treated in Turkey. The Turkish reaction of warmth and gratitude was news. Several similar processes of structural couplings occurred during these days.

Institutionalized processes of co-operation among journalists not only offered a scheme of interpretation for what was happening in the form of themes for journalists like Mustafa Asçioğlu, but they also provided the structures for further co-operation. The concert for the victims of the earthquake organized by the Greek State Radio Station in Xanthi was an initiative undertaken by the Director of the radio station, Ioannis Tzanetakos, and his close associates. The implementation of this project was supervised by Damon Damianos, the then Director of the local State Radio Station of Komotini. Tzanetakos and Damianos were both active members of the "Movement of Journalists for Peace in the Aegean and Thrace" at that time. After the former became General Director of the State Radio Station in 1998, and the latter Director of the local radio station in 1999, they undertook several initiatives to promote co-operation between Greece and Turkey "taking advantage of the inertia of the structures of state mechanisms", rather than by co-operating with the state authorities.²⁷ Similarly, the concert for the victims of the earthquake was an initiative independent of the Greek state authorities.²⁸

The journalists and columnists who first described the changes in Greek-Turkish relations that followed the earthquake in their writings had participated in the

²⁶ *Ta Nea*, 27.08.99.

²⁷ Tzanetakos said characteristically that if permission had been requested for the concert and the other similar initiatives that preceded it, "we would still be discussing whether we should do it or not, with all the concerned agencies and councils". Interviews with then General Director of the Hellenic State Radio Station, Ioannis Tzanetakos, Athens, 07.03.02 and the director of the Radio Station in Komotini, Damon Damianos, Komotini, 01.04.02.

workshops that took place from 1996 until the earthquake, and they employed the themes established there as schemes of interpretation. Stelios Berberakis, Sami Kohen, Mehmet Ali Birand, Damon Damianos, Ioannis Tzanetakos, Zeynep Göğüs and Alkis Kourkoulas were only some of them.

To sum up this section, the news media, by means of their normal functions, provided irritations and increased the communication possibilities that enabled unexpected structural couplings to occur in Greek and Turkish society. The transmission of information to an undetermined number of potential receivers who could continue communication created an open field of experimentation for Greek and Turkish society.

2.2. Civil Society

Greek non-governmental organizations specialized in humanitarian aid, ordinary people, intellectuals, authors, and journalists made a major contribution to the emergence of the system of co-operation. Each system however, operated by drawing on different distinctions and following different aims. Social institutions of co-operation that had emerged from 1996 to 1999, ideological motivations, and organizational practices guided these initiatives.

The Greek non-governmental organizations that specialized in humanitarian aid missions - like Kessa Dimitra and European Perspective - reacted not as Greek organizations but rather as humanitarian aid organizations. Their task was to offer help to the victims of the earthquake. For that reason they were also financed mainly by the European Union (European Community Humanitarian Office) and later partly also by the Greek government. Their first mission to Turkey after the earthquakes was completely independent of the Greek government.²⁹ Offering aid to the victims of the earthquake was their job and they had to accomplish it according to certain international standards. However, their Greek and not their European identity and source of funding was accentuated by the Turkish people they worked with, as well as by the Turkish news media. It was precisely this element that was selected and interpreted and served for further structural couplings that enabled the autopoiesis of Greek-Turkish co-operation.

²⁸ Interview with Ioannis Tzanetakos, Athens, 07.03.02.

²⁹ Interview with Pantelis Sklias, General Director of the Greek non-governmental organization European Perspective, Athens, 11.06.02.

Labour union leaders from various associations in Greece with a strong leftist ideological tone participated in the campaigns for the victims of the earthquake, in order to express their solidarity with their colleagues from Turkey with whom they had established some contact before the earthquake. There we find international solidarity to be consciously opposed to Greek and Turkish nationalisms.

Leftists used the rhetoric of international solidarity and peace among people when they wrote about the earthquake in Turkey and the stance of the Greek people. A characteristic example is the article that provoked the dialogue between one of the best selling Greek newspapers, *Ta Nea*, and the Turkish newspaper *Hürriyet*. That article was written by Mihalis Mitsos, with the title "We Are All Turks". When Mitsos wrote this article he "projected the idea of international solidarity rather than something else".³⁰ Nevertheless, this article was a major surprise for the Turkish side. The paradox here was that it was reproduced by the **right-wing** Turkish newspaper *Hürriyet*.³¹ *Hürriyet* was not concerned with the ideological message that the article conveyed. It selected this article for its striking title and also because it was written by a Greek journalist in one of the two best-selling Greek newspapers. When Mitsos wrote this article, did not think of its possible effects, nor had he been following the developments in Turkey after he wrote it, since he is not a specialist in Greek-Turkish relations. Three years later, he was surprised to hear that the Turkish newspaper *Hürriyet* had reproduced a part of his own article.³²

Another example comes from those people who had participated in one way or another in the rapprochement process initiated after the crisis of 1996. The earthquakes have been a stimulus to resume communication that had been interrupted after the crisis with the arrest of the Kurdish leader Abdullah Ocalan. The message of support by the Greek-Turkish Chamber of Commerce was a spontaneous reaction that had not been preceded by communication with the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs or any other official authority.³³

Similarly, the organization of the campaign for the gathering of humanitarian aid and the blood donation by the Municipality of Sappes was not preceded by any previous contact with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The mayor of the municipality of

³⁰ Interview with journalist Mihalis Mitsos, Athens, 05.03.02.

³¹ *Hürriyet*, 25.08.1999, "The Greek *Ta Nea*: "We Are All Turks", p.1.

³² Interview with Mihalis Mitsos, Athens, 05.03.02.

³³ Interview with Harry A. Caloudis, Managing Director and Official Spokesman of the Greek-Turkish Chamber of Commerce, Athens, 20.07.01.

Sappes, Dinos Haritopoulos, a proponent of Greek-Turkish co-operation, had already established contacts with the Turkish Municipality of Marmara Ereğlisi since 1996. After the earthquake he directly contacted the mayor of Marmara Ereğlisi and the two municipalities organized the dispatching of the aid.³⁴

Psychic systems played an important role in the emergence of this phenomenon. The hundreds of Greek citizens who rushed to offer money, blood or other necessities and express their sympathy and solidarity with the Turkish victims of the earthquake and the Turks who expressed their gratitude, explained their attitudes in their letters, electronic messages and face-to-face interactions that they had with citizens of the other side. Their own explanations reflect four main motivations. *First*, Greeks felt they share a common fate with Turks because of the vicinity of the two countries. *Second*, the vivid images of destruction and pain that the earthquake had caused projected through electronic media stimulated feelings of compassion for the families of the victims. *Third*, some Greeks and Turks employed a leftist ideology, which put the emphasis on solidarity among peoples and opposed Greek and Turkish nationalism in favour of internationalism. Finally, personal memories that Turks and Greeks had from the years they were living side by side in Istanbul, or even positive impressions from visiting the other's country emerged now to contradict the system of conflict and provide the background for their personal initiatives.

2.3. The System of Politics

The argument put forth here is that the systems of Greek and Turkish politics were hijacked by the developments that followed the earthquake. The Greek and the Turkish governments were not in a position to control, let alone to design these developments. Rather, the changes occurred in the wake of the earthquake transformed their environment and imposed co-operative attitudes on the systems of Greek and Turkish politics. These changes reinforced within both systems of politics structures favourable to co-operation and rapprochement and provided with points for their further development contributing to the overall dynamics of communication about co-operation.

³⁴ Interview with the Mayor of Sappes, Dinos Haritopoulos, Istanbul, 08.12.01.

The humanitarian aid gathered by Greek non-governmental organizations and the massive mobilization of Greek civil society brought about a new situation, which changed the environment of the system of Greek politics. The media noticed, recognized, and reinforced this change by making 'news' about it. Questions posed by journalists to politicians invited comments on people's reactions. The new emerging issues of communication provided a **field of experimentation** not only for the news media but for politicians too.

The first statements of sympathy that Greece sent to Turkey and the reply received were within the framework of the international official code of conduct. The same is true for the first aeroplanes sent to Turkey with humanitarian aid. Greece was not the only state that took immediate action to send help after the earthquake. The region of Marmara became the venue of an unprecedented example of international solidarity.

Nevertheless, the change in the official communication between the two governments was important. The provocative statements usually hurled every now and then towards the other side were now replaced by expressions of sympathy and words of friendship. These statements, however formal or however technical they might have been, were oriented towards the direction of co-operation and thus they were coupled with other communications from other social systems that had chosen the same direction.

The mobilization of the Greek authorities was spontaneous. Fotis Xydias, then Consul-General of the Greek Consulate in Istanbul, a junction point for the humanitarian help coming from Greece, argued that there was not a well-organized plan driving the action of the various governmental agencies. He said that

[T]he TV set played a major role.... The mobilization of the Greek authorities did not follow a specific programme. It was just for appearances' sake because the Greek TV channels were showing images from the earthquake for a long time... It was more the result of a kind of competition among the different agencies and organizations regarding who would appear more on the Greek TV...³⁵

The mobilization itself, however, created its own self-referential dynamics. It required continuous contacts on a daily basis among officials on both sides of the Aegean in order to cope with their tasks. The lack of understanding and the absence of common ground for co-operation that had been characteristics of the contact between the two

³⁵ Interview with the then Consul General of the Greek Consulate in Istanbul, Fotis Xydias, Istanbul, 22.04.01.

sides of the Aegean over the years was now replaced by this specific and practical task to be implemented.

The stance of the Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs, George Papandreou, was important for these developments. Papandreou encouraged the Greek initiatives within civil society and he was personally engaged in certain efforts in that direction. The statements he made and his personal initiative for generous funding of Turkey by the European Union was in accordance with his previous policy of rapprochement with Turkey. Furthermore, these statements served to continue communication in favour of co-operation, attracting the Turkish media's attention. Nevertheless, the Greek government was not in control of these developments for two reasons: first, the statements which encouraged people to make a contribution to the aid campaign were made on the 24th of August, which was 7 days after the earthquake. By that time, tons of humanitarian aid supplies had already been gathered. Secondly, these statements cannot be considered as active co-ordination or engineering of the mobilization. Rather, the co-operative perspective of the Greek Foreign Minister vis-à-vis Greek-Turkish relations was structurally, that is, a-causally coupled, synchronized, with the other spontaneous processes of communication emerging in various social and psychic systems in the Greek and Turkish societies.

The first weeks after the earthquake, the Greek government increased its humanitarian aid to Turkey. A Greek fact-finding mission visited Turkey in September to gather information about the needs of the victims of the earthquake and how the Greek state could provide help.³⁶ A neighbourhood of 150 prefabricated houses provided by Greece was established in one of the villages hit by the earthquake. Papandreou himself visited Turkey for the inauguration of the Greek neighbourhood. The talks for the agreements that had started after the proposal of the Turkish Foreign Minister and the reply of Papandreou before the earthquake continued and concluded with their signing.³⁷

To explain the Greek government's stance we have to take into consideration the change of the dynamics the earthquake set in motion within the European Union with regard to EU-Turkish relations. The pro-Turkish camp within the EU raised its voice

³⁶ See live Interview of the head of the Greek mission, Alex Rondos, on the evening news bulletin of the NTV news channel, 20.09.99.

urging solidarity with Ankara and asked the Union to reconsider Turkey's candidate status.³⁸ French President Jacques Chirac sent a letter to Finland, which held the EU presidency for that term and the European Commission, urging the Union to release financial aid to Turkey and to reconsider the status of Turkey vis-à-vis the EU. Gunther Verheugen, the European Commission's main official responsible for Turkey, told the European Parliament that "Turkey must be given a clear path to the European Union if Europe wants Turkey to be a democratic and Western-oriented country instead of an unstable one".³⁹

Facing these new pressures within the EU, the Greek government perceived the emergence of a stream of sympathy for the Turkish victims of the earthquake within Greece, as an opportune moment to change its policy with regard to the veto on the Turkish candidacy for membership in the EU. High-ranking officials in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs perceived that this shift of attitudes would decrease reactions against first the release of the funds by the EU towards Turkey with the Greek consent and then the potential lift of the Greek veto at the Helsinki Summit. Greece had been under continuous pressure, over the previous years, from the other members of the European Union to lift its veto both for financial aid to Turkey and for the candidature of Turkey for full membership. The Greek veto, however, had been considered by Greeks to be a stronghold in the undeclared Greek-Turkish diplomatic war within the various EU bodies and a lever of continuous pressure towards Turkey. Although certain voices had, already before the earthquake, started advocating the lifting of the veto, pointing to its detrimental implications with regard to Greek-EU relations and Greek-Turkish relations the resistance built around it within the Greek society made this issue seem like a minefield for any Greek government until the time of the earthquake. Ambassador Xydas's observation with regard to the impact of the earthquake on the perceptions of the Greek officials is illuminating: "[I]t was only afterwards [after the first weeks that followed the earthquake] that we saw its beneficial results".⁴⁰ Xydas's observation underlines the spontaneity of the changes occurred within the Greek society and challenges the assumption of engineering from above.

³⁷ As it was discussed in the Chapter IV the discussion on a number of issues of bilateral interest started after the Kosovo crisis and the exchange of letters of the two ministers of foreign affairs. See Chapter IV, p.118.

³⁸ *Turkish Daily News*, 12.09.99.

³⁹ *Turkish Daily News*, 12.09.99.

The official attitudes of the Turkish government, on the other hand, also intensified the processes of meaning constitution in the direction of co-operation. Neither these attitudes, however, were determined by a rationale of co-operation or peaceful resolution of the conflict. They were selections guided by previous determinations of meaning and the perception that the system of Turkish politics formed about its environment after the earthquake. The first Turkish official statements thanking Greece for its help were among hundred similar statements issued during those days by the Turkish authorities, addressed to all those countries which sent humanitarian aid to Turkey. However, the Greek news media, looking at them from the Greek perspective, made these statements 'news'.

The unexpected phenomenon that followed the first days of the earthquake, with the Greek aid flowing towards Turkey from different sources within Greece, was a major surprise for Turkish authorities. Again, the Greek Consul in Istanbul describes as following the situation: "At the beginning they [Turkish authorities] were completely dazed at what was happening. What does this attack [of friendship] mean now? What is its purpose? They thought that we [Greeks] were influencing public opinion... But the dynamic of the whole situation made them more flexible".⁴¹

As will be extensively discussed in the next section, in the aftermath of the earthquake, the Turkish authorities had to deal with a crisis of confidence that broke when the Turkish people and the media questioned their competence in dealing with the earthquake. Their inability to meet the requirements of organization and efficient management of the crisis resulted in increased criticism directed towards the two most powerful institutions in Turkey, the government and the army. The frustration and anger of the victims in the earthquake area, who demanded immediate help, framed the Turkish reactions towards the European Union and towards Greece too. The European funds - and the Greek stance vis-à-vis that issue would matter - were more necessary than ever in order to heal the wounds of the earthquake. Nevertheless, while official answers and statements were in the direction of co-operation, efforts to reverse these dynamics were made behind the scenes, by groups in the government and army, as well as columnists in various newspapers. These efforts did not succeed in their target; instead, they increased the complexity and added to the dynamic of the emerging order of co-operation.

⁴⁰ Interview with Ambassador Fotis Xydias, Istanbul, 22.04.01.

3. From Bifurcation to Attractor

The previous section described the emergence of the unexpected dynamics of co-operation as uncoordinated selectivity, oriented to the same direction, namely the direction of co-operation and solidarity. Social systems and psychic systems, each "acting" under its own rationale, increased the complexity of the situation and contributed to the emergence of a stage of bifurcation, a stage of undecidability where alternative to the well-established explanations about the Greek-Turkish conflict emerged and eventually prevailed. In this section we will explore the process of transition from the stage of bifurcation created by the dispersion of communication about the earthquake to the emergence of a new attractor, a new order of co-operation. By attractor here we mean a self-description that has prevailed in society and has become stable condition through networks of recursive observations of observations. An attractor after its emergence is employed by social systems as a guide for their selections in the process of their autopoiesis. The history of the Greek-Turkish relations demonstrates that the Greek-Turkish conflict itself is another attractor, which, at critical moments, has guided the operations of social and psychic systems within the Greek and Turkish societies leading to the emergence of acute crises.

Two are the foci of this section: First, the process of the emergence of a new attractor through recursive observations of observations. Second, it is demonstrated that observing systems make their selections based on existing differences or as it happened here by establishing new differences.

Social and psychic systems are based on differences, which are incorporated in structures and guide their operations of self and other observation. The old well-established differences supportive of the Greek-Turkish conflict that were taken for granted before the earthquake were Greek v Turkish interests, Greek state v Turkish state. These were broken down and replaced by the differences of civil society v state, Greeks/Turks v politicians, co-operation v conflict, enmity v friendship. These new differences found connections in existing referential substrata of both societies.

It is argued that co-operation emerged as a new identity to order the new differences, interpret the new phenomenon and attribute meaning to aspects of Greek-Turkish relations from the past. It was introduced to rationalize the new situation and help

⁴¹ *ibid.*

social and psychic systems handle infinite complexity. The linking device for the structural couplings, which led to the emergence of the new order was the language already formed through similar processes of morphogenetic evolution from 1996 to 1999 or before that period of time.

3.1. The Emergence of New Differences

The mobilization of the Greek civil society in order to gather humanitarian aid, offer money, and express sympathy for and solidarity with the victims of the earthquake broke down the long-held image of Greeks as enemies who seek to inflict harm upon Turks. On the other hand, in Greece, the image of Turks as the worst and most dangerous enemy of Greeks collapsed in front of the image of Turkish people mourning myriad victims of the earthquake. Turks appeared as human beings suffering, in agony for their families who were still under the ruins. Furthermore, the Turkish reactions that followed the dispatch of material aid and relief workers were a surprise, which further broke down the expectation of the enemy according to the image built up over the years. It is important to bear in mind that social and psychic systems did not operate the way they did seeking to break down these differences. That was the unintentional result of the dynamics of communication, which is based on constant movement that is on a constant process of selection and connection.

In this section I present the observations of social systems that is what they selected to observe and the semantics recalled to support their selections. Furthermore, I highlight the emerging differences and their central role as a guide of explanation.

Mihalis Mitsos wrote on the 20th of August in his article "We are all Turks!" that, "if pain and joy really bring peoples together, then Greeks and Turks should be brothers.... we might believe in a different God, we might not believe in a God at all, but we pray for you, because whatever our governments say, whatever propaganda our channels transmit, we love you, we stand by you, we are close to you".⁴²

Panayiotis Ioakeimidis, an academic and a high-ranking official in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, wrote in the same newspaper on the same day about the common elements that the two people share and pointed to the vanity of the conflict: "Looking at those maps and reading about the disaster of biblical proportions, a disaster that the experts say can strike our country at any time, one can reflect on really how pointless

⁴² *Ta Nea*, 20.08.99.

it is for the two countries to come to the brink of war for some arid rocks, for some arid islets, whether they are called Imia or Kardak. The fate of the two peoples is indeed somehow common in many important things".⁴³

"From now on, nobody will be able to follow the 'politics of tension' just because the 'public wants it this way'. Nobody will be able to write provocative words by taking refuge in the same superficial argument. The public's wish was determined by this disaster", Sami Kohen stated categorically.⁴⁴

As noted above the motive for Stelios Berberakis to write his report in the Turkish newspaper *Sabah* where he described Greek reactions was an article written by Anna Stergiou. He quoted a part of this article in his own report: "family, school, armywith all these institutions and a series of historical and political examples we, the Greeks, fed feelings of hatred and antagonism and we believed that the Turks are our enemies. But how did it happen that these feelings, full of hatred and antagonism, that have lasted for years, are deleted and gone within a day? **The enemy is becoming a friend overnight.**"⁴⁵

On the 22nd, the columnist Zeynep Göğüs wrote in *Sabah* about the collapse of Greek stereotypes. On the 23rd, *Star* emphasized the fact that those who were considered to be Turkey's enemies, such as the Greeks, Russians and Israelis, had been the first ones who had arrived quickly to help the Turks. "I Want This Flower" was the title of the article that Bekir Coskun wrote in *Hürriyet* on the 28th of August. That was "the flower of **friendship** of the two peoples that grew in the ruins of the earthquake".⁴⁶ He added that he "will never again believe those **politicians** who instigate crises between the two states".

A group of 21 nuclear physicists of Turkey sent their best wishes to Greece "which proved that humanism is more powerful than everything else". Another "**friend from Turkey**" thanked the newspaper *Ta Nea* for publishing his electronic mail message to the Greek people.

"**Our Brothers the Greeks,**" wrote the columnist of *Cumhuriyet* Ahmet Kislali, who used to employ a strong language in his criticism of the Greek policy vis-à-vis Turkey.⁴⁷

⁴³ *Ta Nea* 20.08.99.

⁴⁴ Sami Kohen, "The Public's Wish", *Milliyet*, 25.08.99.

⁴⁵ *Sabah*, 21.08.99.

⁴⁶ Bekir Coskun, *Hürriyet*, 28.08.99.

⁴⁷ *Cumhuriyet*, 24.08.99.

On the 27th of August, the newspaper *Ta Nea* published a number of electronic messages sent to it from Turkey. A characteristic example is the following, written by Cengiz Sarri: "We have always loved you in spite of **politics**. You know it and we know it. ...I am sending you my best wishes and I hope for your **friendship**. I am sending you the best wishes of the Turkish **people** too!"⁴⁸

Adnan Caglayan, correspondent of the Anatolian News Agency, and Stelios Berberakis correspondent of *Sabah*, when asked by *Eleftherotypia* about the possibility of a non-aggression agreement between the two countries and cuts to both countries' military budgets, answered positively, arguing that "**peoples' and journalists' initiatives can be more effective than those of politicians and governments**".⁴⁹

During the days after the earthquake ordinary Greek and Turkish citizens became the focus of the observation of various social systems whereas before the focus was mainly politicians. Now this primacy of the political system was bypassed by civil society. Greek rescue teams and humanitarian non-governmental organizations at the location of the natural disaster working together with Turks side by side in the rescue operations and other activities broke down the difference between Greeks and Turks. Initiatives undertaken by ordinary people landed on the front pages of the newspapers. Turks and Greeks, became symbols of the friendship of the two peoples. Little Güven, the boy that the Greek rescue team found in the ruins of his house, became the main story on the TV channels and in the newspapers in both Greece and Turkey.

Hundreds of people burst into spontaneous applause. The father, the relatives, and the neighbours tearfully embraced the *Yunan* [«Greek» in Turkish]. In their eyes, sorrow, desperation and happiness too, tried to find expression. They speak in their language but communication does not concern 'languages'.⁵⁰

Güven, months after the earthquake, came to Greece and TV programmes were made featuring him, his mother, and the members of the Greek rescue team. A Greek woman firefighter who went to Turkey as the head of the mission that would help in putting out a big fire that had broken out in the refineries near the area of the

⁴⁸ *Ta Nea*, 27.08.99.

⁴⁹ On the 15th and 17th of September *Eleftherotypia* made a proposal, asking 26 Greek and Turkish politicians and correspondents of Turkish media in Athens and other personalities to answer this question: "After the two societies' rapprochement due to the earthquakes' what would their opinion be, regarding the signing of an agreement of nonaggression and mutual reduction of military expenses in the budget, so that the money that would be saved could be invested in the regions hit by the earthquake and in various projects for development. Hristina Corae, *Eleftherotypia*, 17.09.99.

earthquake became a legend in the region thanks to the Turkish newspaper *Milliyet*.⁵¹ The pilot of a military aeroplane, who now flew a cargo plane with humanitarian aid for Turkey, was another story to which Greek news media paid much attention. The same pilot had never gone to Turkey before, but he had participated many times in the past in dogfights with Turkish aircraft in the Aegean Sea.

Another focus of observation became the way the Turkish state dealt with the crisis the earthquake created. The earthquake revealed the deficiencies of the state apparatus in terms of organization. The Turkish government found itself subject to insistent criticism about delays and its inability to deal with the problems that the earthquake left behind. The majority of the Turkish news media were full of critical articles against the state services and their management of the crisis as well. The expectation that the Turkish state would be strong and could protect its people against external enemies and any disaster was shattered.

Those observations were coupled with another observation namely that the international community rallied to help the victims of the earthquake. Trained rescue teams from all over the world with the necessary equipment, humanitarian aid for the victims, and funds for the rebuilding of the destroyed part of Turkey flowed to Turkey. The new situation challenged and eventually broke down the well-established theory in Turkey "of Turkey being isolated and surrounded by enemies". This theory was built upon the differences Turkey v world and Turkey v Greece. Now the enemies, including Greece, were running to help.

The extracts from the Turkish press below reveal that these observations gave rise to the emergence of new differences such as the Turkish people v the Turkish state, people/civil society/world society v state, co-operation v conflict.

Articles in *Milliyet* on the 19th of August pointed to the deficiencies of the state apparatus and the fact that the rescue teams had been waiting in the airport for hours without translators or any other guidance when time was extremely critical for the victims of the earthquake. In *Milliyet* on the 20th of August we see the title "Candles and Pencils: This Is the Crisis Table".

On the same day another article with the title "**Political Ruins**" was reporting on "the fourth day of the earthquake and the rescue operations of the state!"

⁵⁰ Zaman,

On the 20th of August Bekir Coskun wrote an article in *Hürriyet* with the title "Where Are You?" to state that "The most frequently asked question is 'Where are you?' This word of the question 'where?'..... Where is the aid?..... Where are the rescue teams?..Where is the state?..' There is no answer to those questions....."

On the 21st of August Cüneyt Ülsever wrote in *Hürriyet*: "The bureaucracy with the army in this state since a long time ago, justify those who say that '**this state structure is useless.**'"

In *Milliyet* on the 21st Duygu Asena wrote an article with the title "Yes, they came into terms with that! But **the state isn't there**....They work voluntarily with their hearts and minds. They work simply to succeed at what the **state** has not done. We were in Yalova and Cinarcik. We did not see either intensive work or anyone in charge from the **state**...Indeed, there was complete harmonic co-operation...that was among the **citizens**...."

On the 24th of August *Milliyet* wrote "The **People** are Unprotected", criticising the authorities for the serious delays to rescue operation. The Islamic *Zaman* reported on the same deficiencies; its main headline was "Disaster at Night, Scandal in the Day".

Ilnur Cevik wrote on the 29th of August in *The Turkish Daily News*,

The **state** has been traditionally regarded by **Turks** as 'the father' who provides. So while in Western societies the state is seen as the 'servant' that is charged with serving the **people**, in Turkey the people have turned into subjects and the state the master. Many Turks have never even dreamed of challenging this notion and thus have been rather fatalistic.... People felt deep confidence in some state institutions, such as the **army**, and kept out of any debate. Those who even tried to debate the role and functions of state institutions in our own semi-democratic system were promptly dissuaded from doing so. But the deep confidence in the state as the provider seemed to be shattered after the quake, when the state was too slow to reach the devastated areas.⁵²

The revelation of the inability of the state to meet the needs of the people operated as a reinforcing factor for the emerging system of Greek-Turkish co-operation for two reasons. First, it contributed to the breaking down of the difference our nation/your nation. It was not the Turkish state, but the world that came to help the thousands of

⁵¹ That was the answer I received, when I asked people from this area 2 years after the earthquake "Who put out the fire in the refineries?"

⁵² See caustic articles against the state and the army in *the Turkish Daily News* the days that followed the earthquake. See for example the issues of the newspaper on the 22nd, 23rd, 24th and 25th of August.

victims of the earthquake. Now, worldwide civil society emerged in contrast to the political system. In addition, although those that had officially sent help were governments, Turkish correspondents could see and thus project the image of individuals in the field. Secondly, this contingency enabled further structural couplings within Greece. This critical reporting vis-à-vis the Turkish authorities was important news for the Greek news media. It particularly found good ground among leftists who still held vivid memories of the years of the Greek junta and perceived the criticisms against the Turkish state as a reaction of the Turkish people against an autocratic regime.

3.2. Old Differences v New Differences

Many attempts were made in order to control the unexpected and surprising developments in Greek-Turkish relations aiming to redress the old differences by selecting to focus on past events. This phenomenon, the Greek help and the Turkish reply, was attributed to simple solidarity and sympathy among people without further political meaning.

The main argument that appeared, regardless of whether a Greek or a Turk was writing, was that the expression of sympathy and solidarity was one thing and opposed national interests another. The hard-liner Mümtaz Soysal, former Foreign Minister of Turkey and advisor to Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash, tried to convince the public that “[T]he feelings of the people and the interests of the nation” were two different things.⁵³ In an article he wrote in *Hürriyet*, he attempted to clarify this distinction: “..there is a fundamental mistake in this approach [of Greek-Turkish co-operation]: **it is wrong to confuse the concepts of 'people' and 'nation'**...The feelings of the one side and the interests of the other should not be neglected....”⁵⁴

On the other hand, a former Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece, Yiannis Kapsis, emphasised on the Greek radio station *Flash* that “the financial protocol is a different matter from solidarity between the people”.⁵⁵ “Earthquakes and National Strategy” was the article that a professor of International Relations, Panayiotis Ifestos, wrote as an answer to an article written by Ioakeimidis. Ioakeimidis claimed that it was vain to fight for arid rocks, whether they are called Imia or Kardak, and “co-

⁵³ Mümtaz Soysal, “The Feelings of the People and the Interests of the Nation”, *Hürriyet*, 29.08.99.

⁵⁴ Interview with Mümtaz Soysal, Ankara, 07.06.01.

⁵⁵ Greek Radio Station *Flash* 9.61, 27.08.99.

operation is the only choice, the only road for the two people, the two countries to pursue".⁵⁶ The answer to that was that

..it [this view] is wrong for one more reason: it neglects or bypasses the causes of interstate conflicts and states that international disputes are misunderstandings and misconceptions among **individuals**...the deeper causes of the conflict between the two **states** are different interests...in cases of interstate disputes, military preparation, at least for the state which is on the defensive, is subordinated to the logic of military needs, and its aim is to make the adversary to comply with our political will, which in Greece's case is self-evidently defensive...⁵⁷

The President of the political party *DIKKI*, Dimitris Tsovolas, in a statement he made, emphasized that "**humanitarianism** should not be identified or confused with **foreign policy**...and especially with our policy in Greek-Turkish relations".⁵⁸

The restoration of the old differences was the aim of indirect efforts of certain columnists in the Turkish media too. Discussing how Turkey coped with the disaster, some Turkish journalists omitted the element of foreign aid and they sought to reinforce the national pride of the Turkish people. Sometimes recourse to the rhetoric emanating from the well-known theme of the Greek-Turkish conflict was selected. Oktay Eksi wrote on the 25th in *Hürriyet*: "It emerged again, this magic feeling of solidarity that took us out of the ruins of the [Ottoman] Empire and made us win the War of Salvation". This reference has connotations to the themes of the Greek-Turkish conflict as well as to the theme of the Turkish state's independence from the West.

Mumtaz Soysal's article on the 18th of August implicitly attacks the West and Greece too making a hint about where this aid can lead to:

The powerful states which believe that they can cope in these difficult situations better than we do, have always believed that the Turks do not deserve a country like this because they are not serious enough. At the background of their attacks, of their plans of dissolution, of the Treaty of Sèvres which we have lived through over the last two centuries, there is always the conviction that 'if we were [here in Turkey] we would have developed this land better, we would have lived better in it. If we do not show the necessary seriousness, Turkey will go out from under our feet.

Ertuğrul Özkök, the Director of *Hürriyet*, wrote an article on the 28th of August with the headline "I Rely on Ecevit". And on the 29th : "The code name of this project is

⁵⁶ *Ta Nea*, 20.08.99.

⁵⁷ *Ta Nea*, 25.08.99.

⁵⁸ *Greek Radio Flash 9.61*, 27.08.99.

‘Turkey, one fist’. The slogan for everyone is obvious. Turkey is capable. Turkey can build again what has been demolished. Turkey can heal its wounds”.

The case of the Turkish newspaper *Hürriyet* provides an apt illustration of the bifurcation stage that emerged after the earthquake. On one side, Mumtaz Soysal, Oktay Eksi, Ertuğrul Özkök made attempts to resurrect and reinforce the old differences. At the same time, as was demonstrated above, reporting from the field of the earthquake had extensive descriptions of the foreign aid and in particular the Greek aid and the changes in Greek-Turkish attitudes. Furthermore, other columnists, like Bekir Coskun, Cuneyt Ulsever and Hadi Uluengin provided a different interpretation of the phenomenon. On the 24th of August, Hadi Uluengin wrote:

The people of our country are not stupid, and they saw in practice who it was who ran first to help when the black day came and who it will be. The victim of the earthquake who was kissing the relief worker from the French citizen protection agency because he took his relative out from the ruins, or the mother who expressed her gratitude to the Italian doctor because he examined her baby urgently, will not be deceived easily anymore with enmity against the West. As for the paranoia of external enemies, with which the ‘establishment’ [Derin Devlet] has threatened us, which suddenly disappeared the moment we needed it most, will not cause as much fear among our people, who saw help and affection from those possible external enemies, as it caused in the past.⁵⁹

On the 28th again Hadi Uluengin wrote an article largely devoted to the Greek aid efforts. He reproduced the view of *Sabah's* columnist Raouf Tamer, whom he joined in his request to the Turkish government for a proposal of a movement of good-will towards Greece. Uluengin wrote, “we are in debt to the Greek nation, to the government and the state”.

On the 22nd of August *Hürriyet* appeared with the headline “The Minister does not Accept Aid Because it is Greek” and the sub-title “Ugly Politics”. The article cited the criticism of a high-ranking official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs against this attitude of the Minister of Health, concluding, “...what a pity that in a situation of disaster some circles make politics. There should not be politics in natural disasters.”⁶⁰

⁵⁹ *Hürriyet*, 24.08.99.

⁶⁰ In the same newspaper on the 23rd of August another article appeared about the same issue. The headline was “What Is This Man Saying?” stressing that the statements of the Ministry of Health had made people furious. *Milliyet's* headline was even more caustic: “A Mentality That Stops the Mind”. The article stressed the strong reactions of public opinion against the Minister of Health, Osman Durmus. The next day the same issue made front page headlines: “Stop It”.

Indirect efforts to oppose these new systemic formations targeted the new emerging order. The first week after the earthquake, high-ranking military officers called journalists asking them to stop the transmission of positive, friendly images regarding foreigners and Greeks and to focus on the role of the army.⁶¹ The army intervened through the Radio Television Council and issued the decision to close down television Channel 6. That was considered to be a warning towards the other media for their critical stance towards the state and the sacred institution of the army, which is supposed to be the guardian of Turkey's most important values.⁶² That action aimed to reverse the momentum against the army and the established system of power within Turkey by controlling news media reporting on foreign aid and on Greece. Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit himself frequently attacked "demoralizing" media coverage critical of his government's response to the disaster.

The next days, cameras focused in particular on the image of Turkish soldiers working in the ruins in the earthquake area. Nevertheless, these attempts were noted by journalists who understood all this as an attack against their freedom of expression and they projected that back to the media. Furthermore, news about Greece was kept on the Turkish media agenda too, due to the already established functional systems, which were creating their own news. The visits of official representatives, the large joint Greek-Turkish concerts in both countries, the football games, all these were news that continued to be covered by the Turkish press and electronic media.

Another example of direct opposition to the emerging order of co-operation was the reaction of the Turkish Minister of Health, Osman Durmus. Durmus tried to prevent Greek aid from going to Turkey. He appeared to reject the blood and other aid donated by Greeks because "there was no need" and "there was no place to keep it". Durmus was a member of an extreme right-wing party, the National Action/Movement Party (MHP), one of the three partners in the coalition government in power at that time. Nevertheless, his attitude reported by the Turkish news media triggered simultaneous reactions coming from columnists in the Turkish news media,

⁶¹ Information gathered through interviews conducted by the international non-governmental organization "Search for Common Ground", in the framework of a research project regarding the freedom of the Turkish media. Discussions with Giorgos Terzis who worked for that project, Komotini, 02.04.02.

⁶² These are comments made by Haluk Sahin, Professor of Mass Communication at the University of Bilgi, and columnist in the newspaper *Radikal*.

ordinary people in the area hit by the earthquake, and other members of the Turkish government. They demanded the immediate dismissal of the Minister.

The above-examples demonstrate that efforts to directly oppose co-operation among Greeks and Turks reinforced the dynamics of the new emerging order. By opposing the new differences, they reproduced them and invited similar connections, crystallizing meanings and transforming them into structural gains, new expectations. Contingent developments like a second earthquake, this time in Athens, kept communication about co-operation going, reinforcing and reproducing the autocatalytic recursive processes of communication about co-operation. The second earthquake, which was less destructive, occurred in Athens on September 8th.⁶³ This earthquake offered an opportunity for all the expectations that had been created after the first earthquake in Turkey to be reaffirmed. The Turkish rescue teams rushed to Greece immediately in order to help the Greek rescue teams, whom they already knew from the rescue operations in Turkey. Officials and ordinary Turks expressed their sympathy for the Greeks.⁶⁴ The news media on both sides of the Aegean focused again on the co-operation among Greeks and Turks and thus they kept going the flow of communication about co-operation.

4. Morphogenesis v Conflict Resolution

The new system of Greek-Turkish co-operation emerged as an autopoietic system in the process of society's morphogenetic evolution. As happened with the peace processes examined in the previous chapter, the new order was not the result of pressure nor was it a necessary development. Most importantly, it did not come *after the resolution* of the Greek-Turkish conflict, as conventional theory would expect. The disputes over the Aegean Sea, namely the demarcation of the continental shelf, territorial waters, airspace, demilitarization of Greek islands, flight information region and the Cyprus question, all of which have tormented the relations of the two countries over the years, have remained unresolved. The paradoxical nature of this

⁶³ On September 7th, the city of Athens was rocked by an earthquake with local magnitude of 5.4. The earthquake caused the collapse of two factories and the death of 139 people.

⁶⁴ The Ambassador to Ankara, Danai Koumanakou said regarding this, "[W]hen a Turkish colleague called me from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to tell me that they want to send help for the earthquakes in Athens I felt that the circle was closing. That was the happiest moment in my career here". Interview with Ambassador Danai Koumanakou, Ankara 07.06.01

positive development cannot be explained through traditional tools of analysis, which involve the search for linear cause-effect relationships.

These developments were not the result of some rational processing of information. Even more importantly, the theory of morphogenesis argues that this is not possible anyway, as no system can decompose all the others analytically to arrive at final elements in which knowledge could find an ultimate foothold. That has important implications for our definition of the process that we examine here. Traditional analysis discusses processes of conflict resolution drawing from the rational theory. The above-analysis however, demonstrated that any change that might have occurred in Greek-Turkish relations involved the whole of the society and it was due to the transformational dynamics of communication.

This part of our study further explores the process of the transformation of the Greek-Turkish conflict. It examines in particular the amplification and consolidation of the differences that emerged after the earthquake, in concrete systemic formations, which correspond to new self-descriptions of social systems. It is argued that processes of meaning determination triggered by the earthquake transformed existing systemic formations within Greek and Turkish societies. They gave a new impetus to initiatives undertaken after the 1996 crisis, intensifying processes of reflexive communication that had started at that time. Furthermore, it is demonstrated that every change is self-change.

4.1. The Institutionalization of the Process of Co-operation

The new system can be identified through the institutions, programmes, and roles that have been established in various fields. From early September, expectations for co-operation began to assume an institutionalized form in a number of fields, creating the conditions and setting the goals for further promotion of co-operation. The structures of co-operation established in politics, business, arts, and the media consolidated a broader change of attitudes at the grassroots level, which can be described as a new system of co-operation.

Co-operation on the governmental level was consolidated with the signature of nine agreements on economic, environment, tourism, security, and other issues.⁶⁵ The discussions about these agreements started after the Kosovo crisis in April 1999. The Turkish Ambassador in Athens, Ali Tuygan uses a metaphor to describe the impact of the earthquake upon this process saying, “the earthquake helped to place in an avenue what had begun in a narrow road”.⁶⁶

Greece and Turkey co-authored a resolution to the UN, creating a unit for emergency situations. Furthermore, Greek seismological institutes established closer co-operation with their Turkish colleagues on issues of scientific interest. The universities of Athens and Istanbul signed an agreement, which established the creation of new Departments of Turkish and Greek Studies, in both universities. Furthermore, many projects have been implemented in the last three years that is from 1999 to 2002, among the schools and faculties of various universities of the two countries.

The large municipalities of Istanbul and Athens have established a permanent channel of communication and co-operation, which has enabled close contact and the development of projects in the framework of EU-funded programmes. The European Union's funds have encouraged co-operation among municipalities, allocating a considerable amount of money for the promotion of the institution of sister cities, as well as for developmental programmes.⁶⁷ The expectation of profit has also become the motive for the initiation and continuation of these joint activities.

The Municipality of Sapes initiated and completed the creation of a network of municipalities, which includes municipalities in Western Thrace in Greece and municipalities in Eastern Thrace in Turkey. As the Mayor of Sapes, Dinos Haritopoulos, emphasised, it was only after the earthquake that the mayors of the other cities took the courage to visit Turkey and start some sort of co-operation, overcoming the impediment of the previous prejudices that they or their constituents held.⁶⁸ The municipality of Kavala also established an office in Istanbul with the task of providing information for tourists and those interested in trade with this part of

⁶⁵ Interview with Ambassador Ali Tuygan, Athens, 18.07.01

⁶⁶ *ibid.*

⁶⁷ Some of them are the MERP, MEDA, and INTERREG programmes. For further information see www.europa.int.

⁶⁸ The mayor of Sappes has made many efforts to reinforce Greek-Turkish co-operation since he was elected in 1995. Sappes is a town close to the Greek-Turkish border and its population includes a

Greece. Thessaloniki, the second largest Greek city, has also developed close bonds with the municipality of Istanbul.

Several Greek banks have expressed their interest in investing in Turkey and have opened offices, which actively search for local partners in Turkey. Various associations, artists, and organizations have found a way to develop co-operation in their neighbouring country. Films of Greek-Turkish production have been produced in the latest years and have been very successful.⁶⁹ Several exhibitions of different kinds of art have been organised in both countries.

Furthermore, the number of Greeks who have visited Turkey and the number of Turks who have visited Greece since the earthquakes has increased impressively.⁷⁰

Nikitas Lionarakis, chairman of the Greek Foreign Ministry's liaison committee for non-governmental organizations, and Ali Tuygan, the Turkish Ambassador in Athens, both admit that today it is impossible for the official authorities of both countries to catch up with the majority of these initiatives. After the two earthquakes, these initiatives have multiplied on a scale that cannot be followed, as most of them do not involve the Greek or Turkish state in any way.⁷¹

These processes of co-operative interactions culminated in the lifting of the Greek veto at the Helsinki Summit of the leaders of the 15 members of the EU, in December 1999.

4.2. The Emergence of New Self-descriptions

This section seeks to demonstrate that the structural changes that emerged after the earthquake were self-changes. More precisely, it comes to define them as changes of social systems' self-descriptions. The main operations of social and psychic systems,

minority of Muslims of Turkish origin. Interview with the Mayor of Sappes, Dinos Haritopoulos, Istanbul, 08.12.01.

⁶⁹ See the cinema movie "*Buyuk Baba Kucuk Ask*" as well as the Turkish TV series programme "*Yilan Hikayesi*" which made known to the Turkish public Katerina Moutsatsou, a young Greek actress. Interview with Katerina Mutsatsou, Istanbul, 20.12.01. Many established Greek artists have expanded their careers in Turkey. The actress Karyofilia Karabeti, who played a part in a film of Greek-Turkish production, and the Greek singer Angela Dimitriou, whose songs have been at the top spots of the hit parade of songs played by Turkish radio and TV stations, are only two characteristic examples.

⁷⁰ Interview with Socrates Tragotsis, Consulate General in Istanbul, 10.03.00.

⁷¹ Interviews with Nikitas Lionarakis, President of Foreign Ministry's Liaison Committee for NGOs, Athens, 07.08.01 and Ambassador Ali Tuygan, Athens, 18.07.01 "The Turkish Embassy can follow 60-70% of these initiatives of co-operation that are going on between Greece and Turkey. And I don't mean that we are involved, but they become known to us. A movie festival is taking place somewhere

which are observing systems, are the operations of self and other-observation and self-description. In the previous section, I explored how social systems observed their environment and themselves within it, in other words with what semantics made their selections of observations. This section tracks the way these observations affected the self-descriptions of social systems. This analysis emphasises again that a social system is constituted as the unity of the system/environment difference.

Initiatives that had been suspended after the Ocalan crisis that took place in February 1999, were activated after the earthquake. The businessmen's and women's initiatives for peace got back on track after the earthquake. The Greek part of the Greek-Turkish Chamber of Commerce was the first Greek civil society organization that sent messages of support and offered material support to its Turkish counterpart.⁷² Mayors of Greek and Turkish cities were encouraged to pursue some kind of co-operation with municipalities from the 'other side'. Furthermore, the Greek-Turkish Forum managed to come up with a concrete proposal about the resolution of the dispute over the continental shelf in May 2000, which was welcomed by the Greek and Turkish Ministries of Foreign Affairs as an important contribution to the peaceful resolution of the dispute.⁷³

The above-described changes were self-changes, which emerged through self-referential processes of communication. The systems themselves played a part in the alteration of their own structures. The information systems employed was selected from a domain of potentialities that each system devised and held to be relevant. It was social systems themselves in both Greece and Turkey that perceived the developments after the earthquake as an important change to their environment. They picked up the irritation their environments provided them with and they attributed to it meaning, which in its turn had a further effect on their own self-description.

To give an example, members of the Greek-Turkish Forum admit that they felt endowed with a different responsibility after the earthquake. They felt that the two people wanted peace and this justified their effort.⁷⁴ For that reason, they decided to be "more ambitious" and discuss the core of the conflict in the Aegean.⁷⁵ This change

in Greece and at one moment we see in the newspapers that Turkish films were also projected there. People do that on their own. They don't seek official approval".

⁷² For statistics about trade between Greece and Turkey over the last eight years see the website of the Turkish organization DEIK, www.deik.org.tr

⁷³ For the proposal see the Greek-Turkish Forum's website www.greekturkishforum.org

⁷⁴ Interviews with Ambassador Costas Zeppos, Paulina Lampsas, Ambassador Ilter Türkmen

⁷⁵ Interview with Ambassador Ilter Türkmen, Istanbul, 13.11.01.

as well as the previous transformations of the Greek-Turkish Forum reveals the paradoxical nature of social change. Members of the Forum like Ambassador Costas Zeppos and Ambassador Ilter Türkmen had participated in many discussions on Greek-Turkish problems in the past from their official positions. Ambassador Zeppos was the Head of the Department of Greek-Turkish Relations in the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ambassador Türkmen had served in important posts within the Turkish Ministry, as Turkey's representative at the United Nations and also as Minister of Foreign Affairs. Nevertheless, they had never come so close to the production of a formula for the resolution of the dispute over the continental shelf accepted by both official authorities. Both of them attest to the importance of the environment of trust and co-operation established within the Forum. The impact of the earthquake upon their interaction comes to show that their perception of the environment outside of the Forum is equally important.

This sudden transformation draws our attention to one more feature of these processes. The emerging differences established after the earthquake existed before the earthquake. That social and psychic systems became aware of them after the earthquake was an evolutionary achievement. The operation of self-description, as it was demonstrated in the discussion of the peace processes from 1996 to 1999, does not amount to some kind of accurate or objective description of reality.

The expression of surprise that followed these developments illustrates further the autonomy of the operation of self-description. We read on the front page of the newspaper *Hürriyet* "The People Run Ahead of Us". The director of the newspaper *Ta Nea*, Leon Karapanayiotis, stated that "the solidarity that the Greek people express is not a surprise only for you [the Turks], but for us as well".⁷⁶ Politicians too recognized the change and the emergence of new arrangements. The Turkish Prime Minister, Bulent Ecevit, the Turkish Foreign Minister, Ismail Cem, and the Greek Foreign Minister, George Papandreou, have talked about the expectations this phenomenon has created. Ismael Cem, in an interview he gave to a Turkish channel, openly confessed that these developments have gone far beyond what politicians had thought and he expressed his fears as to the risks of disappointment but also the

⁷⁶ *Hürriyet*, 29.08.1999, Ferai Tinc, p.1 and p.18. See also the article written by Sami Kohen in *Milliyet*, 25.08.99, "...The attitude of various levels of society from the ordinary man to the businessman, from intellectuals to civilian organizations, surprised not only us, but also government officials in Athens...."

responsibility politicians bear after this.⁷⁷ "The earthquake has changed everything" in Greek-Turkish relations, wrote Mehmet Ali Birand.⁷⁸

The above statements recognized the emergence of the new system. This very recognition reinforced the emerging order and ultimately contributed to its construction too.

Causal analysis, based on narrowly defined interactions, cannot cope with these paradoxes of communication. Morphogenesis describes the complex processes of social change, going well beyond the general and abstract remarks of the sociality of peace processes.⁷⁹ In what follows I will further elaborate on the autonomy of the new system of co-operation.

5. The Autonomy of the System of Co-operation

In the previous sections, I explored the increase of complexity after the occurrence of the earthquake and I described the emergence of the new order as enforced selectivity towards the direction of co-operation. The new system of co-operation employed previous determinations of meaning for its autopoiesis. This is possible due to the self-referential nature of communications and the specific strategies of generalization and re-specification.

As happened with the system of the Greek-Turkish crisis of 1996, communications after the earthquake were generalized in all the three dimensions of meaning: the factual, the temporal, and the social. Past events are recalled and connected to present occurrences and future expectations are formed through extrapolations from the past and the present. References to the Greek help for the victims of the earthquake detached themselves from the specific events of the earthquake and sought connections to references to a history of co-operation and peaceful Greek-Turkish co-existence. Turks who had memories from the years they lived together with Greeks in

⁷⁷ "The Turkish Foreign Minister, Ismail Cem, said that he has lost the capacity to control developments because as he emphasized "immediately after the earthquakes new expectations have been established in both countries." *Eleftherotypia*, 15.09.99

⁷⁸ Mehmet Ali Birand, "Efharisto Poli, File", http://www.greekturkishforum.org/arti_6.htm

⁷⁹ Gündogdu's essay on developments after the earthquake employs Wendt's to discuss the impact of the earthquake on Greek-Turkish relations. The argument she makes is that the change of context, namely the end of the Cold War, the developments in the Balkans, and the Kosovo crisis enabled these developments. Nevertheless, Gündogdu cannot go beyond this observation and explain the timing and the nature of these developments.

Istanbul,⁸⁰ Greeks who had traveled to Turkey on holiday and had enjoyed Turkish hospitality,⁸¹ the common elements in the cultures of the two people, all were recalled to support and provide points for further connections in building up the new system. Paradoxically enough, the system of co-operation emerged as something that had always been there. In the interpretations of these developments, the adverb “always” (alternating with “never”) underlines the process of generalization on the temporal dimension, indicating duration and existence in time. Cengiz Sarri wrote in his electronic message “we have always loved you in spite of politics”. Bekir Coskun argued “we will never again believe those politicians who instigate crises between the two states”. “It has always been there” maintained the columnist Hadi Uluengin. Generalization in the social dimension means that there is no constraint as to who is going to make what contribution and when that will happen. As it happened with the crisis of 1996 and the peace processes that followed it, in the wake of the earthquake. Different social partners can make a contribution to the new order. As was shown above, not only and not mainly politicians, but rather journalists and ordinary people contributed to the emergence of the system of co-operation. The Greek pensioner, Turkish intellectuals who had contacts with Greek writers and poets on the other side of the Aegean Sea⁸² -they all made contributions to the emerging order.

The above analysis demonstrated that the new system was independent of the will and planning of the various social and psychic systems that contributed to its constitution. It cannot be identified with the rationale of the system of politics, or media or civil society organizations. Ultimately, it was independent from what brought it about, that is, co-operation for relief of the victims of the earthquake. It acquired its own identity, its own existence as a complex system of Greek-Turkish co-operation.

Conclusions

The emergence and sudden diversification and multiplication of co-operative interactions between Greeks and Turks have often been described as a paradox, as “lacking reason”. Indeed, the analysis in this chapter demonstrated that the system of co-operation lacked reason, as did the system of crisis in 1996 and the peace processes

⁸⁰ Hadi Uluengin in *Hürriyet*, 26.08.99 and Turgul Savkay writing about the Greek national poet Giannis Ritsos, in *Hürriyet* 29.08.99.

⁸¹ See article about the letter Giannis T. Kouris sent to the Turkish Ambassador in Athens, Ali Tuygan, *Hürriyet*, 25.08.99.

that emerged from 1996 until 1999. It was neither instigated nor developed by a super-system, which was acting under a specific rationale of co-operation and peace in the broader region of the Aegean Sea.

The new system of co-operation was the product of the transformational dynamics of communications. Recursive operations of meaning production and processing triggered by the earthquake, were set in motion in the news media (Greek, Turkish and foreign), civil society organizations, politics, and among ordinary citizens. Cascades of fast-moving communication flows, which happened to get caught up in meaning networks that intersected one another, enabled the increase of complexity and created the need for its reduction. Ultimately, the new system of co-operation was itself a reduction of complexity. In that sense there is not a **cause, a reason** for its emergence and constitution. The new system itself is enforced selectivity towards the direction of co-operation.

The initial condition that gave rise to this system was a natural disaster, an accidental and thus contingent event. This analysis points to the role of contingency and chance, but it underlines at the same time that chance does not mean randomness. Chance means lack of co-ordination between events and the structures of a system. This absent coordination can nevertheless produce effects and trigger causal processes. It was the evolution of society that enabled the amplification and intensification of communication processes that constituted the new system. The unexpected appearance of the earthquake and the events and actions that followed it were incorporated and endowed with meaning and causality by their environment. Previous determinations of meaning and social structures like themes, institutions, persons, and organizations provided adequate grounds for the functional specification and institutionalization of a Greek-Turkish system of co-operation. The new order emerged in the course of the autopoiesis, the ongoing self-renewal, of modern functionally differentiated society. It was not imposed from outside, it emerged from within the Greek and Turkish societies.

The systems theory perspective sheds light on the transformation process of the Greek-Turkish conflict, as a dynamic process which involves the whole of the Greek and Turkish societies. Furthermore, it breaks the illusion of Greek-Turkish relations as being in a state of stability, to describe their development as a constant process of

⁸² *Hürriyet*, 26.08.99.

becoming, restless change and movement; which is a state of dynamic stability. Thus, the analysis through Luhmann's theory departs decisively from deterministic approaches, which seek to uncover cause-effect relationships according to a machinelike Newtonian logic. The dynamics unfolded after the earthquake were the dynamics of selectivity and connectivity of communication processes.

CHAPTER VI

THE DYNAMICS OF COMPLEXITY REVISITED: THE 1987 CRISIS AND THE DAVOS PEACE PROCESS

In this chapter Luhmann's theory of social autopoiesis is applied to two more cases namely the crisis of 1987 and a peace initiative that followed it. The examination of another crisis and peace process beyond the chronologically comprehensive period from 1996 to 1999 serves four main purposes. First, it will be an additional test for Luhmann's theory. Second, the timing of this crisis and peace process enables us to put into perspective, in particular, systemic approaches to international crisis, which argue for the importance of structural parameters and above all the Cold War environment. This chapter will demonstrate that conventional systemic approaches to international crisis are static and inflexible whereas Luhmann's modern systems theory can better explain the complexity of these phenomena. Third, the crisis of 1987 and the peace process that followed it, presents a further illustration of the operation of the Greek-Turkish conflict in Greek and Turkish societies as an attractor that guides social systems' selections and in that way it is being self-reproduced. Finally, the peace process of 1987 is an interesting case for comparison with the peace processes studied in chapters IV and V. In contrast to the peace processes explored above, this failed to take hold in Greek and Turkish societies.

Here too, it is argued that crisis and peace processes emerge and develop through chains of simultaneous meaning constituting processes carried out within a multitude of autonomous but interfering social systems such as different ministries, the military and the news media which co-evolve with psychic systems. The shift of emphasis from structural constraints such as patterns of behaviour, institutionalized goals, overlapping roles and routines to structural couplings enables us to explore the dynamics of crisis and peace processes as the dynamics of a self-referential society.

It is demonstrated that the simultaneity of the system/environment relationship and the parameter of time are important factors in the determination of the development of the crisis of 1987 and the peace process that emerged in the wake of this crisis. Thus, the focus of research and analysis is, here too, on the blind spots of social and psychic systems and their structural couplings. The distinctions systems employed in their operations of self- and other observation and the way these distinctions affected their

information processing are explored. Examples of chains of interconnected meaning processes illustrate systemic formation through structural couplings demonstrating that the dynamics of crisis and peace processes is the dynamics of the connectivity of self-referential communications.

1. The Crisis of 1987

This section is divided in seven sub-sections. In the first and the second section I explore the initial condition that set in motion recursive processes of communication and increased the complexity of the situation leading to another bifurcation stage. The ‘butterfly’ this time, was Papandreou’s decision to buy shares of the Canadian led consortium Denisson Morris. The communication of this decision through news media was the irritation that when selected by various social systems set in motion simultaneously, recursive processes of communication and increased the complexity. The third section discusses the moment of the emergence of the crisis. The fourth section argues that increased complexity eventually enforced the crisis to emerge as enhanced selectivity and explores the selections made by various social systems pointing to the blind spots of these systems. It examines in particular the system of the consortium, the system of Greek and Turkish politics, the military and media. Furthermore, it explores the Akiman-Kapsis interaction system, which provided other social and psychic systems in the Greek and Turkish societies with noise for their operations of self and other observation and their autopoiesis. Nazmi Akiman was the Turkish Ambassador in Athens and Yiannis Kapsis was the then deputy minister of foreign affairs with whom Ambassador Akiman met several times during the days of the crisis. The fifth section argues that the crisis of 1987 de-escalated through reflexive communication and challenges the argument conventional analysis makes, which is that the crisis de-escalated due to skillful use of coercive diplomacy. The sixth section elaborates on the self-referential nature of communication, which enables the crisis to emerge as an autonomous and independent social system. Finally, the seventh section illustrates the paradox of the re-entry of crisis back to the system of conflict through the mechanisms of writing and printing that is academic discourse political rhetoric and journalistic accounts.

1.1. Papandreou's decision to Buy Shares of the Consortium as the 'Butterfly'

The crisis of 1987 was built up around the issue of prospecting or drilling for oil in the Aegean Sea outside Greek demarcated territorial waters, namely beyond the 6 nautical miles from the Greek coastline. The issue of drilling appeared for the first time in the Greek political agenda after the statement made by Sakis Peponis, the Minister of Industry on the 16th of February. His statement was that the Greek government intended to buy shares of Denisson Morris, the Canadian-led international North Aegean Petroleum consortium. The Greek Prime Minister, Andreas Papandreou, was the person who made this decision,¹ and the aim was for the Greek government to keep control of the consortium's activities.

This decision had not been prepared on the institutional level by the other entities of the Greek government. The Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Kapsis, wrote about this:

..on the 16th of February, turning on the television in order to watch the news, I heard the then Minister of Industry Peponis, informing us that with the approval of the Prime Minister, he had decided in favour of the compulsory purchase of the shares of the consortium. We, the people in the ministry, were staggered at the news. That was a dramatic decision that had been made and announced without any consultation with us -without any careful planning, without preparation, at least on our part. Haralambopoulos [the Minister of Defence], Papoulias [the Minister of Foreign Affairs], Maheritsas [Director of the Diplomatic Office of the Prime Minister], - all these people were asking each other if any one of them had been informed beforehand about it. But no one knew anything about it.²

The announcement of this decision set in motion processes of meaning determination within a multitude of social and psychic systems. The 'butterfly' in this case was Papandreou's decision to buy shares of the consortium. Although not directly related to the Greek-Turkish conflict, once communication about it was disseminated through news media, unexpected chain reactions happened, cascades of communication processes, which amplified it and attributed to it the meaning of the cause of crisis. In the section that follows, I will describe the processes of amplification of this initial condition and the subsequent increase of complexity.

¹ Interview with Carolos Papoulias, Athens, 13.03.02.

² Yiannis Kapsis, *The Three Days of March*, p.41-42. Mr. Kapsis was also critical of the decision of the Ministry of Industry saying that "the Ministry of Industry took this decision which to my opinion was unexplained". Interview with Yiannis Kapsis, Athens, 18.07.01.

2. A Stage of Bifurcation

The decision of the Greek government to buy shares of the consortium created a stage of bifurcation. It triggered processes of communication within various social and psychic systems, increasing the complexity of the situation in Greece and Turkey. It raised the question of whether the Greek government was planning exploration or drilling outside its demarcated territorial waters and whether by means of this action it planned to proceed to a *de facto* expansion to 12 miles. Expansion of Greek territorial waters was considered by Turkey as a major threat to its national interests. Thus, the question was: is it a threat, is it a crisis or not? This stage was characterised by increasing complexity, uncertainty and intense observation. It was a situation of double contingency as each side made its attitude dependent on the other's stance and where every accident and every error could be productive.

So far, I have presented some reactions from people from within the Greek Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defence. The Greek press was puzzled by Papandreou's decision and saw in this a lack of planning and aim.³ The consortium reacted to that decision too. The President of the Board of Directors of the consortium, Parmeli, denied negotiations with the Greek government and argued that this decision hid Greek intentions to proceed on its own with the drilling. In an interview given on the 23rd of February, Parmeli replied to the invitation to negotiate, stating that according to the contract the company had signed with the Greek state, the consortium was entitled to proceed with drilling east of Thasos, beyond the 6 nautical miles. Moreover, he stated that the company would proceed with drilling on the 28th of March. At the same time he added an international dimension to this issue - he asked for the intervention of countries that had vested interests in the consortium, namely Canada, West Germany, and the United States, since these were the nationalities of the consortium's companies.

The Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Yiannis Kapsis, and the Minister of Industry, Sakis Peponis, tried to answer Parmeli's accusations in a common press conference they gave on February 26th. There however, a Greek journalist asked them whether Greece intended to expand its territorial waters. Peponis passed the question to

³ The decision was characterised as a "spasmodic" and an "incomprehensible" move. See the Greek newspapers *Eleftherotypia* 08.03.87 and *Vradyni*, 08.03.87.

Kapsis, who was surprised. He admits in his book that “I looked for an unclear or vague answer and I said without having thought much the phrase that became the slogan repeated *ad nauseam* during the days that followed”.⁴ Kapsis's answer did not remove uncertainty: “Whether, when, and where Greece will carry out drilling is a sovereign right of Greece expressed by its legally elected government at any given time”.

This “slogan”, which was an improvisation by Yiannis Kapsis, was the constitutive element employed by various systems in order to carry out their operations enabling their further autopoiesis and increasing the complexity of the situation. The Greek administration considered this statement to be the implementation of the Greek foreign policy. Its meaning as interpreted by them was that Greece reserves the right to expansion as it has always done in the past. The Greek media however, started speculating about the meaning of the Greek government's decision to buy the shares of the company and the meaning behind Kapsis's statement. The press conferences Parmeli and Kapsis and Peponis gave, were also the trigger for news production through the Greek and Turkish medias' recursive operations, which further increased the complexity of the situation. From the point of view of the Turkish press the “hot” news was that Greece invalidated the Berne Agreement.⁵ Ambassador Akiman however, and the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs had different concerns. Ambassador Akiman had protested against what Turkey considered Greek violation of the Berne Agreement several times in the past from 1984 to 1987. However, this time he considered Kapsis's statement a formula to hide the Greek designs for research and possibly drillings beyond the six miles in the immediate future, which would mean expansion of Greek territorial waters. Ambassador Akiman visited Kapsis immediately after the interview the latter gave and asked the Greek government to stop the consortium from proceeding with exploration outside Greek territorial waters. The argument of the Turkish government was that the drillings beyond the 6 miles would violate the Berne Agreement signed by Greece and Turkey

⁴ Yiannis Kapsis, *The Three Days of March*, p. 50.

⁵ See articles in *Hürriyet* about this issue from the 1st of March to the 7th of March 1987, see also *Cumhuriyet* 03.03.87. The articles make a general reference to the invalidation of the Berne Agreement instead of informing about the different interpretations Greece and Turkey held over the Agreement and the background of this dispute.

on the 11th of November 1976.⁶ Article 6 of the Agreement stipulated that the two parties should abstain from any act or initiative related to the continental shelf that might prejudice the negotiations for the resolution of the dispute. However, the Greek answer was that there were no negotiations going on at that time; therefore, this agreement was not operative.

On March 6th, a bill for the nationalization of the shares of the consortium was proposed in the Greek Parliament. According to the bill, the companies of the consortium were invited to negotiate regarding the conditions of the sale of the shares. If 3 months should pass without any sign of interest on the part of the companies of the consortium then the Greek government would proceed with the application of Article 106, paragraphs 3 and 4 of the Greek Constitution, which made a provision for such a case.

From the first days of March until the 27th of March, the day of the peak of the crisis, the complexity of the situation increased with the maneuvers of the Turkish prospecting ship *Piri-Reis* accompanied by warships, the increased presence of Greek warships and certain “dogfights” within the Greek airspace. While under normal circumstances these are institutionalized routines frequently employed by both sides in the Aegean now they acquired their own dynamics further constraining social systems’ operations of meaning determination towards the direction of confrontation.

3.1. The Emergence of the Crisis

The bifurcation stage was a stage of increasing complexity during which the crisis had not yet emerged. Various systems were trying to make sense of and rationalize what was happening. It was after the decision of the Turkish National Security Council to

⁶ Greece set its sea borders at 6 nautical miles from the coastline, in accordance to international law, with an internal law of 1936. Later on, when the Geneva Convention regarding the Law of the Sea was signed in 1969, Greece ratified it and declared that according to the Convention, it has the right to expand its territorial waters to 12 miles. Initially, Turkey did not oppose this declaration, but after the invasion of Cyprus in 1974, it started disputing not only the potential expansion of the Greek territorial waters to 12 miles but also the operational limits of its airspace and the rules to be applied for the demarcation of the continental shelf. In 1976, Greece and Turkey came close to war over the issue of the continental shelf, which led the leaders of the two countries to sign the Berne Agreement. The reader should bear in mind that Turkey does not dispute the expansion of Greek territorial waters in general. Turkey has already expanded its own territorial waters to 12 miles in the Black Sea and in the Mediterranean, excluding the area of the Aegean, for which it applied the 6 miles plus 6 rule. Turkey does not dispute the Greek right of expansion in the Aegean Sea in general. In the case of the drilling off Thassos, Greece has the right to drilling beyond the 6 miles and this is not disputed as such. However, Turkey's fear was that if Greece would start expanding its territorial waters - even in non-

grant exploration and exploitation licenses to the state-owned Turkish Petroleum Company (TPAO) that the crisis fully emerged. These permits covered areas outside the six miles of territorial waters off the Greek islands of Samothrace, Lesbos, Chios, Lemnos, and Agios Efstratios. “The Turkish National Security Council gave permission for seismic research to the TPAO. That was the message. The crisis had started” writes the then Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Yiannis Kapsis.⁷ The same day the Greek National Security and Foreign Policy Council (composed of the Prime Minister, the Minister of Defence, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces) was convened. Coming out of the meeting, the Greek Prime Minister declared that “[I]f the Turks attempt drillings we will hit them”. To make this decision more convincing, the Greek government also decided to close the American military base at Nea Makri.

In the remainder of this chapter it will be demonstrated that the crisis of 1987 was not designed by any decision-maker: it emerged as combined selectivity through selections made by various social and psychic systems and through structural couplings among them in the course of their autopoiesis.

3.2. The Blind Spots of Social Systems

The above description of the events of the crisis is not sufficient to explain the emergence and escalation of the crisis of 1987. ‘Actions’ are considered to be the externalization of the self-reference of the social systems that observe them, simplified self-descriptions of these systems and their environments. As shown above, social systems observe events, that is they select to observe certain events and not others and by observing them they attribute meaning to them, according to their pre-established rationale, aims and programmes. Nevertheless, they cannot see the re-entry of their previous determinations of meaning back into society neither can they control the consequences of their operations. Here I examine how the social systems of politics, the economy, the military, media and the interaction system between Akiman-Kapsis carried out their selections. I will demonstrate that they were

disputed areas - it can continue doing so for the whole of the Aegean Sea, including areas contested by Turkey.

⁷ Yiannis Kapsis, *The Three Days of March*, p. 63.

operationally closed but cognitively open systems.⁸ Furthermore, from a second order observation perspective, I look to disentangle the structural couplings, that is the a-causal connections of communications, which enabled the autopoiesis of crisis. Examples of structural couplings illustrate that the dynamics of crisis is found in the connectivity of communications and the paradoxes of systems' *blind spots*.

3.2.1. The Consortium

From the chronicle of the crisis and the consequent presentation of the events that composed the crisis it became clear that the stance of the consortium played an important role in the emergence of the crisis. The consortium is a sub-system of the function system of the economy. Accordingly, it observed its environment and drew distinctions employing the binary code of profit/non profit.

The President of the Board of Directors of the company, Parmeli, appeared to be convinced that the Greek state was determined to harm the interests of the company. To understand the stance of the consortium we need to take into account the company's interests and the conditions of its activities stipulated by the contract signed with the Greek government. Kapsis himself describes these conditions as follows:

The consortium was right on its own part to insist on its right to conduct research outside the six miles of demarcated territorial waters. It had the obligation and the right provided by its contract to carry out drillings until the 1st of April. And if it did not utilize its right by that date, it would lose that right on its own responsibility.⁹

Additionally, something that illuminates further the insistence of the consortium to carry out the drilling, concerns the importance attached at that time to the Aegean Sea's oil resources. During the eighties there was still the general conviction that

⁸ Both psychic and social systems process complexity in the form of 'meaning'. In other words they can internally represent the complexity of the world through 'meaning'. Their difference is that psychic systems' mode of operation is consciousness and social systems' mode of operation is communication. For the distinction between life, psychic and social systems see Chapter II, pp.45-46.

⁹ Although Kapsis explains the rationale of the consortium in his book (p.40), in the same book he argues that the crisis was instigated by some international financial interests, which also conspired against the then Greek socialist government. Furthermore, he makes a hint about the links of these interests with Turkey. "The people of the consortium and their inseparable friends were waiting for, if they were not preparing it, a crisis in the Aegean which would lead to the toppling of Papandreou's government". Yiannis Kapsis, *The Three Days ...*, p.52 In the interview he gave to the author he argued clearly that this crisis "was very well designed" and it occurred "in order to serve the economic interests of the consortium and in order to serve the purpose of the imposition of the policy of the

these resources were rich in hydrocarbons. That was of considerable importance because the oil in the Caucasus had not been discovered yet.¹⁰

This explains why Parmeli, in the press conference that he gave following the Greek invitation to negotiations by the Minister of Industry, stated publicly that Greece wanted to buy the shares in order to proceed with the drilling on its own.¹¹ He rejected the Greek explanations regarding the possible implications that the company's plans for exploration outside the six miles might have on Greek-Turkish relations. Greek arguments based on political considerations, about the sensitivity of the issue, could not find a sympathetic hearing. Parmeli's interpretation was consistent with the rationale of the system of economy, which is expressed in the profit/not profit code.

It was Parmeli's statements which included a definite date for the commencement of drillings - the 28th of March - that enabled further structural couplings and thus the autopoiesis of crisis. These statements put a pressure on the Greek government to proceed with its plan for the nationalization of the consortium employing the provisions of the Greek Constitution for compulsory nationalization. The same statements were employed by the Turkish government in its communications with the Greek government and with the international community. The Turkish representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Ilter Türkmen, referred to these statements in his letter to the Secretary General of the UN - as evidence of Greece's plans to proceed with drilling outside the six nautical miles, the limit of the Greek demarcated territorial waters.

3.2.2. The Akiman-Kapsis Interaction System

In this section I will examine the Kapsis-Akiman interaction system and I will demonstrate that it played a significant role in the emergence and the development of the crisis.¹² Akiman was the Turkish Ambassador in Athens. Kapsis was the Greek Deputy Foreign Minister in charge of Greek-Turkish affairs. The two of them met several times during February and March. The argument put forward here is that their

American State Department 'sit down in a negotiations table and discuss it'. In other words a package deal". Interview with the Deputy Foreign Minister Yiannis Kapsis, Athens, 18.07.01.

¹⁰ This was something that both Ambassador Zeppos and Admiral Kiyat emphasised in their explanation of the crisis. Today however, with modern satellite and other research systems it has been known that the Aegean Sea is not as rich in hydrocarbons as it was thought. Interviews with Ambassador Costas Zeppos, Athens, 14.09.01 and with Admiral Attila Kiyat, Istanbul, 08.11.01.

¹¹ Yiannis Kapsis, *The Three Days of March*, p.39.

interaction was not constituted of the two individuals who participated in these meetings, as traditional sociology could probably argue. An interaction system is a highly complex social system. Psychic systems make part of the environment of an interaction along with other social systems. Interactions and thus the Akiman-Kapsis interaction too, produce noise, which can be used by other social and psychic systems in order to continue their autopoiesis. The Akiman-Kapsis interaction offered a field of experimentation for social systems in the Greek and Turkish societies, the a-causal couplings of which eventually constituted the crisis of 1987.

This interaction system was constituted of structural couplings of various social systems such as the diplomacy, the system of the Greek socialist politics, which included also references to a strong anti-Americanism and the history of the meetings the two men had in the past. Furthermore, the operations of the above systems were conditioned by the institutionalised Greek-Turkish conflict.

Diplomacy is an observing system institutionalised in modern society. Accordingly, it has developed its own practices and patterns of behaviour, a set of formal rules and language to be employed by diplomats. The role of a diplomat is precisely to understand the meaning behind the words said and the intentions behind what has not been said. Under the condition of the Greek-Turkish conflict, Akiman as a diplomat was observing intensely trying to see what the Greek government was preparing and what Kapsis in particular was concealing. He says:

at the end of our meeting I asked him [Kapsis], 'I want to be clear when I report this. Does the Greek government contemplate performing any exploration beyond the 6 miles?' The answer Kapsis gave was this: he lay back in his chair, put his hands behind his head (and this is something I reported to my government too) and he said, 'We will carry out exploration wherever we want in the Aegean'. 'Are you sure about this?' I asked him. 'This might create difficulties in our relations'. He said, 'Yes, I am sure'.¹³

The system of Kapsis-Akiman interaction was formed by both oral communication and body language. Body language is also communication which was being observed by Ambassador Akiman at the time, and which irritated and misled him. Ambassador Akiman interpreted Kapsis' body language and gestures as a signal that the Greek government had decided to proceed with drillings and Kapsis was engaged in some

¹² About the nature and function of interaction systems within society, see Chapter II, p.46.

¹³ Interview with Ambassador Nazmi Akiman, Istanbul, 22.05.01.

form of intrigue.¹⁴ In order to explain how the Turkish diplomacy processed information and attributed meaning to it, how in other words it constrained infinite complexity and continued its operation, we can further explore the semantics it employed for this task.

The already accumulated knowledge and experience from the contact Akiman had with Kapsis – during the previous three years - conditioned the Turkish diplomat's understanding of the situation.¹⁵ Earlier selections structured complexity and acquired their own dynamic. The example that follows will shed light to the process of the constitution of this history through successive selections.

In 1985, Akiman was informed through intelligence reports that drilling had taken place in the Gulf of Strymonikos, outside the 6 miles of the Greek demarcated territorial waters and he went to the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs to protest against the violation of the Berne Agreement.¹⁶ Kapsis then maintained that the drillings took place within the already demarcated 6 miles of Greek territorial waters. Akiman asked for the co-ordinates and Kapsis did not give them to him. When Akiman insisted and he was given the co-ordinates, it became clear that the drillings took place outside the 6 miles of demarcated territorial waters. Kapsis's answer then was that "I had the impression that it was within the territorial waters but it seems that we made a mistake".¹⁷ This event was interpreted by Ambassador Akiman and the Turkish government as indicative of the intentions of the Greek government to find an opportunity and expand its territorial waters. Kapsis on the other hand, dismissed the importance of this and other similar incidents because, he argues, that the region where the drillings took place was not a disputed by Turkey area.¹⁸

At this point we should explore further how the system of Greek politics perceived its environment at that time. Kapsis's rhetoric vis-à-vis Ambassador Akiman reflects the

¹⁴ *ibid.*.

¹⁵ Interview with Ambassador Nazmi Akiman, Istanbul, 22.05.01. See also footnote 7.

¹⁶ The reader should keep in mind that the region mentioned here is not disputed as such by Turkey. Greece, according to the International Law of the Sea, has the right to expand its territorial waters in that area. See also footnote 3.

¹⁷ Kapsis confirms this incident in the book that he wrote about the crisis. Another interesting piece of information he gives in the same book is that the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Prime Minister himself did not know for many years that exploration activities were taking place. Kapsis writes in his book "[I]t was a big surprise. With the first reading [of the relevant file] it became obvious that for 6 years, exploration and drilling were taking place without the slightest briefing of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The only exception was probably a letter of Evangelos Couloumbis in 1982, asking for our opinion", Kapsis, *The Three Days of March*, p.39.

¹⁸ Interview with Yiannis Kapsis, Athens, 18.07.01.

structural couplings among the system of the Greek socialist politics, the Greek-Turkish conflict and the semantics with which the Greek politics perceived the Greek-American relations. An important element that determined the operations of meaning determination on the part of the Greek government was the interpretation of the presence of the US Secretary of Defence Caspar Weinberger and the Assistant Secretary of Defence Richard Perle in Ankara during these days. Their presence in Turkey was perceived as evidence of the involvement of the USA in instigating a Greek-Turkish crisis because Greece - a small country - was going against its plans.¹⁹ Greek politicians attributed meaning to this event concluding that the USA was backing Turkey in this crisis in order to teach a lesson to Greece "for not being obedient" as the Greek Foreign Minister Papoulias said to Bulgarian President, Zhivkov in the meeting he had with him on the 27th of March in Sofia.

Kapsis writes:

There is no probative evidence, neither the smallest, which proves the allegation that Weinberger agreed and Richard Perle co-operated with the military establishment of Turkey for the preparation of the crisis of March. But on the other hand, there can be no promise, no assurance, no argument to convince all of us who lived these dramatic moments that Perle's role was not decisive.²⁰

And at another point "[I]nconceivable naivety would be required for anyone to believe that neither Weinberger nor Perle had understood the Turkish intentions - that the Turkish generals proceeded [to the crisis] without informing their real superiors".²¹

Kapsis's attitude and rhetoric in his meetings with Akiman was in the same line with Andreas Papandreou's foreign policy as it had been expressed until that time. That involved a tough rhetoric against Turkey, "the country that had invaded and occupied Cyprus" as well as the socialist rhetoric of an independent vis-à-vis the West and especially the USA, foreign policy. So, Greek Deputy Minister's stance meant to express the resistance of Greece to the plans, Kapsis assumed that Turks and Americans had prepared. The same rhetoric, however, was interpreted by the Turkish diplomat as hiding Greek intentions for drillings.

Ambassador Akiman did not understand the way the Greek government perceived its environment at that time. In a double contingent situation social systems remain

¹⁹ See references to Papandreou's policy as regards nuclear weapons p.60, p.199.

²⁰ Yiannis Kapsis, *The Three Days of March*, p.75.

²¹ *ibid.*, p.75.

opaque and incalculable to each other. They are operationally closed systems, which communicate selectively with their environment.

Another incident described by Kapsis in his book on the crisis substantiates further the above analysis and it illustrates the distinctions employed by the systems of diplomacy and politics when they were carrying out their meaning constituting operations. The night of the 27th of March, when the crisis had been de-escalated after the unofficial intervention of Boutos²², Ambassador Akiman was again invited to the Ministry, where he was given an official confirmation of what had been said unofficially in his meeting with Boutos. Kapsis describes an incident that took place the moment Ambassador Akiman was at the door of his office and he gave him his hand to send him off.

Akiman pulled me slightly outside trying to give a completely unofficial and friendly tone to what he had to tell me. 'So,... between us Mr. Minister.. tell me have you planned any drilling for the foreseeable future?' His question had a tone of agony.....'Even if we wanted to do drillings, we do not have floating drilling machines. The consortium, as you know very well, terminated the contract of the floating drilling machine, which is in Keratsini for repair"²³.

This incident sheds light to the assumption upon which the Greek politician based his attitude during the previous days. Kapsis assumed that Turkey knew very well that Greece did not have the appropriate drilling machine to proceed with the drilling. This was a "fact", beyond any doubt. "It's impossible that Ankara did not know that the drilling machine was in Perama. Everybody knew it. Don' t they have spies?" Kapsis argues.²⁴

On the other hand Ambassador Akiman says "[M]y perception, until Kapsis told me at the very last meeting that there are no drilling machines, was that they were going to do something...."²⁵ Akiman interpreted what was happening as hiding a well-organized Greek plan to challenge Turkey. He was convinced that Papandreou was behind Kapsis's attitude and that he was engaging in brinkmanship, testing the limits of Turkey.²⁶ His anxiety and agony reflected in the question he asked Kapsis, makes

²² See below the section on the de-escalation of the crisis where I present the accidental but catalytic intervention of Ioannis Boutos, pp.215-217.

²³ Yiannis Kapsis, *The Three Days of March*, p.102.

²⁴ Interview with Yiannis Kapsis, Athens, 18.07.01.

²⁵ Interview with Ambassador Nazmi Akiman, 22.05.01.

²⁶ "I know that Mr. Kapsis often was going to Andreas Papandreou and was boasting that he had put Akiman into a corner. As far as I know Papandreou did not encourage him. Nevertheless, neither did he discourage him". *ibid.*.

clear that until that moment he was convinced that Greece was planning drillings beyond its demarcated territorial waters.

The above analysis demonstrates how the Greek politician and the Turkish diplomat interpreted certain events, which they had constructed in the first place by selecting them as purposeful 'actions'. For Kapsis, Turkey's protests were only the pretext the Turkish government used in order to proceed with its plans against Greece. For Akiman, Greece had decided to make a *fait accompli* in the Aegean.

Distrust was another important environmental condition of this interaction system. Ambassador Akiman argues that he could not trust Kapsis. Kapsis, on the other hand, was very suspicious of Turkey and the role of the USA in Greek-Turkish relations in general. Distrust, in a way similar to trust, reduces complexity and achieves simplification. Furthermore, it is the case that the person who distrusts becomes more dependent on less information.

What follows is another example that illustrates how pre-existing structures of meaning make social systems oversensitive to specific items of information and guide their selections towards certain events ignoring others. On the 19th of March the Greek Minister of Defence, Haralambopoulos, made the statement that "the Aegean Sea is Greek and it will remain Greek". The Turkish Ministry and Ambassador Akiman linked this statement causally to other events of the time, considering it another clear sign of the Greek intentions to expand the Greek territorial waters. Ambassador Akiman connected Haralampopoulos's statement with a similar statement Kapsis had made in one of their meetings. There, Kapsis said "we have over 3000 islands which also have continental shelf and this means [the Aegean Sea] is almost a Greek lake and this is why I think that you should not be bothered with this".²⁷

The above analysis of the Akiman-Kapsis interaction demonstrates that communication does not necessarily mean understanding. Akiman sent a report to Ankara, which was clearly stating that Greece was preparing exploration activities outside its territorial waters. "If I had any doubts that they would [carry out exploration] of course I would have reported that. And if I had reported that, perhaps Turkey would not have acted the way it did by sending ships into the Aegean Sea".²⁸ Akiman's report however, was not the result of a linear cause-effect process. Rather,

²⁷ Interview with Ambassador Nazmi Akiman, Istanbul, 22.05.01.

it was another contingent emerging order. That means that it was neither necessary nor impossible. It was constituted through the structural couplings that is the a-causal synchronisation of various social systems to a common direction - the direction of the crisis.

3.2.3. The Turkish Politics

The Turkish government and bureaucracy during the days of the crisis employed its own distinctions in order to make sense of what was going on. The then spokesman of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Yalim Eralp, illuminates the processes of meaning determination and the semantics that guided their information processing.

You set the whole thing within a general framework. Greece had become a member of the European Community and inch by inch it was moving its position.... We don't have to look for additional information. This is the picture. The statement [made by Haralambopoulos] that the Aegean is Greek, the statement that Greece has the right to extend its territorial waters, then Greece says that it has the right to drill but is simply buying the shares in order to control the situation.... Each country was arming against each other, not against the Soviet Union".²⁹

This description aptly illustrates the operations of selective gathering of information according to a specific scheme of interpretation and the attribution of meaning to this information. The Turkish politics attributed systematicity to its environment according to the distinctions of Greece v Turkey and Europe v Turkey, and Greece's aim being the expansion of its territorial waters against Turkey's national interests. It therefore connected various events and considered them purposeful 'actions' aiming to harm its interests.

3.2.4. The Turkish Military

The crisis fully emerged after the statement made by the General Secretary of the Turkish National Security Council regarding the departure of the *Piri-Reis* and the permits for exploration granted to the Turkish Petroleum Company. This statement was perceived by Greek politicians as evidence for the determination of the Turkish military to proceed to a heated confrontation with Greece.

In this section I will argue that this event too was not the result of an imperative necessity. Rather, it came about as the reduction of complexity through structural

²⁸ *ibid.*

²⁹ *ibid.*

couplings of different communicative systems. Institutionalized practices, the rationale of the Turkish military, and contingencies such as the absence of the Turkish Prime Minister for health reasons made up the complexity of the environment that gave rise to this statement.

The involvement of the Turkish army in managing the crisis was pre-determined by the constitutional position of the Turkish army within the power structure of Turkey and the provisions with regard to the National Security Council in particular.³⁰ In addition, the military took the lead in managing the crisis at this specific moment because Prime Minister Turgut Ozal was away for health reasons. Ambassador Akiman's report from Athens was linked with the Turkish military's self-perceived mission as being the ultimate guard of the Turkish national interest, which stems from Turkish history. Given the evaluation of the situation by the bureaucrats of the Turkish Foreign Ministry, the army made its decisions according to its own rationale and based on the means it had at its disposal. Granting permits for exploration to the Turkish company was considered to be a reply to the Greek challenge to proceed with drillings in non-demarcated waters showing determination to protect the Turkish rights even with military power. As Admiral Kiyat put it, "after all an army exists in order to fight" rather than considering the alternatives to military confrontation. The latter was something that rested with politicians.³¹

On the other side of the Aegean however, Greek leaders interpreted the statement of the General Secretary of the Turkish NSC that Turkey will proceed with drillings too, as evidence of the Turkish aggressiveness and intent to expand in the Aegean Sea. The Turkish decision was coupled with Greek expectations and it formed the ground upon which the Greek National Security and Foreign Policy Council made its own dramatic decisions for military mobilization. Kapsis describes as follows the reception of the Turkish decision: "[T]hat was a crisis we have been expecting since 1985"..³²

³⁰ A further note regarding the institutional position of the Turkish National Security Council (Milli Güvenlik Kurulu) within the power structure in Turkey is required here. It is a body of special power which includes, besides the Prime Minister and members of the cabinet, top-level military officers. The synthesis and power of this institution is provided by the Constitution of 1982, which was written by the military junta of General Kenan Evren. This arrangement allows the military to participate in all important political and other decisions. The elimination of the NSC as a constitutional body and the restriction of its responsibility only for national defence issues is included in the legislative changes Turkey has to make in its road to EU membership. See Bulent Tanor, "Perspectives on Democratisation in Turkey: Progress Report 2001", <http://www.tusiad.org/english/rapor/perspective/democsummary.pdf>

³¹ Interview with Admiral Attila Kiyat, Istanbul, 08.11.01.

³² Yiannis Kapsis, *The Three Days of March*, p.17.

and at another page of the same book “..our most serious fears were confirmed. There was no doubt about it”.³³

The constitutive element of the crisis was not the statement of the Secretary General of the Turkish National Security Council as such, but its interpretation by Greek officials according to their previous determinations of meaning. Nevertheless, the mobilization of the military forces further constrained complexity towards the direction of violent conflict.

To understand the Greek reaction we have to take into account the distinctions the Greek politics employed to make sense of what was happening at that time. The fact that the Turkish military was in charge of crisis management triggered references within Greece to its own past and to the way Greeks perceive Turkish history. The Greek perception about the Turkish military and its role in the history of its country emphasizes that the Turkish army has overthrown the legally elected government of Turkey twice.³⁴ Furthermore, Greeks have understood these events through their own history of the military junta of Georgios Papadopoulos (1967-73). In the Greek self-understanding, recent Greek history is marked by the resistance of the Greek people against the junta and the victory of democracy. This is a landmark in the Greek collective memory, celebrated every year throughout the country. Greeks understand the Turkish history – hetero-reference- through the Greek experience – self-reference. Thus, the Greeks observed the developments by employing the distinction Turkey as a non-democratic state, run by the military and Greece as a democratic country. The Greek perception of Turkey being a country ‘ruled’ by the military is reinforced by the simplified image Greeks hold with regard to the Turkish invasion and occupation of Cyprus in 1974. That image has led to overgeneralizations regarding the particularities and complexities of Turkish politics and the position of the military within Turkish society. Nevertheless, these distinctions employed by the Greek

³³ *ibid.*, p.63.

³⁴ Two coups d'états have marked the recent Turkish history, in 1960, and 1980. Furthermore, the intervention of the military in 1971 was another covert coup d'état. The generals asked Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel to resign otherwise they would remove him. This is what is known as the remarkable ‘coup by memorandum’ as the tanks did not come to the streets. Finally in 1997, again the generals toppled the coalition government led by the Islamic party, the Prosperity (Refah) Party, led by Necmettin Erbakan because of the fear of the Islamic danger. For the three first coups d'état see Harris, George, S., *Turkey: Coping with Crisis*, London; Sydney Boulder: Westview Press, 1985 and Dodd, C., (ed.), *The crisis of Turkish Democracy*, London, The Eothen Press, 1990, for the last one see Cengiz Çandar, *Çıktık Açık Alınla – 28 Subat Post-modern Darbe Geçidi'nde*, [in Turkish], Timas Yayinlari, 2001.

government during the days of the crisis simplified the complexity of the situation and enabled social and psychic systems to continue their operations.

3.2.5. The Greek Politics

The statement of the Turkish National Security Council that granted permission for exploration triggered as shown above processes of meaning determination which led to the decision of the Greek Council of Foreign Policy and Security to place the military forces on full alert. This action was a simplified self-description of the system of Greek politics and its environment. The complexity is reflected in Papandreou's words when he met Boutos the most critical day of the crisis:

"it is no accident that this is happening. Ozal is returning from the United States where he had a medical operation, he stops in London and the day he is in London the *Piri-Reis* is coming out. Consequently, the Turkish government makes that move with the approval and even the exhortation of the Americans and the British and they pursue the humiliation of Greece. But I cannot accept this.³⁵

This description of the situation by Papandreou illuminates the way Greek politics perceived its environment and the semantics that guided its operations of meaning determination. For the processing - that is selection and interpretation - of information the Greek government employed the simplified distinctions, Turkey v Greece, and the USA v Greece.³⁶ These distinctions guided the operations of self and other-observation together with the self-description of the PASOK government and Papandreou himself as its leader. In his search for a rational explanation, Papandreou selected and attributed meaning to information, causally connecting several events *a posteriori*. Ozal's trip to the USA and his stop in London on his way back to Ankara was considered to be relevant to the crisis, not accidental. In the meeting of the National Security and Foreign Policy Council, Papandreou informing the members of the Council said: "It is impressive - and I want to stress the emphasis before I refer to the second phase of the crisis - that all this time Ozal was in the USA. That only yesterday when the National Security Council of Turkey took the important decision, only then he departed from the USA. Furthermore, we cannot not take into account that Weinberger stayed six days in Ankara and Perle stayed even more - he left only

³⁵ Interview with Ioannis Boutos, Athens, 05.07.01.

³⁶ See the speech Andreas Papandreou delivered on the 27th of March on the television as well as the first words he said to Boutos when the latter arrived at his office some hours later the same day. *Eleftherotypia*, 28.03.1987 pp. 6-7.

yesterday despite the fact that he is supposed to have resigned from the 25th of March...”³⁷

The Turkish rationale remained completely out of sight of the Greek government, media, and civil society. Papandreou's exact words when he met Ambassador Akıman were “Mr. Akıman, I did not know what was going on at that moment [during the days of the escalation of the crisis], believe me. A war between Turkey and Greece? This is unthinkable. How could I build the economy of that country once again?”³⁸ His surprise again is an apt illustration of the paradoxical constitution of the crisis as combined selectivity and temporalised complexity. It demonstrates that the crisis of 1987 was not developed out of a process of rational and careful calculation. In any case such a process would presuppose complete information; yet under the condition of infinite complexity systems can access reality only selectively.

Papandreou felt compelled by the crisis itself to take the decision for full military mobilization. The paradox is that he had contributed to the emergence of the crisis in the first place. When Boutos visited the Greek Prime Minister and explained to him the Turkish perception of the situation, Papandreou was seemingly surprised by the Turkish reading of the situation.³⁹ Furthermore, he exploded in anger at Kapsis when he realized that he had misperceived Turkey's actions and intentions on the basis of Kapsis's reports.⁴⁰ For that reason he used Boutos as an alternate channel of communication with the Turkish Ambassador.⁴¹ Nevertheless, Kapsis's stance was partly constructed by Papandreou himself. Kapsis writes in his book that Papandreou was enthusiastic about the slogan he invented at the press conference and it was repeated thereafter. The themes that guided the selections of social systems in Greece had been constructed by Papandreou's rhetoric since his election as the first socialist Prime Minister in Greece in 1982. The ‘slogans’ that prevailed these years in Greece were against NATO and the American military bases, and against the European Community as well. Although his policy was not different from his predecessors vis-à-vis these organizations his anti-NATO and anti-American rhetoric, took its own dynamic during these days of March. Papandreou could not see the re-entry of his

³⁷ Yiannis Kapsis, *The Three Days of March*, pp.74-75.

³⁸ Interview with Ambassador Nazım Akıman, 22.05.01.

³⁹ Interview with Ioannis Boutos, Athens, 05.07.01.

⁴⁰ See below the section about the de-escalation of the crisis.

⁴¹ Yiannis Kapsis, *The Three Days of March*, p.50.

own distinctions back to the society as constitutive elements in the emerging system of the crisis of 1987.

3.2.6. The Greek Military

On the other hand, for the Greek military, as for the Turkish military, the important distinction was threat/no threat, which corresponds to the distinction of war/peace. Following the orders it received from the political leadership, the Greek military undertook advanced preparations in the light of a prospective war against Turkey, according to its own institutionalized practices, rationale and plans. The preparations included the mobilization of heavy artillery in the streets in cities in Northern Greece - Xanthi, Komotini, Alexandroupoli, and Orestiada - as well as marching orders for reservists.

3.2.7. The Greek Civil Society

The mobilization of the armed forces, observed by the Greek civil society was perceived as a sign of preparations for war and spread the panic to the habitants of cities in Northern Greece. They packed their belongings in their cars and made long queues in the streets leading to Southern Greece.⁴² In the last two days of the crisis there were shortages of goods in the supermarkets, as people believed that an attack from Turkey was imminent and rushed to stockpile basic necessities.

3.2.8. The Greek and Turkish News Media

The Greek and Turkish press played an important role in the emergence and development of the crisis. The function system of media employs the binary code news/not news. As it was demonstrated in the analysis of the Imia/Kardak crisis, according to the medias' institutionalized practices, conflict and crisis are 'news'. The press conferences given by the Greek Minister of Industry, Peponis, the President of the Board of Directors of the consortium, Parmeli, and then Peponis and Kapsis were addresses to the news media.⁴³ These statements were dispersed through the news media, triggering recursive processes of meaning determination in a multitude of social systems within the Greek and Turkish societies. Public opinion, opposition

⁴² In discussions I had with inhabitants of Komotini it was made clear that these days have been engraved in their memory as a traumatic experience.

⁴³ At this time private television had not yet been introduced in the two countries.

parties, analysts and many other individuals and groups could comment on the crisis, increasing the noise and the complexity of the situation through a process of generalization and re-specification of the above communications according to their own pre-established semantics.

Again, as happened with the crisis of 1996, the news media fed the system of crisis through their normal functions. By trying to rationalize the events they contributed to the increase of complexity and thus they provided the noise for the self-reproduction of the crisis. By posing questions to politicians, they were forcing an answer addressed to their constituencies. Nevertheless, the other side was a recipient as well. A characteristic example of the media's function and contribution to the constitution of the crisis is the following. The Turkish journalist Sami Kohen, in an interview with the United States Assistant Secretary of Defence Richard Perle, asked him about Greek-Turkish relations. Perle's reply was that "[T]he Greek government will do whatever it can to impede rapprochement between America and Turkey. It can make use of provocations. Be careful. I'm afraid that a small spark can open the way to large-scale developments".⁴⁴ While these statements might have been accepted within Turkey as justification of the Turkish positions, they were also received by the Greek officials who were observing with intensity what was going on in Ankara. These statements were received as evidence of the Turkish-American designs against Greece. They contributed to subsequent selections of meaning towards the direction of crisis. Connected with the Greek expectations about American plans in the region they were employed for further structural couplings. In the above analysis of the Akiman-Kapsis interaction system I presented the way Kapsis perceived the presence of the American officials in Ankara at this time: "...there can be no promise, no assurance, no argument to convince all of us who lived these dramatic moments that Perle's role was not decisive" and he continues "[A]fter all, himself leaving Ankara, the first day of the crisis he took care to make bitter statements against our country".⁴⁵ The selective nature of news is illustrated by the way the Turkish and Greek press received Turkish Prime Minister Turgut Ozal's statements about Greek-Turkish

⁴⁴ Interview by Sami Kohen with United States Assistant Secretary of Defence Richard Perle in *Hürriyet*, 21.3.87.

⁴⁵ The importance attributed to these statements is reflected to the number of references in Kapsis' s book about the crisis. See Yiannis Kapsis, *The Three Days of March*, p.60, p.62, p.75. Kapsis called Richard Perle the 'Prince of Darkness', p.199.

relations.⁴⁶ Ozal, while recovering from an open-heart operation in Houston in the United States, maintained on the 25th of March in an effort to abate the crisis that Greece and Turkey should focus on issues of co-operation. Nevertheless, the title of the relevant article in the Greek newspaper *To Vima* was “Clear Threats against Greece”.⁴⁷ Selecting one sentence of Ozal's statements which was saying that “[T]urkey will develop rapidly” led to the interpretation of his statements as provocation and threats. This interpretation demonstrates the attribution of meaning by the Greek press. On the other hand the violation of the Berne Agreement became a red flag for the Turkish press. Without knowing or without presenting the history of the Berne Agreement and its invalidation by Greece, they were making headlines with it.

4. The De-escalation of the Crisis

The de-escalation of the crisis is the focus of this part of the chapter. Even today, the Greek interpretation of the events of March 1987 is that the closure of the American military bases and the trip of Foreign Minister Carolos Papoulias to Sofia were skilful strategic moves that played a decisive role in the de-escalation of the crisis. It is argued that these actions demonstrated that Greece was determined to use force to protect its national rights and that stimulated the United States as well as the NATO Secretary-General, Lord Carrington, to intervene and exert pressure on Turkey to withdraw from its plans.⁴⁸ On the other hand the official Turkish view is that Turkish determination expressed through the departure of the *Piri-Reis* for the Aegean prevented Greece from realizing its plans for drilling in the Aegean sea.⁴⁹ Accordingly, this theoretical analysis of the crisis follows the line of deterrence theories of strategic analysis, putting the emphasis on the threat of use of force.

⁴⁶ *Hürriyet* 26.03.87, *To Vima*, 27.03.87.

⁴⁷ *To Vima*, 25.01.1987, p.21.

⁴⁸ “Papandreou's determined response and allied quiet diplomacy defused this latest crisis between Greece and Turkey”. See Van Coufoudakis, “Greek Political Party Attitudes towards Turkey: 1974-1989”, p.49, in Dimitri Conostas, *The Greek-Turkish Conflict in the 1990s: Domestic and External Influences*, London: Macmillan, 1991.

⁴⁹ The headline of the newspaper *Hürriyet* on the first page on the 29th of March was “What happened? And Athens on the other side found a determined Ankara”. The article argued that “Turkey's stance was reprisals to Greece's actions as it had warned that she would reply in a similar way in Greece's moves. In the meantime, Greece had asked for support even from Bulgaria and having not found support she stayed ‘one to one’ with Turkey. The insistence in being stubborn meant war. Faced with that difficult situation (war) Greece's plans collapsed”.

Here however the argument is that the crisis de-escalated due to the emergence of a system of reflexive communication through the interaction system between Ioannis Boutos and Ambassador Akiman. Ioannis Boutos was one of the top cadres of the opposition party, Nea Dimokratia, who happened to know Ambassador Akiman. Boutos's description of his meetings with both Ambassador Akiman and Prime Minister Papandreou illustrates this argument. Furthermore, the role of the American and the British interventions will be discussed, in the context of the effect they may or may not have had in the de-escalation of the crisis.

4.1. Reflexive Communication

Ioannis Boutos visited Ambassador Akiman on the most critical day of the crisis. The purpose of this visit was to discuss about the trip Boutos had made to Ankara in early March 1987.⁵⁰ The appointment had been arranged immediately after Boutos came back from his trip to Turkey. Incidentally, that day coincided with the most critical day of the crisis. Boutos visited Akiman on the 27th of March, at noon. At that meeting, Ambassador Akiman took the opportunity to let him know about the Turkish viewpoint on the crisis. This accidental meeting gave rise to reflexive communication - that is communication about the way the two countries were communicating and about the meaning of each side's statements. This had a decisive impact on the de-escalation of the crisis. At this point I should cite Boutos's narration.⁵¹

After I said what I had to say about my trip in Turkey, Ambassador Akiman wanted to tell me what had preceded the Turkish decision to take the Turkish research ship out in the Aegean sea. When the Greek state made known its plans to buy the Denisson Morris and this decision was accompanied by Mr. Kapsis's statement that "we will do drillings when we want, the way we want and where we want", Ambassador Akiman interpreted this as a clear indication that the Greek government would buy the shares in order to drill eastern to Thasos, which Denisson Morris did not want. The truth however was the other way around. Denisson wanted to proceed with the drillings and the Greek government, in order to prevent such an unwanted event that would surely have serious implications on Greek-Turkish relations, decided to buy the shares of the company. I knew about that and I said so to Ambassador Akiman.

⁵⁰ Ioannis Boutos was one of the top cadres of the opposition party, Nea Dimokratia, during the years of the PASOK administration. While his own party was in power, Boutos had served as Minister of Industry as well as in other important positions. After 1986 he left his party and he became an independent Member of the Parliament as well as a Member of the European Parliament.

⁵¹ Interview with Ioannis Boutos, Athens 05.07.01.

He said that his impression was that my appreciation of the situation was wrong. He added that he had assumed from Kapsis' s attitude during all this time that we are preparing for drillings east of Thasos. He had already sent telegrams about this to Ankara. One or two days before that, Ankara had warned Athens; in fact, Ankara had made a pre-emptive movement, in order to show that Turkey would persist on the policy it had been following, which was that any drilling out of the Greek territorial waters, east of Thasos, would be considered as a *casus belli*.

I went to my office, feeling very worried, because I could see there had been a misunderstanding; this was not the intention of the Greek government and the Turkish perception was different. On the way to my office I heard on the radio about the decision of the Greek cabinet to prevent Piri-Reis from doing any research.⁵²

I called Papandreou in front of Byron [Ambassador Theodoropoulos whom he had called to his office to discuss the crisis⁵³] and he gave me an appointment for 5:00-5:30 at his house.

So, I went to his office in Kastri...

I said 'President....Today at noon I was with Akiman and he told me that this is a pre-emptive movement. There is a misperception of our intentions, regarding the purchase of Denisson, I am afraid. Akiman told me that they have taken out Piri-Reis to warn us to avoid this situation'. And I explained to him what Akiman told me about his communication with Mr. Kapsis.

'I 'll be damned! This bastard, Kapsis, will take us to war on the continental shelf?' was his reaction.

What should we do now? What do you advise me to do? he said. I said look President this is a misunderstanding; the Turks have misread our intentions and we have this crisis on our handsI told him that at this time Kapsis's credibility has dropped at the nadir. So, you have to find a way through other channels and not through Kapsis, in order to assure the Turks about your intentions and the government's policy.

Then he turned to me and said: are you willing to play that role? I replied – 'if you ask me so I will do it. You decide'.

I also told Papandreou that after the meeting I would have with Akiman he should ask Kapsis to call Akiman at the Ministry so as to give him official confirmation of what I would have said..

I went to Akiman and I told him about these things.

I told him that he had misunderstood the intentions of the Greek government. The Greek government did not want to buy the shares of the consortium in order to do research out of its territorial waters; on the contrary it wanted to stop the Canadian company from doing research east of Thasos.

He accepted what I told him. I also added that all these facts will be confirmed by Kapsis. While I was at his office, the phone rang and Akiman told me that it was Kapsis who wanted to see him. At that moment, I felt that my mission was complete.

⁵² See the chronicle of the crisis, Appendix, p.253.

⁵³ Ambassador Byron Theodoropoulos is a retired Greek diplomat of a high repute who has served at important posts related to Greek-Turkish relations. Ambassador Theodoropoulos confirmed that he visited Boutos at his office that day. Interview with Ambassador Byron Theodoropoulos, Athens, 10.09.01.

Akiman called the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ozal in London.⁵⁴ A couple of hours later Ozal made a statement on BBC saying, “[I]f Greece does not proceed with the drillings Turkey will not do anything”. This statement defused the crisis.

Boutos’ interference demonstrates the contingent character of social systems. His meeting with Akiman that day was incidental in that it was not scheduled by any decision-maker. Ambassador Akiman named that accidental element ‘God’ as he emphatically said “somehow God sent Mr. Boutos to my office”.⁵⁵

The main element in the interactions between Boutos and the Turkish Ambassador Akiman, and later with the Greek Prime Minister, was reflexive communication. In both cases, the pre-eminent element was an inquiry about how things were said and what their meaning was. That process enabled the re-entry of complexity into the unity of what is complex. The oversimplified distinctions drawn before, which had become constitutive elements of the crisis, were redressed.

4.2. The role of the USA and the UK in the De-escalation of the Crisis

The view that the crisis de-escalated due to the American and British intervention has prevailed in both Greece and Turkey.⁵⁶ Greeks - politicians, analysts, journalists - suggest that Papandreou's decision to close the American military base in Makri put pressure on the American administration to intervene and forced Turkey to withdraw. I will argue however, that the American administration in Washington could not have intervened decisively because it realised the emergence of the crisis at a very late stage. It was informed about the criticality of the situation by the American Ambassador in Athens, Bob Keally. The American Ambassador sent two reports, one late in the evening of the 26th of March and the other in the morning of the 27th of March.⁵⁷ These reports contradicted the CIA's evaluation of the situation. American intelligence seems to have been convinced that there was no risk of a dangerous crisis between the two neighbouring countries.⁵⁸ However, Ambassador Keally formed a different view after the meetings he had in Athens and the information he received from the American Embassy in Ankara. He was invited to the Greek Foreign Ministry

⁵⁴ Interview with Nazmi Akiman, Istanbul, 22.05.01.

⁵⁵ *ibid.*.

⁵⁶ See examples of the Greek and Turkish literature on crisis in the following section of this chapter "The Re-entry of Crisis to the Greek-Turkish Conflict".

⁵⁷ This is information presented on the newspaper *To Vima*, 05.04.87.

⁵⁸ See *To Vima*, 05.04.87.

for a briefing on the latest developments regarding the crisis on the 26th. At this meeting he had discussions with officials and the Greek position was explained to him; namely that Greece had no intention to proceed with drilling outside its demarcated territorial waters but it reserved its right to do so in the future.⁵⁹ When he went back to his office and read the telegrams that the American Embassy in Ankara sent to him, he realised that the Turkish authorities had a different perception of the situation. The information they had received through Ambassador Akiman was arguing that Greece was planning to undertake imminent action in the Aegean. Ambassador Keally reported this difference of interpretation to the American State Department and the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs.⁶⁰

His report arrived at Washington some time after midnight local time. The 8-hour difference between Athens and Washington was critical for the reaction on the other side of the Atlantic. By noon time on Friday, in Washington, that is on the 27th of March, the issue had not yet been high on the agenda of the political and military agencies of the White House. The Greek Ambassador in Washington, G. Papoulias, asked for an urgent meeting with the American Under-Secretary Roseanna Ridgeway for the morning of the 27th of March. However, the meeting was arranged for 6 o'clock in the afternoon because the Under-Secretary had already arranged to attend another meeting in the White House. This latter meeting concerned the relations of the USA with Western Europe but not the escalating Greek-Turkish crisis. Sources within the State Department appear to have known nothing "about any discussion by the Under-Secretary in the White House on the Greek-Turkish crisis".⁶¹ When the Greek Ambassador met with the Under-Secretary, the crisis had wound down. In Athens, it was already after midnight and Boutos had met with Ambassador Akiman and the Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou. Finally, Roseanna Ridgeway's answer when asked about the American role in the crisis, in a meeting of the Sub-Committee of Foreign Programmes of the Funds Committee of Congress, was that "the United States did not intervene in the dispute and they were careful with their relations with both countries".⁶²

⁵⁹ Interview with Ambassador Costas Zeppos, Athens, 14.09.01.

⁶⁰ Interview with Ambassador Costas Zeppos, Athens, 14.09.01.

⁶¹ *To Vima*, 05.04.87.

⁶² *Eleftherotypia*, 03.04.87.

The importance of Boutos's intervention was acknowledged by the American Ambassador Keally, with whom he met after he left the Turkish Embassy the same evening for a dinner at a mutual friend's house.⁶³

Another scenario about the de-escalation of the crisis suggests that the British Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, intervened putting pressure on the Turkish Prime Minister Turgut Ozal in London after the intervention of Lord Carrington, who was then the Secretary General of NATO. The rationale being that the Secretary General of NATO was concerned about the developments in Greek-Turkish relations especially after the Greek foreign minister Carolos Papoulias's trip to Bulgaria.⁶⁴ Papoulias argues that he flew to Sofia by military plane and he carried a personal message from the Greek Prime Minister Papandreou to Bulgarian President Todor Zhivkov. According to him, this trip was decided on the basis of an agreement for military co-operation that Greece had signed with Bulgaria. Furthermore, he maintains that President Zhivkov's reply was that "Greece should not be worried about the security of its borders with Bulgaria and I will give orders to move a division to the Bulgarian-Turkish borders".⁶⁵ Nevertheless, these allegations cannot be substantiated for the following reasons: First, the personal note the Greek Foreign Minister carried to Zhivkov made no reference to the military agreement. Papandreou was informing in his personal note to the Bulgarian President about the seriousness of the situation and asking about his thoughts. Second, the answer of the Bulgarian government as it was stated by the Deputy Foreign Minister, Ivan Ganev, on the 28th of March, - the day after the visit of the Greek Foreign Minister - was marked by a policy of an absolute equal distance from the two countries.⁶⁶ USSR too intervened

⁶³ Boutos was invited to this dinner days before the crisis. That evening everyone turned to Ambassador Keally to ask about the de-escalation of the crisis and the latter answered that Boutos was the one who knew how it happened. Interview with Ioannis Boutos, Athens, 05.07.01.

⁶⁴ "This move by Papandreou gave us a big advantage. It gave flesh and bones to the warning he had addressed many times to NATO privately and publicly. If there is a heated confrontation between Greece and Turkey - he was telling them - then the whole South-eastern flank of NATO will collapse." Yiannis Kapsis, *The Three Days of March*, p. 89.

⁶⁵ Interview with the then Foreign Minister Carolos Papoulias, Athens, 13.03.02.

⁶⁶ Ganev's statement was saying: "We would like the existing problems between our two neighbouring countries to be resolved....The escalation of disputes between our two neighbouring countries are not in favour of peace, stability, good neighbourhood and co-operation in the region of Balkans and thus it is not in the interest of Bulgaria. For that reason we want a peaceful solution to be found for the problems that really exist. However, in interstate relations non-existing issues emerge too, which cannot be solved through any kind of negotiations. That is why the most important thing is those who are responsible, governments and leaders, to follow pragmatic policies and to put forward existing problems and not constructed. We would like in our relations with our neighbours on the basis of equal dialogue to ask the resolution of all the problems and especially to direct our efforts towards the

during these days asking both parties to solve their problems peacefully. Finally, this understanding of the de-escalation of the crisis did not convince Turkey. Ambassador Akiman considered that to be a move on the part of Greece to show off.⁶⁷ Nevertheless, it is possible that Lord Carrington and Sir Geoffrey Howe contacted the Turkish Prime Minister Turgut Ozal and they did the same with the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well. But these contacts were of a general nature asking the two parties to resolve their dispute peacefully.⁶⁸ There is no indication that Lord Carrington took a position in favour of Greece, as Kapsis argues in his book.⁶⁹ Nor is there any evidence that he was convinced that the Turkish officials were responsible for the crisis. In discussions Lord Carrington had some days after the crisis in Washington with American officials, he asked the American administration to intervene on both sides in order to prevent another dangerous Greek-Turkish crisis. As for the crisis of 1987 and the Greek-Turkish conflict, he referred to "the political exigencies in both countries, which according to his view prevented the resolution of the conflict".⁷⁰

establishment of peace and security transforming our region to a zone without chemical and nuclear weapons." Bulgarian daily newspaper, Trud, 29.03.87.

⁶⁷ Interview with Ambassador Nazmi Akiman, Istanbul, 22.05.01. Ambassador Zeppos too agrees with that when he says that this movement "was for the sake of appearances. On the other hand the Bulgarian leaders did not commit themselves very much". Interview with Ambassador Costas Zeppos, Athens, 14.09.01.

⁶⁸ Another indication about the way the crisis was de-escalated may be drawn from the foreign press. American, British, and French newspapers argued that Papandreou used the crisis in order to serve his own personal political interests. Furthermore, there was no reference for involvement on the part of Lord Carrington and the United States. The *New York Times* saw Papandreou's crisis management as a political red herring in order to gain ground in the domestic front. The article was based on American diplomatic sources in Athens. There was also the argument that Papandreou's decision to close the American bases in Nea Makri might turn against him as this move demonstrated that Greece was a less reliable ally than Turkey.

It is interesting to see the way the Greek press received this information and analysed the foreign press. "Western Press Embittered over the Success of Greece in the Aegean" wrote *Eleftherotypia* on the 31st of March. The message this title conveys is that the Western press did not accept Greece's "victory". This however is not a "fact". Rather, it is an interpretation, an attribution of meaning to the information presented in the foreign press through the Greek understanding of the crisis. The logical question of how it happens that the American diplomats in Greece transmitted this information and why there are so many doubts not only in the American but in the foreign press in general regarding the emergence and development of the crisis was not put forth by the Greek press. The articles written on Greek newspapers selected information that was confirming their previous determinations of meaning. They did not question the content of those articles, they immediately proceeded in interpreting the views expressed there. The information presented by the foreign press was simply employed for the further auto-poiesis of existing themes in Greece, such as the theme of the Greek victory against Turkey and Greek independence vis-à-vis the West. The article is an illustrative example of the nature of social systems as closed and open at the same time. The Greek press as a function system is operationally closed and it communicates with its environment selectively rather than through some kind of rational processing, careful examination and evaluation of information.

⁶⁹ Yiannis Kapsis, *The Three Days of March*, pp.88-90.

⁷⁰ *Eleftherotypia*, 03.04.87.

5. The Autonomy of the System of Crisis of 1987

In the previous sections, I explored the emergence of the crisis of 1987, as temporalised complexity. The argument was that the crisis was the outcome of selections carried out in a multitude of social and psychic systems, guided by previously established schemes of interpretation. Simultaneous selections moving towards the same direction, namely the direction of confrontation, structured infinite complexity. Each selection had a reinforcing and self-reproducing effect on the emerging order of the crisis. The dynamics of crisis was found in the selectivity and connectability of communications. It is this aspect of communications operation that will be highlighted here as it was done in the other case studies too. It will be demonstrated that this is possible due to the self-referential nature of communication and the meaning specific strategies of generalization and re-specification.

Each social system, the politicians, the military, the media, and the consortium selected its information - sometimes the same piece of information - and interpreted it according to different distinctions. The consortium employed the profit/non profit distinction, the media the news/not news distinction etc. assigning to it different selectivity and connectivity. For example, the decision made by the Greek Prime Minister and the Minister of Industry to buy shares of the consortium was perceived by the consortium as harmful to its interests. At the same time, it was perceived by the Turkish authorities as revealing the Greek intentions for expansion of the Greek territorial waters. It was perceived as an act of sovereignty by part of the Greek press, and as a bluff of the Greek Prime Minister by the American intelligence services. On the other hand, the decision of the Turkish military to grant permission to the Turkish petroleum company was perceived as an act of deterrence by the Turkish military and media and as an act of aggression by the Greek state.

In the case of the crisis of 1987, references to the facts, e.g. the Greek decision for buying shares of the consortium, Kapsis's behaviour, the statement of the Secretary General of the Turkish NSC and other events, were detached from the time and locus of their occurrence to be connected to the history of the Greek Turkish conflict. For the Greek government, diplomacy and media, everything that occurred was relevant to the Turkish intentions to change the status quo in the Aegean. Every event or action, which took place in Turkey, was linked to previous crises like the invasion of Cyprus

in 1974, and the crisis in the Aegean in 1976.⁷¹ The details of the emergence and development of these crises were not important. For the Greek side it was Turkey that disputed the status quo. Turkish Prime Minister Ozal's trip to the USA and the statements made by a military and not a civilian officer were causally linked to become the basis of further action on the part of the Greek authorities.

Similar processes were carried out within the system of Turkish politics, the military and the media. On the 14th of March, Turgut Ozal stated that "our history with Greece is not new. It goes back before the 1980's"⁷² and the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the 26th of the same month said that "the fact is that Greece tried to invade Anatolia in the 1920s and by declaring that Cyprus is an extension of Hellenism tries to annex it to Greece. It proves who is the expansionist to the entire world.... And its stance now....is the clearest proof of Greek expansionism".⁷³

The initial condition, the Greek decision to buy shares of the consortium was not the cause of the system of crisis. The trigger of the crisis could be another incident as well. The crisis did not develop because Greek or Turkish sovereign rights were disputed; it was, **the expectation that these rights would be disputed** that directed social systems operations to the definition of the situation as crisis. Paradoxically enough, the Turkish and Greek governments had been making the same claims about the Berne Agreement for many years before the crisis. These claims and actions provoked official protests and public statements. Nevertheless, it was only in March 1987 that the claim of the violation of the Berne Agreement was perceived as the cause for a serious crisis.

The complexity explored in the previous section was condensed into the system of crisis. This development enabled various social and psychic systems to handle the complexity of the situation - now they had to deal only with the crisis - and absorbed uncertainty. The understanding or misunderstandings between the Deputy Foreign Minister and the Turkish Ambassador did not matter. Whether actually Denisson Morris or the Greek government was planning to carry out drilling beyond the demarcated 6 miles was irrelevant. The Canadian-led consortium, although appeared to trigger the crisis, it disappeared from the scene from the beginning of March. It is

⁷¹ "...Turks were testing us. The same happened with the crisis of 1976 and 1996.", Interview with Carolos Papoulias, Athens, 13.03.02.

⁷² See statement by Turgut Ozal, *Hürriyet*, 14.03.87.

⁷³ The statement of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs appeared in Turkish newspapers on the 21st of March 1987.

another paradox that no account of the crisis asks questions about the fate of the consortium after Parmeli's statements.⁷⁴

The above analysis demonstrates that the crisis of 1987 cannot be identified with one of the social and psychic systems that appear to have contributed to its constitution; neither could it be subjected to control or planning by any of them. It emerged and developed as an autonomous autopoietic system through the normal operations of social and psychic systems in a modern functionally differentiated society.

6. The Re-entry of the Crisis of 1987 to the Greek-Turkish Conflict

Traditional crisis theory assumes that when a crisis has de-escalated it has come to an end. Here I argue against this view, following the same argument I put forth regarding the crisis of 1996: the crisis of 1987 has not yet ended. It did not end after the withdrawal of the two fleets to their harbours. On the contrary, a **simplification** of the crisis itself has re-entered the system of conflict and even today it is reproduced through the mechanisms of writing and printing as manifested in political rhetoric, academic literature and products of the media. In the analysis of the re-entry of the crisis of 1996 to the Greek-Turkish conflict, I stressed in particular the role of the system of science in the autopoiesis of the conflict. Here, I seek to demonstrate the process of the self-reproduction of the Greek-Turkish conflict through the normal operations not only of science but other function systems like politics, and media as well.

In the aftermath of the crisis neither Boutos nor the Greek Prime Minister himself or the Turkish Ambassador Nazmi Akiman revealed what had happened during the most critical day of the crisis. Boutos's stance was determined by his pre-established understanding of Greek-Turkish relations. First, although he believed that during the crisis of 1987 important mistakes were made on the part of the Greek authorities and that the Greek people should know about that, he did not want to provide justification for the Turkish side and expose the Greek side.⁷⁵ It should be noted that his conviction that Turkey had expansionist aims against Greece also constitutes the background for his stance in the wake of the crisis.⁷⁶ Second, Greek-Turkish relations had come to a critical point and the revelation of his own experience might have complicated things

⁷⁴ Interview with the then Foreign Minister Carolos Papoulias, Athens, 13.03.02.

⁷⁵ Interview with Ioannis Boutos, Athens, 11.07.02.

further. Andreas Papandreou had warned him that he would deny anything he would say about his own intervention and asked him to transmit this message to Ambassador Akiman too. Therefore, he also thought that any revelation might not help the improvement of Greek-Turkish relations.⁷⁷

As for Papandreou's stance, the day after the crisis, he was concerned with his political survival. In particular, at that moment he was being attacked by the leader of the main opposition party, Constantinos Mitsotakis, for having constructed the crisis in order to unify the internal front.⁷⁸ Any revelation about Boutos's role would not have helped him to cope with this front. On the other hand, it would not have helped the aim of the Turkish Prime Minister Turgut Ozal to bring Turkey closer to the EU as he knew that the road was also passing through Greek-Turkish relations. Accordingly, those decisions were selections made by self-referential systems; based on their own distinct rationales and aims and their understanding of their environment. These decisions, however, framed the existing accounts of the crisis.

Kapsis has written a book about the crisis and he has participated in many public discussions in Greece on Greek-Turkish relations. His belief was that the crisis was de-escalated after Papandreou's decision to send Papoulias to Sofia and his own active diplomacy through his communication with Lord Carrington and the American Ambassador Keally. Nevertheless, some years after the crisis he was informed about Boutos's intervention from a speech Ambassador Akiman gave at Harvard University in Boston on the occasion of a seminar in 1998.⁷⁹ He interpreted that revelation as follows:

Akiman said that a forgotten politician who had left the party of Nea Dimokratia asked to see Papandreou about this matter [the crisis] and he saw him. I asked many members of the government and they told me that that was impossible. Nobody could see Papandreou. You see, for an ex-member of the parliament...to meet with the Prime Minister..[unfinished sentence] ...There is only one case in which [Papandreou] could have received him [Boutos]: if he was an envoy of the Turks or the Americans. There is no way that he was an envoy of the Turks, therefore he was an envoy of the Americans, but of other services besides the Embassy - I emphasize this - other services apart from the Embassy, which was doing its job at that time.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ *ibid.*

⁷⁷ *ibid.*

⁷⁸ See Constantinos Mitsotakis' s statements at the aftermath of the crisis that there was no crisis but Papandreou had deceived the Greek people. *Eleftherotypia, Ta Nea, Kathimerini, Eleftheros Typos* 29th and 30th of March 1987.

⁷⁹ Interview with the then Deputy Foreign Minister Yiannis Kapsis, Athens, 18.07.01.

⁸⁰ *ibid.*

Kapsis attempted to make sense of this piece of information - Boutos's involvement - interpreting it according to his pre-established distinctions. The pattern of "the evil role" of the American secret services is recurrent in his rhetoric and it is coupled with his understanding of the Greek-Turkish conflict. This is what is implied here too. This political rhetoric and the journalistic accounts in the same line have contributed to the construction of a generalized and simplified image of the events of March 1987, which re-entered the Greek-Turkish conflict.

In what follows I will present some examples of the process of re-entry of the crisis to the Greek-Turkish conflict through academic analysis demonstrating that the system of science employed its own distinctions to compensate for the lack of information on the emergence of crisis.

According to Hristodoulos Giallourides, Professor of International Relations at Panteion University of Athens, who has also served as special advisor to the Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Defence "[T]he Greek-Turkish crisis of March of 1987 started with the decision of the consortium, which was exploiting the oil of Thassos, to proceed with exploration for the existence of new oil deposits at the site of Babouras, east of Thassos, beyond the 6 nautical miles... It might be the case that the crisis was initially provoked by a third party - the consortium - but Turkey attempted to exploit it for the purpose of promoting its constant aim for resolution of the continental shelf problem in the Aegean through political negotiations".⁸¹ Another expert on Greek-Turkish relations, Professor Thanos Veremis of Athens University, argues that "[T]he crisis of 1987 started with the Turkish intention to prospect for hydrocarbons in the underwater area of the Aegean, which is considered to belong to the Greek continental shelf, and led the two countries closer than ever to conflict".⁸² The Greek analyses of the crisis are based on the unquestioned assumption that Greece did not want to provoke Turkey and this is something that Turkey knew.⁸³

⁸¹ Giallourides, Hristodoulos, *The Greek-Turkish Conflict from Cyprus to Imia 1955-1996, The Press Perspective*, Sideris, 1997, pp.281-284.

⁸² Veremis, Thanos, *History of Greek-Turkish Relations 1453-1998* sec ed., ELIAMEP, Sideris, 1998, p.154-155.

⁸³ See also Angelos Syrigos's understanding of the same issue: "In early March 1987, the international consortium announced its plans to drill a promising new well in the Babouras area. The Greek government decided to nationalize the consortium in order to avoid any problems with Turkey."

Moreover, politicians, diplomats, academics, journalists, and ordinary citizens still believe that Greece gained an important victory against Turkey at the end of March 1987, due to Papandreou's strategy, which included Papoulias's mission to Bulgaria and the closing of the American base in Makri. The Deputy Minister of Defence, Nikos Kourris writes about the crisis: "The crisis of March 1987 is, I think, the crowning achievement in the political career of Andreas Papandreou".⁸⁴ Admiral Hristos Lyberis, who was the Commander-in-chief of the Navy during the crisis of 1987, and the Commander-in-chief of the Greek Armed Forces during the crisis of 1996, evaluates Papandreou's crisis management as follows: "Independently of the view one has of the person of Andreas Papandreou, his stance [during the crisis] cannot be related to anything else than to his ability to understand the strategic dimensions of his country's foreign policy and of seeing the choices and problems beyond the horizon and the duty to the country".⁸⁵

On the other hand Turkish scientific analyses argue that Greece was the instigator of the crisis. Sükru Sina Gürel, professor of International Relations, who has also served in important posts within the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, wrote about the crisis: "In March 1987, a Greek company, after the decision of Papandreou's government, started research for oil east of the island of Thasos, that is, not yet demarcated Aegean continental shelf".⁸⁶ As far as Ozal's crisis management is concerned, Turkish analysts argue that it was skillful and increased the prestige of the Turkish Prime Minister within Turkey and abroad.⁸⁷

These analyses project an over-simplified image of the emergence and development of the crisis, which seeks to establish direct and simple causal links among the events and actions. The paradox here is that although they claim to base their analyses on real facts they defy reality. What really happened does not become the subject of research. These very facts are obscured through vague expressions and inaccuracies. As was shown above, Gürel argues that it was a "Greek company" that was preparing

⁸⁴ Kourris, Nikos, *Greece and Turkey, the Fifty-Year War*, Nea Synora, A. A. Livani, p.15, Hristos Lyberis, *National Strategy and Crisis management*, Poiotita, 1997, p.113.

⁸⁵ Lyberis, Hristos, *National Strategy and Crisis Management*, Poiotita, 1997, p.113.

⁸⁶ Gürel, Sükru Sina, *The Greek Turkish Relations - 1821-1993*, Ankara, 1993, p.94. Gürel became Turkey's Minister of Foreign Affairs after the resignation of Ismail Cem on the 10th of July 2002.

⁸⁷ Cengiz Çandar, a Turkish analyst, writer of several political books and Ozal's special advisor, experienced the crisis in both countries as he traveled to Athens on the 27th of March. His own view is that the de-escalation of the crisis was Ozal's major victory not only on the domestic front but on the international one too. Interview with Cengiz Çandar, Istanbul, 10.11.01.

to drill. Veremis maintains that it was "the Turkish intention to prospect for hydrocarbons".⁸⁸

Academic analyses of the crisis of 1987 are self-referential communicative systems which process selected information about the events of the crisis - hetero-reference - through theories they have already constructed - self-reference. Deterrence theories and game theory have been employed in order to rationalize *a posteriori* the events scholars have selected in the first place, according to these schemes. Professor Giallourides writes "[Turkey] acting as a rational actor after the calculation of costs and benefits that were involved, preferred to withdraw"⁸⁹ and at another point "..the crisis of 1987 was a Chicken Game and the threats of the Greek Prime Minister aimed at making his threats of military confrontation as believable as possible".⁹⁰ Here, constructions of science like theories of deterrence attribute causality to the events. Furthermore, the general theoretical frameworks of international crisis analysis is coupled with the constructions of the Greek and Turkish international relations theory. Greek interpretations of the crisis perceive the crisis as another premeditated Turkish attempt to draw Greece to the negotiation table, which will lead to the change of the status quo in favour of Turkey. Turkish interpretations still can see the 'Megali Idea' behind the crisis of 1987, that is, the plans of Greece to incorporate all the Greeks and all the lands where Greeks had settled since antiquity within its borders.⁹¹

The role of these accounts within a functionally differentiated society is very important. Sukru Sina Gürel says in the preface of his book on Greek-Turkish relations that he prepared his study over ten years of teaching Turkish undergraduate and graduate students of political science and international relations. His book on Greek-Turkish relations is an internal artificial construct of Turkish social science and in particular political science. His lectures are communicative systems, constitutive

⁸⁸ See op.cit. 86 and 82 respectively.

⁸⁹ Giallourides, Hristodoulos, *The Greek-Turkish Conflict from Cyprus to Imia 1955-1996, The Press Perspective*, Sideris, 1997, p.290.

⁹⁰ *ibid.*, p.287.

⁹¹ "The lessons that Turks drew from the Cyprus problem is that the Greek *Megali Idea* of restoring the lost Byzantine Empire of the former Constantinople and the Anatolian heartland was not dead and any Greek designs and attempts aimed at creating or benefiting from a window of opportunity to extend Greece's borders at the expense of Turkey should not be tolerated in Cyprus, in the Aegean or elsewhere." Ayman, Gülden, S., *The Kardak (Imia) Crisis and Turkish-Greek Relations*", *Hellenic Studies*, Vol.9, No 2, 200, p.56. See also similar references to the *Megali Idea* in the preface of the book written by Hussein Pazarci on *The Status of Demilitarisation of the Islands in the Eastern Aegean*, Ankara University, 1986.

elements of the Greek-Turkish conflict within Turkish society that enable further and further connections, structural couplings which serve the autopoiesis of the conflict.

The paradox here is that although Greek and Turkish scientific accounts employ the same analytical tools - rational theories - and they study the same issue - the crisis of 1987 - they draw completely opposed conclusions as regards the causes of the crisis and the way the crisis was de-escalated. Nevertheless, they make a claim to truthfulness; after all, science is supposed to describe and explain reality. They do not ask how it occurs that truth has two sides with one opposed to the other. They cannot problematize the introduction of their own distinctions in their analyses that is they cannot problematize their own blind spots.

The re-entry of the crisis to the system of the conflict and thereby the reproduction of the conflict is illustrated by the following example. The Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time, Carolos Papoulias, considers the management of the crisis by Papandreou as an exemplary case of international crisis management to be taught in seminars of crisis management.⁹² This interpretation of crisis has become a guide for future action and a blueprint to understand Greek-Turkish relations. Papoulias himself, present President of the interparty Committee of the Parliament for Foreign Affairs interprets the fact that there was no other Greek-Turkish crisis after 1987 and during the time Papandreou was in office as evidence that his strategic capacities had deterred Turkey from trying something new.⁹³

⁹² See interview with Carolos Papoulias, then Minister of Foreign Affairs, in the newspaper *Ta Nea*, 30.10.00.

⁹³ "...and I want to go back to the testing of [Prime Minister] Simitis [by Turkey] in the Imia crisis. You see, I wonder how it occurred that Turkey did not exploit Papandreou's weakness, because of his illness, when Papandreou was still in power. Analysts of psychological warfare maintain that when the enemy is in a situation of illness you can exploit this event. They did not do that. They did it however when Simitis came to power. Which makes me ask why a crisis did not happen before. And I say that fear keeps people in their place. Taking into account Papandreou's determination in the crisis of 1987, even this thought deterred the Turks. 'Papandreou, even if ill, will do the same thing; he will decide for conflict with us'. Whereas Simitis was being considered by Turks...[unfinished sentence] and I have to say that he is not a man of crisis and he showed that in the Imia crisis. The crisis management in Imia was bad." Interview with Carolos Papoulias, Athens, 13.03.02.

2. The Davos Peace Process

The de-escalation of the crisis through Boutos's accidental intervention 'disappointed' Papandreou's expectations and enabled the emergence of a new self-description, which was reflected in the peace initiative launched in the aftermath of the crisis. This initiative has been named after the place the two leaders, Andreas Papandreou and Turgut Ozal, met, which was in Davos, Switzerland. This meeting was followed by several other meetings among Greek and Turkish officials. Nevertheless, the process did not take hold in the Greek and Turkish society.

Press and international relations literature in both countries have discussed the Davos process extensively, suggesting that the cause of its failure was mainly the conflict of interests of the two countries and the other side's provocative attitudes.⁹⁴ Here it is argued that this view is an oversimplification, which does not answer why and how the process failed.

The Davos peace process is an interesting case for comparison with the peace processes that developed after the crisis of 1996 and examined in chapters IV and V. It will be demonstrated that the interactions among officials provided a field of experimentation to society and a test for the new emerging order of co-operation. The failure of this process to become crystallized into some structures of a system of co-operation was not determined by the governmental actions or decisions. Rather, its development was determined by its inability to connect within Greek and Turkish societies under the condition of the institutionalized Greek-Turkish conflict.

2.1. The Experiment

In the aftermath of the crisis Papandreou and Ozal agreed to make an effort to solve the problems between Greece and Turkey. Their first meeting took place in January 1988 in Davos, on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum. In this meeting the two leaders decided not to discuss the thorny issues. "We solved no problems but we

⁹⁴ Süha Bölükbaşı writes about the Davos and other efforts made in order to improve the Greek-Turkish relations: "... although they [Greece, Turkey and the two Cypriot communities] have been sincere in their efforts to tackle all or some of the outstanding problems -either through negotiations or through international conferences- they have not been able to do so because there are wide divergences in their perceptions of their interests". "The Turco-Greek Dispute, Issues Policies and Prospects", in *Turkish Foreign Policy, New Prospects*, ed. by Dodd, C.H., The Eothen Press, p.28,1992. On the other hand Van Coufoudakis put the emphasis on the Turkish attitudes during 1988 and 1989. "Greek Political Party Attitudes towards Turkey: 1974-1989", in *Greek-Turkish Conflict in the 1990s*, Dimitri Conostas ed., p.53.

agreed to have no war" was the statement made by Papandreou when he was asked by *The Times* to comment on the results of his meeting with the Turkish Prime Minister.⁹⁵ Furthermore, the two leaders employed existing institutionalized practices of conflict resolution. They signed a memorandum, which was designed to pave the way for peaceful relations between the states. They agreed to establish a 'hotline' between Athens and Ankara as a crisis preventive measure. Moreover, they agreed on an elaborate plan of confidence-building measures and they decided to set up a joint committee at ambassadorial level to define the problem areas, which would "explore the possibilities of closing the gap and move towards lasting solutions, the progress of which will be reviewed".⁹⁶ Other joint committees would discuss the development of closer economic and political relations through a series of meetings. Moreover, they encouraged businessmen to co-operate and invest in both countries.

The political and economic committees met twice in 1988 and their sub-committees met more often in Athens, Ankara and Istanbul. One month after the meeting in Davos in February 1988, the two Foreign Ministers, Carolos Papoulias and Mesut Yilmaz met in Athens. The product of this meeting was the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding, which made the provision that military exercises would be avoided during the summer tourist period.

The two Prime Ministers met again in March 1988 at the NATO Summit in Brussels where they repeated their dedication "to the spirit of Davos".⁹⁷ This meeting was followed by the first visit by a Turkish Prime Minister after 36 years to Athens on the 13th of June 1988. During this meeting the committees appointed for discussions failed to come to any conclusion. However, the two leaders tried to down play this failure in a joint press conference.

In the last meeting the two political committees had in Istanbul, the then Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mesut Yilmaz, after a discussion he had with Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Yiannis Kapsis and having consulted Prime Minister Ozal, proposed to him that the two states sign an agreement on the dispute in the Aegean Sea.⁹⁸ Nevertheless, neither this proposal found fertile ground to be developed

⁹⁵ *The Times*, 01.02.88.

⁹⁶ For the Davos communiqué see "The Week in Review", Greek Embassy Press and Information Service, Washington D.C., 1 February 1988, No. 4/88.

⁹⁷ Joint press communiqué, Brussels, 4 March 1988, Yearbook of 1988, ELIAMEP.

⁹⁸ Kapsis, Yiannis, *The Three Days of March*, p.175

nor were the other efforts fruitful. The Davos process did not develop further in the second half of 1988.

2.2. The Paradoxes of the Davos Process

Mainstream analysis of the Davos process describes the various meetings officials of the two states had and their results explaining them through a linear causal analysis. Here, it is argued that the failure of the development of the Davos process could not be attributed to any premeditated plan designed by the governments of the two states. Rather, it will be demonstrated that social patterns of behaviour and institutionalized practices constrained the selectivity and connectivity of this peace process as they directed social systems' selections towards the system of conflict instead of co-operation. Furthermore, as demonstrated in the analysis of peace processes from 1996 to 1999 here too, the argument is that interactions do not provide solid ground for future action but they offer a field of experimentation for modern society.

The Davos peace process did not find connections to develop in Greek and Turkish society. The paradox here is that the very condition for the establishment of this process of communication, secrecy, doomed the process to failure. Papandreou kept the preparation of the Davos meeting secret not only from the public eye, but even from his close associates. His aim was to set aside the 'hard-liners' within the Greek bureaucracy and within his own party.⁹⁹ Ambassador Akiman argues that Papandreou had asked him "not to contact him, call him, send letters, or anything. He said he would find the way to contact me. Furthermore he asked me to transmit his messages to Ozal in person. And he had emphatically told me 'Mr. Akiman, do not talk on the phone or send coded telegrams to Ankara on this matter, fly and communicate...'"¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ Angelos M. Syrigos, *The Status of the Aegean Sea According to International Law*, Sakkoulas/Bruylant 1998, p.248-249.

¹⁰⁰ Ambassador Akiman emphasized that Papandreou was very careful regarding his communication with Ankara. The following incident makes that clear: "One day I wanted to see Mr. Papandreou and I was thinking of ways to see him. It was the Epiphany ceremony on the 6th of January. We were supposed to go to the port of Pireas where the ceremony would take place. Mr. Sartzetakis, the President of the Republic of Greece, came and all the ambassadors were there too. There, I was watching Mr. Papandreou so as to tell him that I had to see him immediately. I was watching him what he was doing. At the end of the ceremony he said something to Mr. Sartzetakis, probably he asked permission to go and see the diplomats. Then he started shaking hands one by one and when he came to shake hands with me it was only 5 seconds we had to shake hands and I told him 'I have to see you, Sir, today' he said 'come and see me at two' and he went away". Interview with Ambassador Nazmi Akiman, Istanbul. That Papandreou followed this tactic in his communication with his Turkish counterpart is further confirmed in Kapsis 's book. p.116, as well as in the speech Akiman gave in the Center for European Studies in Harvard University, http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/kokkalis/leaders_akiman.html.

Similarly, Ozal did not explain the Davos process either to his colleagues or to the Turkish media and public.¹⁰¹ Secrecy impeded the intensification and amplification of the Davos process.

Indeed, the undertaking of this initiative by Papandreou was inexplicable and surprising for many Greeks. Kapsis writes about it: "It was a big surprise. The question remained unanswered: at the aftermath of a big victory, what made Papandreou request...negotiations as if he had been defeated? We expected that kind of initiative from Ozal".¹⁰² In addition, the tactic of secrecy was observed by other social systems. Social systems in order to make sense of what was happening employed their own distinctions for the processing of information and the continuation of their autopoiesis. The selections the systems of diplomacy, media, civil society, the military and the bureaucracy in Greece and Turkey made simultaneously while operating in their own autonomous way constrained complexity. Nevertheless, they were oriented towards the direction of conflict instead of co-operation.

The institutionalized conflict within the Greek and Turkish society constrained the selectivity and connectivity of communication about co-operation. The crisis of 1987 had reinforced the dynamics that is the connectability of the system of the conflict. Greek and Turkish accounts - political, journalistic, and academic - of the crisis were all in a jubilant strain. Greeks were celebrating Papandreou's decisiveness and strategic thought whereas Turks were convinced that Greece withdrew. The way the crisis was perceived to have de-escalated offered further points for connection to themes that constituted the conflict. The aftermath of the crisis found Greeks and Turks convinced that the use or the threat of power was the effective means to deal with the "other side".

The resignation of Greek senior career diplomats from the diplomatic corps was a manifestation of the different interpretation of the events that followed the crisis by the system of diplomacy.¹⁰³ The Ambassador to the USSR, Mihalis Dountas, the Ambassador to Cyprus, Themis Stoforopoulos, and the head of the Greek-Turkish section of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Serbos, resigned in order to express "their concern about the impact of these initiatives [the Davos

¹⁰¹ Interview with Yalim Eralp, Istanbul, 04.05.02.

¹⁰² Kapsis, Yiannis, *The Three Days of March*, p.111.

¹⁰³ See Angelos Syrigos, *The Status of the Aegean Sea According to International Law*, p.268

process] on the long-term policies of Turkey towards the Hellenic world".¹⁰⁴ They were convinced that the Greek government should follow the policy of deterrence instead of engaging in dialogue. After their resignation they engaged in active opposition to this new policy of rapprochement. The Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and other diplomats in the Ministry tried hard to redress the legal perspectives of the Aegean question, and to narrow the dispute to the delimitation of the continental shelf.¹⁰⁵ Kapsis himself admits that even after the meeting of the two Prime Ministers in Brussels, he was applying the previous policies "without... asking".¹⁰⁶

The Turkish military opposed this process.¹⁰⁷ Four months after signing the memorandum for a moratorium on flights in the Aegean by the two Ministers of Foreign Affairs, the Turkish military abolished it in practice. Turkish jets started their flights again.¹⁰⁸ It was the same memorandum, which made Papoulias the target of fierce polemics in Greece, accusing him of treason.¹⁰⁹

The main national newspapers were critical of Ozal's policy and when the latter went to Davos they warned him to follow a tough line on the Aegean continental shelf issue.¹¹⁰ When the Turkish public was asked regarding the prospects for a partial withdrawal of the army forces from Cyprus, 45 per cent was absolutely negative. Polls conducted in late May indicated that two-thirds of the Greek public did not support the rapprochement. Furthermore, another survey a couple of weeks before Ozal's visit to Athens indicated that about 30 percent considered his visit a provocation.¹¹¹ The different interpretations of the peace process was manifested also in the

¹⁰⁴ *ibid.*, p.263.

¹⁰⁵ Syrigos, Angelos *The Status of the ...*, p.263.

¹⁰⁶ Kapsis, Yiannis, *The Three Days of March*, p.151.

¹⁰⁷ Mehmet Ali Birand's account of the Davos Process based on interviews with the Prime Minister Turgut Ozal, the Foreign Minister Mesut Yilmaz, the Special Advisor to the Prime Minister, Duna, the Ambassador to the EC Ozdem Sanberk, Süleyman Demirel and Ismet Inonu is illuminating as regards this aspect. Birand argues that the Davos process was undermined by the constraints "public opinion and the rigid subconscious ideas of the 'establishment' placed on the implementation of the vision of the two prime ministers". See Birand, Mehmet Ali, "Turkey and the Davos Process: Experiences and Prospects", in Conostas, Dimitri, (ed.), *The Greek-Turkish Conflict in the 1990s*, pp.27-39.

¹⁰⁸ Interview with Carolos Papoulias, Athens, 02.07.02.

¹⁰⁹ *ibid.*.

¹¹⁰ See article written by Mehmet Ali Birand in *Milliyet* 30 January 1988, also statements by Suleyman Demirel and Bülent Eçevit, *Hürriyet* 30 January 1988.

¹¹¹ Pridham, Geoffrey, "Linkage Politics Theory and the Greek-Turkish Rapprochement", in Conostas, Dimitri, (ed.), *The Greek-Turkish Conflict in the 1990s*, 1992, p.85.

demonstrations of Turkish dissidents and Greek Cypriots in Athens during the days of Ozal's visit.¹¹²

Papandreou's new policy could not reverse the dynamics of conflict that is the connectability of communication about the conflict. One of the issues around which the polemics of the Davos process centred was the Cyprus issue. Papandreou was accused of not discussing the Cyprus problem with Ozal in their first meetings and therefore not making this 'national issue' the first priority. Ironically, it was Papandreou's rhetoric over the years of his administration that raised the expectations of the Greek people regarding the Cyprus problem. From the time he came to power, one of the two preconditions he had set for the resumption of dialogue with Turkey was the withdrawal of the Turkish troops from Cyprus. The other was that Turkey should recognize the Greek rights in the Aegean.¹¹³ The day after the Davos meeting, Papandreou was accused by the opposition and the Greek news media because he did not take the opportunity to implement his declared policy.

Answering these criticisms within the Greek Parliament, the Prime Minister said in a laconic way: '*Mea culpa*'. This became the spearhead of the attack of the polemics against Davos. The opponents of the Davos process propagated it as if Papandreou himself had admitted a big mistake. However, according to the then foreign minister Carolos Papoulias, who had followed the development of this process closely since the meeting of the two leaders in Davos, the meaning of these two words was completely different. Papandreou actually meant to say that he undertook the responsibility for this tactic because he believed that he could not discuss this issue in his first meeting with the Turkish leader.¹¹⁴

The institutions established through the Davos process did not take hold in Greek and Turkish society. Programmes of action and programmes of goals were reversed in the stage of their implementation by pre-established social structures like other institutionalized practices. An apt illustration of the development of the process

¹¹² Birand, Mehmet, Ali, "Turkey and the Davos Process: Experiences and Prospects", in Conostas, Dimitri, p.35.

¹¹³ This policy fits in with the general framework of Papandreou's rhetoric regarding Greek foreign policy developed in the years when he was opposition leader and the first years of his administration. During his election campaign in 1981 he had emphasized the need for an independent Greek foreign policy vis-à-vis NATO and the EEC. His main argument being that these organizations failed to prevent the occupation of Cyprus by Turkey in 1974. However, despite this rhetoric, in practice he followed the steps of his predecessors as regards the European orientation of Greece and NATO as well.

¹¹⁴ Interview with the then Minister of Foreign Affairs Carolos Papoulias, Athens, 02.07.02.

provides us the example of the decision of the Turkish government to invalidate the two illegal secret decrees of 1964 for the seizure of the fortunes of the Greek citizens who used to live in Istanbul at that time.¹¹⁵ This aimed at enabling Greeks to go back to Istanbul and claim their properties. Nevertheless, this has not been an easy process. In many cases judicial proceedings were involved, which also entailed a time-consuming procedure and the interference of political considerations.¹¹⁶ In some cases, the secret decrees were re-activated in practice through judicial decisions based on the institutionalized rationale of the decrees. These occurrences were observed by various social systems and interpreted as expressions of the designs of the Turkish government rather than autonomous operations of the legal system for example. Paradoxically enough, in the end, communication about the Davos process within Greece and Turkey led to a reinforcement of the system of conflict.

Conclusions

In this chapter I examined the crisis of 1987 and the Davos peace process that followed in its aftermath. Both emerged and developed through precisely the same processes and mechanisms that is morphogenetic evolutionary processes of communication. Papandreou's decision to buy shares of the consortium was the 'butterfly' which enabled chain reactions within a multitude of social and psychic systems and increased the complexity of the situation. The emergence and de-escalation of the crisis of 1987 led to the Davos peace process.

The development of the crisis to a new attractor as well as the failure of the Davos peace process to develop further were constituted as the unity of the difference of

¹¹⁵ The two secret decrees were only one out of a number of discriminatory measures taken against the Greek minority living in Istanbul during the last century. This specific measure was considered to be a part of the Turkish reprisals for the suffering of Turkish-Cypriots in Cyprus. It will suffice to note here that at the beginning of the twentieth century more than 100 thousand Greeks were living in Istanbul. Towards the end of the century less than three thousand, most of them elderly people, are left there. Alexandris, Alexis, "The Greek Minority in Turkey, 1918-1956 and Greco-Turkish Relations", Athens, 1983. See also on the Capital Tax and the Secret Decrees, Hulya Demir and Ridvan Akar, *The Last Exiles of Istanbul*, ("Istanbul'un Son Sürgünleri"), İletisim, 1994.

¹¹⁶ An example is the case of [2], the owner of 35 hectares in Yesilkoy. In 1988 she tried to sell her property but the Municipality opened a trial against her and the court decided that she could not sell it. She lodged an appeal against the decision to a higher court and the latter decided in 1995 that it was not within its competence to decide, thus it referred her to the court of the first instance. The latter decided in 2001, that it could not recognise her right to sell because this right emanates from hereditary right of succession. That decision was based on the grounds that Muslims of a Turkish origin living in Western Thrace, Greece, cannot bequeath inheritances to Turks, therefore the Turkish court does not recognise the right of a Greek citizen to inherit from a Turkish citizen of a Greek origin. [2] went to the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs to ask whether this was true and there she received a certificate which she submitted to the court that assures that Turks can inherit from Muslim Greek citizens.

themselves and their environment, that is they were both enabled and constrained by their environment. Neither a crisis nor a peace process is a self-sufficient entity or a unit independent of its environment; put it more succinctly, its environment is not less important than the system. Social and psychic systems that formed the environment of the crisis of 1987 and the Davos process, Greek and Turkish media, politics, bureaucracy and individuals and groups carried out their selections under the condition of the institutionalized double contingency of the Greek-Turkish conflict. The system of conflict operated as an attractor, which attracted observations that confirmed it. The condition of distrust built up over the years before the crisis was an important structural constraint to the emerging orders.

Autocatalytic processes of communication, re-entries of previously established semantics back into the society determined the emergence and development of the crisis and the failure of the Davos process to be established as a new self-description for Greek and Turkish societies. Pre-established patterns of behaviour, social practices and interconnected themes provided the necessary connections for the autopoiesis of crisis and conflict. They guided social systems' meaning determinations towards the direction of crisis and conflict. That process enabled them to reduce infinite complexity and continue their autopoiesis.

This analysis breaks down the assumption of one rationality be it the protection of national interests or the rationale of peace. Various social and psychic systems have their own distinct rationalities. Furthermore, although they might act rationally according to their own "meaning world" that does not mean correspondence to one objective reality. Given the infinite complexity of their environment, systems can access reality only selectively. Simultaneous selections towards the same direction of meaning determination constrain and structure complexity. The selective character of the way systems operate illustrates the contingent nature of the crisis as opposed to the necessity implied in conventional analysis.

Social and psychic systems cannot control their environment neither can they control the consequences of their actions. The two Prime Ministers were not the protagonists of the crisis of 1987. Neither were the protagonists Kapsis, Ambassador Akiman, or the Turkish generals and the media. All of them contributed to the emergence of the crisis, by "acting" upon their previous determinations of meaning. Yet, they could not see the re-entry of their distinctions back to the emerging system of the crisis. The

system of crisis was autonomous and independent from the operations of the various social systems that contributed to its development.

Similarly, the development of the Davos peace process was not determined by the will or the national interests of the two countries but by the dynamics of communication in a functionally differentiated society. The Davos process provided the Greek and the Turkish societies with a field of experimentation, a test for the boundaries of existing social systems. It gave rise to new themes, and some tentative institutions of co-operation. Nevertheless, these structures did not prove successful in forming chains of connections and being amplified.

This analysis places the emphasis on the "social" character of the crisis of 1987 and the Davos peace process. The semantics the social and psychic systems employed in their determinations of meaning cannot be reduced to a subject. The case of the Davos peace process illustrates the social character of peace processes as opposed to conventional analysis of the crisis, emphasizes the role of individuals. Although Papandreou was one of the most charismatic leaders in Greece's history, admired by colleagues and followers and respected by his opponents his policy of co-operation was constrained by the existing social structures in Greece that is institutionalized practices, patterns of behavior and the system of the conflict. On the other side of the Aegean, Turgut Ozal was also a strong leader with a clear vision of Turkey becoming part of Europe. Nevertheless, despite their expressed will and efforts the Davos process atrophied as it could not connect within the Greek and Turkish societies.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS

This thesis is the first application of Luhmann's modern systems theory to the field of conflict resolution and, in particular, to the study of crisis and peace processes. Luhmann's theory was employed to examine two Greek-Turkish crises and several peace processes such as negotiation, mediation, problem-solving workshops and conferences that aimed to improve the communication between the two sides of the Aegean Sea. The thesis demonstrated that the theory of social autopoiesis is a fruitful and rich perspective, which can enable us to ask new questions and explore aspects of these phenomena that other theories have difficulties to deal with.

Mainstream approaches conceptualize international crisis and peace processes as unique and exceptional instances of international relations driven by a particular rationale, that is the rationale of political gains for crisis processes and the rationale of peace for peace processes. This conceptualization often justifies the separate treatment of these phenomena, which further accounts for the fragmented nature of the ensuing analysis. The underlying assumption here is that society is hierarchically differentiated, constituted of rational actions or decisions made by individuals.

The results of my empirical research and analysis through Luhmann's theory demonstrated that this perspective cannot see, let alone explain, the paradoxes involved in these processes. The reason for that is that it cannot go beyond uni-linear causality. To be able to explore the dynamics of crisis and peace processes we need to change our way of thinking and challenge what we take for granted. Luhmann's theory applied to the study of crisis and peace processes led to the examination of these processes from a completely different perspective, the improbable probable perspective. This perspective enables us to put forth original questions about conflict and peace in modern society.

From the viewpoint of social autopoiesis the phenomena of crisis and peace processes are considered as integral part of the continuous evolution of the Greek and Turkish societies. They are neither exceptional instances nor they involve only the two governments. Rather, they are being self-reproduced constantly in modern society through recursive processes of communication.

The main conclusions of the thesis can be summarized as follows:

1. Conflict Theory

The main conclusion of this thesis is counterintuitive and subversive: Crisis and peace processes are selections made by the whole of modern society in its process of its blind evolution which is based on the selection and variation of communication. It was demonstrated that these phenomena do not concern only segments of society such as the system of politics. They emerge and develop through the complexity of modern society and their dynamics is the dynamics of communication about crisis and co-operation to get selected and connected within society.

This approach breaks down important assumptions of the conventional theory of crisis and peace processes making a genuine contribution to our understanding of these phenomena. The system/environment perspective is a sophisticated tool to explore in depth the relationship between crisis and peace processes and their environment, that is society as a whole. The conclusion of my research and analysis is that these processes are highly complex systems, which emerge as the unity of themselves and their environment. This further means that the environment of a crisis or a peace process is not less important than the process itself.

Society here is considered to be functionally and not hierarchically differentiated. Furthermore, it is not constituted of individuals and their interactions as conventional analysis argues but of social systems built up of communication. Social systems such as politics, media, diplomacy and the military are interdependent and yet autonomous in the way they implement their function. Structurally coupled through their normal recursive operations, they produce the dynamics of crisis or co-operation. Their aim is neither stability nor the fulfillment of some super-ordinate purpose such as peace or the protection of national interests; it is simply their self-reproduction: communication must follow communication.

The description of the Greek-Turkish crisis and peace processes through the 'butterfly' metaphor stresses the emphasis precisely on the system/environment synergy. It is the dynamics of the environment that attribute causality every time to the 'butterflies'. The *Figen Akat* incident and the earthquake needed the 'unintended' coincidental co-operation of the environment of the Greek and Turkish societies to produce the 'unintended' crisis and the 'unintended' system of co-operation.

This thesis argued that crisis and peace processes emerge and develop in the course of modern society's continuous self-reproduction. Society is ceaselessly being shaped and re-shaped at the level of communication steered by existing structures of expectations each

system holds about itself and its environment. Crisis and peace processes, then, emerge through morphogenesis that is deviation amplifying mutual causal processes of communication.

The perspective of the social autopoiesis shifts the emphasis from social structures to simultaneity and complexity, which enforces selectivity. Various social systems' simultaneous selections constrain complexity towards the direction of crisis or co-operation and peace. Increased complexity enforces the emergence of nexuses of contingent selective occurrences, fast moving cascades of interconnected communications which are oriented towards the one or the other direction. The dynamics of these processes is found in the ability of communications to connect and to form structural couplings. Furthermore, this is possible due to the self-referential nature of 'meaning' and its strategy of generalization, which grants it autonomy and a high degree of freedom in connecting.

Peace processes literature has looked for the link to connect the various peace processes and the peace processes with their broader environment that is society. Habermas's discourse ethics as applied to the study of peace processes seeks this link in the communicative rationality and justice. John Burton, Herbert Kelman and others are based on the positivist philosophical foundation of human needs and behavioral theories. Luhmann's answer is radically different and counterintuitive: neither reason nor justice; there is nothing but the structural couplings among social systems that is a-causal connections in the process of modern society's autopoiesis.

Luhmann's different understanding of the complexity and contingency of modern society employed here leads to a surprising answer with regard to the on-going discussion in the literature of conflict theory, conflict transformation v conflict resolution: there is no conflict resolution; perhaps only by accident. The emergence of a crisis or a peace process and its development is a matter of chance. Yet, as demonstrated in all of the cases examined above, chance does not mean randomness. Rather, it means **lack of co-ordination**. The impossibility of co-ordination among the various autonomous social and psychic systems is a condition of modern, functionally differentiated society, which determines its every time orientation towards conflict or co-operation.

The empirical evidence presented here demonstrated that the various self-referential systems that contributed to the constitution of the systems of crisis and co-operation did not have the same 'motives' or the same rationale. They reacted to irritations that they selected to observe or some times they selected the same 'irritation' to which they attributed, however, a different selectivity and connectivity according to their own

'meaning worlds'. There was no super-system that organized infinite complexity neither was there one particular super-ordinate rationale. The assumption of one rationality breaks down to a number of distinct rationales of social systems and their distinctions, which are the simplified codes which guide their operations of meaning determination. Then, crisis and peace processes emerge through the coincidence of structural couplings.

The analysis of peace processes through Luhmann's theory challenges the assumptions that underly conflict resolution theory to advance the existing theories of conflict transformation. Indeed, it offers us the analytical tools to further theorize on the dynamics of conflict transformation. Conflict transformation theories emphasize the need of a society in conflict itself to address and cope with the conflict. The thesis shed light on this aspect making the point that any change in a society in conflict is self-change. Furthermore, it argued that this change is not accumulative, result of a rational process; therefore, it cannot be planned or engineered. Planning, of course, is part of the operation of social systems. Yet, the argument here was that society does not follow the plan of a system. Rather, it is the transformational dynamics of communication that can give rise to new systemic structures such as language, themes, institutions, programmes of actions/goals and persons, possible points of connection that direct communication towards co-operation and peace. The discussion in the chapter VI about the emergence of latent structures of peace and co-operation, which can be uncovered when a decisive point is reached, further illuminates the morphogenetic nature of conflict transformation.

Recent theories of conflict transformation have hesitantly attempted to move away from the mainstream causal analysis, experimenting with the study of self-reflexive processes within modern society. Nevertheless, still approaches such as those of Dryzek and Tarja Vayrynen's are oriented towards the search of some 'shared reality' and 'consensus', which will be achieved through communication. The problem here is - and this is the direction to which, with few exceptions, the majority of conflict transformation theories look at - that they equate communication with understanding. The research conducted on Greek-Turkish relations through Luhmann's theory challenges this assumption to demonstrate that communication sensitizes society to chance. The development of the various Greek-Turkish peace initiatives examined above ultimately depended on their connectability, whether they were able to link up and form chains of communications. This approach emphasizes the impossibility of communication and the increase of contingency in modern society. Additionally, it made the point that the **fundamental problem of society is the self-referential nature of communication.**

Galtung's TRANSCEND approach is one of the few theories which seek to overcome the equation of communication with understanding. Based on his rich experience from many conflicts all over the world, Galtung described conflict transformation as a process of complexification arguing that a conflict worker should introduce more perspectives, more issues and more goals in order to disembed a conflict from its dual restrictive framework. The application of Luhmann's theory to peace processes provides a more profound understanding of Galtung's complexification process and offers the means to connect it with John Vasquez's observation that for the success of peace processes it is important the number of institutions supportive of peace in a society. Indeed, the thesis explained that the process of connecting the various initiatives is self-referential and every change is self-change. The institutionalised aims of the EU and NATO, institutionalised Greek-Turkish economic interests, a culture of an active civil society and women's movement were points of connection for the co-operation/conflict difference on the side of co-operation. Taking the example of PSWs, it was the increase of complexity and more precisely the modelling of society's complexity within complexity that speeded up structural couplings and enabled the emergence of new social structures. Thus, this thesis argues that **complexity is not only a problem in the resolution of conflicts but it is also where the solutions may lie.**

Conventional analysis of crisis and peace processes evolves around the discussion of narrowly defined interactions among decision-makers, assuming a hierarchical differentiation of society where leaders have full control of the relations of their state with other states and they make decisions on the grounds of a rational processing of information. My research and analysis makes the point that interactions, like meetings of decision-makers, or meetings among representatives of civil society organizations are highly complex social systems which cannot be reduced to its participants. An interaction is a cognitive entity on itself constituted of various social systems, social and cultural patterns, routines and institutionalized practices. Interactions provide society's constant autopoiesis with a field of experimentation rather than a solid foundation for future action. Accordingly, interactions are episodes in society's self-reproduction, which can produce complexity for its further differentiation.

The discussion of the re-entry of the two crises back to the Greek-Turkish conflict through the mechanisms of writing and printing illustrated again the autopoietic evolution of the Greek-Turkish conflict in the Greek and Turkish societies explaining further why modern society cannot be described anymore on the level of interactions. The self-reproduction of

the crises of 1996 and 1987 continued after their de-escalation through the academic and journalistic writings and the political rhetoric. Communication about selected events related to the crises was connected beyond the specific locus and time of these events with other themes and structures within the Greek and Turkish society towards the direction of conflict and thereby reproduced them eventually transforming them to an integral part of the conflict. It did not matter whether this communication reflected an objective reality or not. All it mattered was the selectivity and connectability of the communication about these events.

The radical shift from action to communication as the constitutive element of these processes is an imaginative and fruitful choice, which makes an important contribution to theorizing about crisis and peace processes. In the introductory chapter, it was demonstrated that mainstream theories of crisis and peace processes, based on a hierarchical view of society, focused on actions and decisions, ending to a description of isolated aspects of these phenomena. Put it otherwise, although conventional approaches do talk about crisis and peace processes they cannot describe and explain the dynamics involved in these processes because they remain largely static theories of objects. Luhmann's theory is a theory of process, which breaks the illusion of a hierarchical and stable society to demonstrate that modern society is a self-organising system, which is in a state of dynamic stability based on constant movement, the constant self-reproduction of communication that constitutes society. Indeed, using the theory of social autopoiesis, the emergence and development of crisis and peace processes were explored as processes of constant change, vanishing and becoming. Thus, this perspective signifies the departure from the existing theories of crisis and peace processes, which are theories of object, to the articulation of a real theory of process.

The approach to crisis and peace processes developed here through Luhmann's theory is holistic. As such it could not ignore the role of the system of science with regard to the selection of conflict and peace within modern society. The examination of the process of the construction of the analyses of the crises of 1996 and 1987 demonstrated that academic discourse can contribute to the reproduction and reinforcement of the structures of a protracted conflict. Furthermore, it can contribute to the development and institutionalization of conflict resolution practices and thus it can contribute to the emergence and development of peace processes. It was discussed, in particular, how mainstream theories of crisis and peace processes assign themselves the task of the description of an assumed objective reality and they then proceed to prescribe certain

solutions to the problems they have defined. This is reflected in their proclaimed goal to trace the paths that lead to war and peace and identify specific patterns in these paths. These studies, however, are produced through the structures of meaning of social science, which is also a function system within society. This system observes society through its own pre-established distinctions. For that purpose it employs methods of research and schemas of interpretation developed within the system of science. However, just like the other social systems, the system of science cannot see the re-entry of its pre-established determinations of meaning to society, and thus the consequences of its own operation within society. Thus the conclusion here is that the re-entry of theory into modern society changes its own object resulting to the paradox where theory is not something different from its own object; it becomes its own object!

This conclusion has further implications with regard to a key question of the praxis of conflict resolution namely the problem of direct control and social engineering by means of knowledge. The above analysis makes the point that in conditions of high complexity control and planning are not possible; neither is prediction possible. Nevertheless, although one cannot predict the next crisis because of the nature of society and social systems, one can explain the phenomena of unpredictability, dynamics, and 'butterflies'. One can then explore how the improbable can become probable through deviation amplifying mutual causal processes that can be crystallized to some structural form of crisis or co-operation. The theory does not produce quick-fix advice to policy makers such as the advice provided by the conventional crisis management theories e.g. keep firm control on the military or censor the media. As noted at the beginning of this section, it requires a different way of thinking which will take into consideration the complexity of modern society.

The methodology of second order observation or the observation of observing systems which was adopted here asks sociological researchers to avoid attributing their own meaning to events. It seeks to uncover the invisibilities of social systems, their blind spots and the paradoxical nature of system formation in modern society. It can explore how systems reflect on everything they take for granted as their environment and to which they attribute meaning through processes of generalisation and re-specification. The epistemology of second order observation enables comparisons instead of immediately reducing complexity by attributing itself meaning to actions and events according to its own pre-established distinctions.

2. Greek-Turkish Relations

This thesis demonstrated that **the Greek-Turkish crises and peace processes are paradoxical autopoietic systems**. Using the analytical tools Luhmann's theory provides us with we explored their constitution through autocatalytic processes of communication rather than actions and decisions. Indeed, the empirical evidence presented above substantiates the argument that crisis and co-operation in Greek-Turkish relations emerged through meaning constitutive processes that involved not only the political system or isolated segments of the Greek and Turkish society but society as a whole. Greek and Turkish politics, media, diplomacy, the military, science and civil society organizations, contributed to the emergence and development of crisis or co-operation through their normal operations within society.

This study led to another conclusion with regard to the evolution of Greek-Turkish relations: **they develop along the transformational dynamics of bifurcations and attractors**. This analysis stressed the unpredictability in moments of bifurcation and the sensitive dependence on initial conditions or "butterfly effects". In a self-organising society an event -like the *Figen Akat* accident, or the earthquake of 1999- could trigger meaning constitutive processes and increase the complexity of the situation and the need for its reduction. This moment of infinite complexity is described as bifurcation. An attractor is a self-description that has prevailed and has become stable condition through networks of recursive observations of observations. Furthermore, after its emergence an attractor becomes a distinction, a blueprint, for social systems' selections, which constrain infinite complexity.

The Greek-Turkish conflict itself was defined in this thesis as a powerful attractor that reduced complexity and gave rise to the Imia/Kardak crisis and the crisis of 1987. The thesis demonstrated that 'accidents' triggered nexuses of references activating the structures of the meaning of the conflict, which in turn increased the speed of structural couplings and eventually structured the complexity towards the escalation of the crisis. It was argued that recourse to rational thinking or rational decision-making was not possible simply because the leaders of the two countries could not have complete information, they could only access the complexity of the situation selectively.

However, this thesis has also demonstrated how an accident like an earthquake can lead to the emergence of a new attractor, a system of Greek-Turkish co-operation. The analysis of the phenomenon that followed the earthquake of 1999 demonstrated that morphogenetic evolutionary processes of communication were crystallized in social structures of co-

operation such as themes, institutions, programmes, and persons. In this case, the system of co-operation emerged and it was established as another attractor alternative to conflict. Furthermore, after its establishment guided the operations of social systems.

The conclusion drawn from this analysis is that the emergence and development of crisis and conflict on one hand and peace and co-operation on the other cannot be reduced to one particular reason or rationale. The crises of 1987 and 1996 did not share the same or similar causality; and the same can be said about the peace processes examined in this thesis. For example the defence of the national interests of Greece and Turkey was not the cause of the two Greek-Turkish crises. Neither was the rationale of peace the cause of the peace initiatives undertaken. The above analysis demonstrated that it was multiple rather than uni-linear causality, which constituted the crisis and the peace processes examined here. The exploration of structural couplings illustrated the self-referential nature of these systems. The emergence of the various structural couplings was largely accidental; structural couplings were not motivated by the advantages of the couplings themselves.

The analysis of the paradox of the re-entry of the two crises back into the system of conflict, from which they emerged in the first place, further illustrated the autopoiesis of the Greek-Turkish conflict within the Greek and Turkish society through structural couplings. The two crises re-entered the Greek-Turkish conflict by means of scientific, journalistic and political accounts of the crises. These accounts reinforced the structures of the meaning of the conflict. Communication about the crisis became independent of the living memory of the interactive partners, independent of the interaction itself, detached from the temporal point of its appearance and ultimately detached from the events that brought it about in the first place. The way the crisis of 1987 or 1996 escalated and de-escalated was not important anymore. Journalistic and academic narratives and political rhetoric about the Greek-Turkish crises became the crises themselves. These narratives structured the complexity, created expectations and institutions, corresponding to the expectations which reproduce them further within the Greek and Turkish societies. These narratives however, are a self-created reality, part of a continual self-reproduction through socialisation and education and the direction of technical automatic processes of social systems. The conclusion drawn from this analysis is that in both countries, academics, journalists, politicians, and diplomats participate in the creation of the problems they address and in a certain way, they have created what they should avoid.

At the end of a thesis on Greek-Turkish relations one might expect some sort of prediction; whether and when another Greek-Turkish crisis will break out or whether the

emerged system of co-operation is likely to develop further. According to the above analysis what we know for sure is that the development of Greek-Turkish relations is not pre-determined; whether crisis or co-operation will prevail depends on 'accidents'. That means that a negative turn is possible. The evolution of Greek-Turkish relations depends on the complexity and contingency of their environment and the connectability of conflict or co-operation.

To give an example here, the process of the European integration has increased the complexity of the environment of the Greek-Turkish conflict creating structures such as themes, roles and institutions, which guide the operations of social systems towards the direction of peace. On the other hand, however, the recent Iraqi crisis and its effects on Greek-Turkish relations offer another illustration of the complexity of this environment as the complexity of world society.

During the last months (spring 2003) themes of the Greek-Turkish conflict have re-emerged and have again gained the day in the Greek society in particular; the Turkish society at that moment was occupied with other issues. The Greek media, politics, civil society, focused on - that is they selected to observe - the movement of the Turkish troops to the northern border of Turkey with Iraq, interpreting it as the evidence that confirms their pre-established image of Turkey as "an unchangeable military regime". They willingly ignore another 'fact' which is that a small Turkish army was already within the Iraqi land and with that they ignore the complexity of this issue. Because the war in Iraq, reported by the Turkish media constituted an 'irritation' for the Turkish society, which increased the complexity. Anti-war demonstrations by masses of islamists after the Friday prayer, joined by civil society organizations and intellectuals in a country governed by an Islamist party with a European orientation, under the constant pressure of a military which seeks to preserve the secular character of the state, its territorial integrity and its power through its ties with the USA is a highly complex and unpredictable situation.

The mobilization of the Turkish troops is only one out of many events, which are simplified self-descriptions of highly complex processes going on simultaneously in Turkey. The simplified theme of Turkey being a "military regime" makes integral part of the "meaning world" of the Greek-Turkish conflict seen from the Greek side. As it was demonstrated in the chapter VI under certain conditions this theme has also guided the selections of social systems in Greece towards the direction of the crisis as it happened in 1987. At this juncture, this contingency seems to favour the dynamics of the conflict instead of the dynamics of co-operation. To come back to the question posed in this

section, if social systems make selections towards the conflict, they reinforce the dynamics of conflict and at the same time the system of co-operation atrophies because it cannot find points for connection within society.

3. The Re-entry of this Thesis into Society

This thesis constitutes a highly complex communicative system itself. Accordingly, just like other analyses of crises and peace processes, which have re-entered society through the medium of writing and printing, it will re-enter society through the structures of the social system of education and in particular its sub-system of universities. These structures have pre-determined the processing of a PhD Thesis in the University of Kent at Canterbury. As the thesis re-enters society, as something, which is disseminated through reading, elements of it can be selected, oversimplified, generalized and re-specified to steer further processes of differentiation and autopoiesis within society. These elements can be selectively understood and structurally coupled for the autopoiesis of other social systems in their connections with existing meaning nexuses. For example, the factual evidence my research uncovered with regard to the de-escalation of the crisis of 1987 may be connected with the anti-PASOK rhetoric of Nea Dimokratia within Greece. One can imagine several other examples where a particular system or subsystem may select elements, which may continue its own self-reproduction.

Nevertheless, the aim of this thesis is to provide an insight into the complexity of Greek-Turkish relations. Furthermore, this analysis can serve as an instrument of other and self-observation, which may increase our understanding of the nature of modern society. The complex architecture of Luhmann's theory enables us to explore the complexity of modern society. By increasing internal complexity Luhmann's systems theory increases selectivity and enables us to explore the multiple causality involved in crisis and peace processes' constitution.

Finally, I do not claim this thesis is a representation of the reality of Greek-Turkish relations. The judgment of the usefulness of the theory rests with the readers and whether it offers a better understanding of the complexities of modern society for them. This question then will be ultimately answered through the observations of my observations by other second order observers.

APPENDIX

The Chronicle of the Crisis of 1996

26th of December 1995: the Turkish merchant vessel "Figen Akat" was driven ashore in one of the two rocky islets which are located in the Eastern Aegean sea. The Greek local authorities offered assistance but the captain of the vessel claimed the islet to be part of the Turkish land and therefore suggested that the Turkish authorities ought to deal with it.

27th: the Turkish boat was finally towed by a Greek company to the Turkish port of Culluk.

29th: the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Deniz Baykal submitted a memorandum to the Greek ambassador Dimitris Nezeritis claiming sovereignty over the islets. The main argument was derived from an interpretation of the Treaty of Paris of 1947. It was argued, that although the Article 14.1 of the above Convention signed between Greece and Turkey, stipulates that the Dodecanese and all the adjacent islets were ceded to Greece, meanwhile the islets of Kardak are adjacent to Turkey and not to Greece because the distance in the first case is 3.5 nautical miles and 5.5 in the second. In addition, it was argued that "the islets of Imia constitute part of Turkish territory and that they had been recently registered in the Land Registry of the Turkish province of Mugla.

10th of January: the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs replied through another memorandum, and rejected the Turkish claims. The Greek arguments recalled the agreement of 1932 between Turkey and Italy, which demarcated territorial boundaries and sovereignty over islets associated with the Dodecanese archipelago. Sovereignty over Imia/Kardak was considered to belong to Italy. Subsequently, by the Treaty of Paris of 1947, the islets were ceded to Greece with the other Dodecanese islands.

20th: an article about the Figen Akat incident appeared in the Greek periodical "Empisteutiko Gramma", bringing the matter to the public eye.

24th: the Greek private television channel Antenna, presented the incident with the *Figen Akat*, as well as the official correspondence between the two states, as evidence of a serious threat to Greek sovereignty.

25th: four inhabitants of Kalymnos (adjacent to Imia/Kardak island), among them the mayor of the island, took the initiative to hoist the Greek flag on one of the two islets, with Antenna camera crews present.

25th: the Minister of the Press and the spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Greece admitted the existence of the issue and tried to play the incident down.

27th: a group of Turkish journalists, accompanied by a camera crew from the Turkish television channel Kanal D, chartered a helicopter and landed on the islet. They lowered the Greek flag and hoisted the Turkish flag in front of the Turkish cameras. This film was shown on Turkish television the next day. The same footage was shown in Greece on Greek television channels.

27th: the deputy Foreign Minister of Turkey frowned upon this action.

28th (early in the morning): the Turkish flag was located by a Greek warship, which was ordered by the Head of the Greek Forces after communication with the Minister of Defence to raise the Greek flag again, and a small contingent of soldiers stayed on the island.

29th (early in the morning): starts the building up of the military presence of both sides in the region.

29th: the Turkish government made an open claim to possess the two islets and the Foreign Minister Deniz Baykal gave Ambassador Nezeritis another memorandum. The argument was not referring just to the distance of the islets from the other islands and the Turkish coasts, but it was based on the non-validity of the procedure of the signing of the 1932 Turk-Italian Treaty.

The same day the Greek Foreign Minister replied on the grounds of the international law and both sides increased the presence of their warships in the region. In the afternoon of the same day the Greek Prime Minister made a confusing statement -as can be seen in retrospect - that "Greece is ready for everything".

30th (morning): the Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Ciller raised also the tones stating on the television: "We do not have to give even a little stone of the land of this country... We do not allow the rising of a foreign flag on Turkish land".

30th: the USA undertook the role of the mediator from early in the afternoon. High level officials had direct contacts with Greeks and Turkish decision-makers, Prime Ministers, Ministers of Foreign Affairs, and the leaders of the armed forces in both sides.

30th (night): the interim Prime Minister Tansu Ciller addressed an ultimatum to the Greek government asking for the withdrawal of the land and naval forces, as well as the withdrawal of the flag from the Imia/Kardak setting a deadline until 7 o' clock the

next morning. The Greek side agreed with the withdrawal of its forces, ships but not the flag.

31st at 2:00 a.m.: Turkish commandos succeeded in passing through the Greek warships and occupied the other one of the two Imia/Kardak islets also hoisting the Turkish flag and achieving strategic parity.

31st: the negotiations lasted until 4:00 a.m. The withdrawal of the fleets, the flag and the commandos started early in the morning.

The Chronicle of the Crisis of 1987

16th of February: The Greek Minister of Industry Sakis Peponis stated that the Greek state would buy the shares of the multinational consortium Denisson Morris Corporation. For that reason he called the companies of the consortium to negotiations.

23rd of February: The President of the Board of Directors of the consortium Mr. Parmeli, denied to negotiate. Furthermore, in an interview he gave, he argued that the Consortium according to the contract it has signed with the Greek State, was entitled to proceed with the drillings east of Thassos, beyond the 6 miles. Furthermore, he stated that the company would proceed with that on the 28th of March and asked for the intervention of the interested countries -Canada, W. Germany, USA- these countries had vested interests in the consortium.

27th of February: The Ambassadors of the USA, W. Germany, and Canada had talks with the Greek Minister of Industry Sakis Peponis. They asked the Greek government to cancel its decision to nationalize the shares of the company.

Ambassador Akiman went to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He wanted the Greek government to stop the consortium from making research beyond its demarcated territorial waters.

5th of March: emergency meeting in Ankara of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Defence, the subject was the developments in the Aegean and the drillings out of the Greek territorial waters.

6th of March: a draft of law about the nationalization of the shares of the consortium was proposed in the Greek Parliament. According to the draft, the companies of the consortium were to be called to negotiations regarding the conditions of the sale of the shares. If 3 months should pass without any sign of interest on the part of the companies of the consortium then the Greek government would proceed with the application of the Constitution, article 106 &&3,4, which made provision for nationalization.

19th of March the Greek Ambassador to Ankara was called to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Undersecretary of the Turkish ministry of foreign affairs Kamel protested about the Greek aircraft and war ships, which were disturbing the Turkish research vessel Piri-Reis in the Aegean Sea. Furthermore, a protest was made about the statement the Greek Minister of Defence made that "the Aegean Sea is Greek and will remain Greek".

19th of March in the morning: Piri-Reis left Gokceada and started its trip escorted by two warships, "Ak Hisar" and "Adatepe". It came 12 miles of Athos in Halkidiki.

20th of March in the morning: Ambassador Akiman was called to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Alternate Minister Yiannis Kapsis and Ambassador Costas Zeppos protested Piri-Reis's trip in the Aegean Sea which was considered to create a climate of tension and insecurity in Greek public opinion. Finally, it was argued that this incident followed a long line of similar incidents, which took place on the 13th and 16th of the same month. At that time, Turkish war ships had come just near the territorial waters of Limnos, and this was also considered as a clear provocation against Greece.

The Spokesman of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that "the Greek government is obliged and for that reason determined to take all the appropriate measures and it will have no responsibility for the unexpected consequences a deterioration of the situation may have". The Ministers of Foreign Affairs, of Defence and the Minister of Industry made statements in an attempt to clarify the intentions of Greece.

22nd of March:

Greece denied that the consortium was planning to undertake research beyond of the 6 miles.

23rd of March

According to the Greek government Turkish aircraft violated the rules of air traffic.

24th of March

A statement was made by the Greek spokesman Yiannis Roumbatis about the violations. The Greek representative to NATO protested about the same incidents.

25th of March

The Turkish National Security Council was convened. At this meeting, Kaya Erdem (the Vice President who was replacing the Prime Minister), Hasan Cemal Guzel, (spokesman of the government and Minister of the Presidency), Ministers of Justice and Internal Affairs, Sugurlu and Abulut and all the superior military officers were present.

Later in the evening -after the National Security Council meeting- the Ministers' Council was also convened and decided to apply the decision taken by the NSC.

The Turkish Ambassador to the United Nations, Ilter Türkmen sent a letter -dated 23rd of March-to the Secretary General of the UN. It was based firstly on the statement

made by the president of the consortium Parmeli that the consortium would make research beyond the territorial waters of Thassos, and secondly on the Berne Protocol. Ozal made moderate statements in London emphasizing the prospects for co-operation between the two countries as well as the determination of the Turkish government to respond to any attempt on the part of the Greek government to create a *fait accompli*.

Friday 26th of March

14:00-17:00 Meeting of the Greek National Security Council (Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Head of the Armed Forces) in Kastri, at the Prime Minister's house. Coming out of the meeting they declared that "if Turks attempt drillings we will hit". Closure of the American military basis in Makri, the Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs, Carolos Papoulias went to Sofia to discuss the crisis with the neighbouring country.

Güven Ergedlan, a military officer, general secretary of the NSC, informed domestic and foreign press about the decisions taken the day before by the Turkish National Security Council. A new meeting of the NSC convened.

Plus a large Turkish military exercise was taking place during the same days in the Aegean Sea.

Meeting of the Greek Heads of the Armed Forces and later on another meeting with the Minister and the Deputy Minister of Defence Haralambopoulos and Kouris respectively.

A meeting of the NATO Ambassadors in Brussels was convened where the crisis was discussed.

The Greek representative in New York informed the President of the Security Council about the situation.

Kapsis called Ambassador Akiman to the MFA and invited the Turkish government to agree upon the relegation of the resolution of the dispute about the continental shelf to the International Court of The Hague according to the International Conventional and Customary law.

The Turkish newspapers and the Greek press supported the decision of their respective governments.

Piri-Reis left its port for research in the open sea. "If the Greek aircraft disturb it then Turkey will immediately react" was the message on the part of the Turkish side.

