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**Immigration's Part in the Reconfiguration of
Citizenship: the Greek Case.**

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I. Preface.

‘Citizenship and migration affect everyone. More than any other institution, they touch us all, partly because of their scale and public nature, and partly because they hold up a revealing mirror to who we are and to the kind of society we want to live in’.

(Kostakopoulou, 2000:168)

Among the various features of globalization that challenge the modern nation state, migration holds a special place. It constitutes per se a challenge for the state sovereignty as well as for its central political institutions. This challenge is manifested at the design and implementation of immigration policy, including both immigration control, i.e. state control over entry and expulsion, and integration of long term foreign residents. In our paper we focus on the integration aspect of immigration policy, and more specifically on issues linked to the status of settled migrants vis-à-vis political institutions, especially that of citizenship. Our choice derives from the fact that in Western Europe newcomers plan to stay permanently, while the once thought as temporary labor migration has definitely become settled. The result is indeed puzzling: long term foreign residents trapped in a non-citizen status from a formal point of view, i.e. deprived of full rights and exempted from full obligations. The need for a comprehensive integration policy is pressing.

The role of citizenship in our study is focal, not only because of its perception as the ‘essence’ of the nation state, but also because it forms a tool of significant importance for the nation state’s integration policy. In the remainder of the paper, we shall proceed by presenting the classical notion of citizenship, the role that was originally assigned to it and the challenge it is confronted with in our days. In turn, the main alternatives for escaping the ascertained dead-end are cited. The section closes with the presentation of a case study focused on recent relevant developments in Greece.

II. The Institution of Citizenship: definition, role and meaning in retrospect and today.

When asked to define citizenship, a common-sensical answer would refer to a set of rights, such as the right to vote and stand for political office, to enjoy equality before law, to be entitled to government services and benefits etc, and a set of obligations, such as to abide by the law, to pay the tax and to defend one’s country (Castles and Davidson, 2000:1)¹. This simplistic view of citizenship, no longer

¹ For an elaborated answer to the question ‘what it means to be a citizen’, see Bauböck, 1994 a:vii.

accurate or at least adequate, attunes with the expectations linked to the institution of citizenship when first coined.

The institution of citizenship is often perceived of as the other facet of state sovereignty. The two have been collaborating since the French Revolution when ‘nationness’ and ‘stateness’ respectively were fused to form the modern world’s universal political organizing principle: the nation-state (Joppke, 1998:9). The fusion of the ‘statist’ legacy with the ‘republican’ legacy of ‘a self-governing political community of free and equal citizens’ (ibid: 23) reveals the inherent dualism of the modern nation state: *qua* state, it is attached to the territorial organization of rule and characterized by the monopolization of legitimate force; *qua* nation, it is a democratic membership association with a collective identity, formed on the grounds of (national) origin (ibid:8, 23). In other words, the nation state is ‘a combination of a political unit that controls a bounded territory (state) with a national community (the nation or people) that has the power to impose its political will within those boundaries’ (Castles & Davidson, 2000:12).

In this context citizenship was attached to nationality in order to determine the members of the polity. Becoming a citizen depended on membership in the community, that is to say a citizen was always a national as well. The rationale is obvious: in a world where scarcity of resources prevails, rights cannot be granted for free to everyone². Being a national guaranteed being culturally homogeneous, and this constitutes a sufficient proof of shared understandings on the rules of conviviality. Following this path of logic, citizenship was used to ‘consolidate internally [the fragile state] by forging hostility towards external groups’, i.e. other nation states (ibid:11). Thus it bred a specific sentiment of solidarity in the face of the other nation states.

At the same time, from a domestic angle, citizenship purported to institutionalize and legitimize the dominant ethnic group’s culture by means of taking measures ‘to incorporate minority groups into the so-called “national culture”’ (ibid:12-3). These measures consisted either of forcible imposition or of gradual consensual processes or of both. The homogenization process was justified in light of the risk that the existence of diverse ethnic groups, all inhabitants of the same often fragile territorial unit, constituted for the latter’s survival. In fulfilling its task,

² See also Walzer’s argument about states operating as clubs (1983). Compare to the ‘original position’ hypothesis of Rawls (1971).

citizenship worked along with all important collective identity formation institutions - education, military service, church etc-, in order to attain the desirable homogeneity of the resident population. Once again, the intrinsic contradiction between the UN fundamental principles of national sovereignty and self-determination of peoples lies before the researcher's eyes (ibid:12).

In fact the above mentioned homogenizing function of citizenship supplemented its function as a control mechanism. As the absolutist state rose and personalistic dependencies such as serfdom or other forms of forced labor declined, personal freedom advanced (Torpey, 1998:241). The territorial rule liberated the individual from the master-servant bond and from the feudal internal barriers to move. However this liberation was at odds with the constitutive principle of the state, i.e. 'sedentariness' (Joppke, 1998:6). The state was in need of finding a way to keep track of its potential taxpayers, soldiers and citizens, a way of monopolizing the authority to determine movements of people and establishing their identities in order to enforce this authority (Torpey, 1998:241). For all these reasons, 'a form of membership, more demanding than mere residence, was required' (ibid). Citizenship was the institution that rendered people dependent on states for the possession of a certain identity that allows or prohibits access to various spaces. Its formal recognition as an inclusion/exclusion mechanism took place after the WW I, with the use of devices rooted in writing, i.e. identity card, passport and other travel documents, certifying one's national membership (Hammar, 1986:736; Giddens, 1987:47). This way every person became bound to one and only citizenship.

Moving away from the historical context of citizenship's emergence and evolution, it is advisable to have a closer look into the meaning of the actual term. With a view to a better understanding of the term, we shall employ a rather artificial, nevertheless methodologically useful, distinction between the formal and the substantive aspect of citizenship.

Formal citizenship

The formal approach to the institution of citizenship deals with the matter of access to citizenship. Access to citizenship is usually governed by two adverse principles, *jus soli* and *jus sanguinis*. By virtue of *jus soli*, which literally means law of soil, citizenship is bestowed to an individual at birth in the territory of the state in concern. *Jus soli* is usually associated with states formed by immigrants such as in

North America, Oceania etc, because of its ability of integrating -or even assimilating- migrants into the receiving society. On the other hand *jus sanguinis*, i.e. law of blood, confers citizenship only by descent from a national of the state concerned. *Jus sanguinis* is mostly applied in countries with emigration past, and it is considered to be closer ideologically to the ‘Kulturation’ (ethnic) model of state-building (Castles & Davidson, 2000:85).

Their critical difference though lies in the effect they have on longstanding foreign residents. There is no doubt that both rules craft a rather inhospitable environment for the longstanding migrant population. However it is *jus sanguinis* that sustains the formal exclusion from the polity for migrants, as its consequences are transmitted to the offspring of the migrants, namely second and subsequent generations. This comes to verify that at the end of the day the accidental fact of one’s birth determines his life’s chances (Weiner, 1996:172-5). But how can we say that we live in liberal democracies when a part of the population is deprived of the right to have a say in law-making and governance of the state where it resides?³

Naturalization rules have undergone a considerable change the last decade⁴. Besides the fact that in practice a combination of the two has been applied, there is a third principle gaining ground regarding admission to citizenship especially in countries with long immigration past, irrelevant of having accepted it or not. According to *jus domicili*, or law of residence, a migrant may gain entitlement to citizenship by means of residence in the territory of a state (Castles& Davidson, 2000:85). Certainly this development favors the later generations, people who are born and brought up in a state where their parents are foreigners. It should be noted though that in countries where *jus sanguinis* predominated, cautious steps have been made towards the introduction of elements of *jus domicili*. *Jus soli* countries have a different stance to the issue, launching a combination of the old and the new principle.

In spite of these changes, the situation regarding citizenship by acquisition, has not been radically altered; propensity to naturalization remains significantly low (OECD, 2004:309). Causes vary and result from both sides –state and migrants. Among these the issue of dual citizenship has its part. To be more specific numerous objections are raised when the issue of dual/multiple citizenship comes into question.

³ Political rights are tied to citizenship and citizenship presupposes national origin or/and favorable naturalization regimes.

⁴ For an overview of naturalization in various countries, see Cinar, 1994:49-72;Guimezanes, 1995:157-72.

As we shall see, these objections are founded on political rather than legal-technical arguments (Hammar, 1989:86-9).

First of all there is the perception that in a well ordered world a person can bear only a single citizenship. Deviating from this postulate may bring problems to interstate relations, as dual citizenship may entail adverse obligations.

Secondly, a single citizenship guarantees unity, cohesion and strength of a state; no complications risking national security domestically and internationally can be afforded. For the same cause, loyalty cannot be divided between two states. Division of loyalty is interpreted not merely as division of attachments and identifications between two different social and cultural environments, but also as division between two separate political communities. According to the essence of citizenship membership to a state is inevitably membership to a nation.

The above lines of thought, already out-of-date⁵, must seem rather paradoxical when faced with the dynamic category of ‘transmigrants’. By employing this old term to define a recently upcoming migrant category, researchers refer to ‘the migrant who maintains strong and enduring ties to homeland, even though he is incorporated in the resettlement society’ (Levitt, 2003:565). A concomitant effect of these ties is ‘overlapping memberships between territorially separate and independent polities’, a fact that in turn ‘affects collective activities and conceptions of citizenship in both host and origin societies’ (Bauböck, 2003:700). In a nutshell, we speak of simultaneous belonging to two different political communities. Is there any more evident example of citizenship’s inadequacy against today’s realities and needs?

Having outlined the main features of formal citizenship and before turning to the substantive citizenship, there is a point that should be elucidated so as not to be misunderstood: ‘naturalization is a discretionary act of the state’(Castles& Davidson, 2000:86), namely access to formal citizenship is at the discretion of the state. What is at stake here is where the formal citizenship-door leads today.

Substantive citizenship

The substantive citizenship offset for a while issues arising from the denial of admission to formal citizenship. With respect to its interpretation two main currents should be mentioned. Both enjoy strong advocacy and are not mutually exclusive.

⁵ For cases revealing the irreversible augmentation of people possessing dual citizenship, see Hammar, 1989:82.

Following their historical appearance, citizenship was originally considered as membership of a nation state. The central notions of this conceptualization are those of community, belonging and political participation. Its advocates are privileged enough to report the respective Aristotle's work (Abu-Laban, 2000:515). Regarding the basic ideals permeating this model, they are a fusion of the statist and republican legacies.

From the statist legacy (Joppke, 1998:23), citizenship inherits the features of:

- 'immediacy': nothing stands between the individual and the state.
- 'personality': the state as membership association is too demanding to rely on mere birth on territory or residence.
- 'continuity and exclusivity': the relationship between the state and the individual continues over a lifetime and cannot be divided simultaneously between more than one states.
- 'effectiveness': the state rewards the individual's commitment by offering physical and social protection.

At the same time the republican tradition circumscribes the nature of citizenship as (Brubaker, 1989:3-4):

- *egalitarian*. Gradations of citizenship cannot be accepted.
- *sacred*. Citizens should be prepared to make sacrifices ('sacred acts') if asked.
- *national*. A member of the state must also be member of the nation.
- *democratic*. Membership must be open to all and include significant participation to political life.
- *unique*. Each person must belong to one and only one state., and
- *consequential*. Membership, along with duties, should confer important privileges.

This conceptualization of citizenship has been contradicted by contemporary reality, not to mention the deviations resulting from different policy implications the aforementioned features involve⁶. Postwar immigration has accentuated old deviations and triggered new ones. This development was expected to the extent that membership is a much broader and inclusive term than formal citizenship (Brubaker, 1989:16). More specifically, as Hammar points out, a foreign resident may as well be member of one or several societal subsystems, such as resident population, labor force, economy, cultural and political life (Hammar, 1986:742). Consequently there

⁶ Analytically in Brubaker, 1989:5. For the conditions that favored these deviations see Soysal, 1997:18-9.

are many *de facto* and *de jure* relations that a non-citizen may have with the host society.

Let us now turn to the conception of citizenship as ‘acquisition of rights’. This one is informed by T. Marshall’s sociological analysis for citizenship rights. According to Marshall (1950) there are three distinct but interrelated categories of citizenship rights which developed in a historical progression. The first category is the ‘civic’ rights, relating to the rule of law, known also as ‘negative’ rights; the second category is the ‘political’ rights, relating to active participation in the democratic processes of government, known as ‘positive’ rights; last but not least come the ‘social’ rights relating to the 20th century’s welfare state, which permitted genuine participation for all individuals to political life by means of guaranteeing an elementary standard of well being through work or social provisions.

For all its doubtless value, Marshall’s path breaking theory has its limitations. A classical criticism focuses on the false impression, that the three categories of rights are similar in kind: social rights can never be assimilated to political rights, as the former require e.g. money redistribution through taxation, constituting thus a challenge to capitalism (Oliver-Heater, 1994:34); on its lack of general applicability; on the failure to emphasize the real nature of struggle in the acquisition of rights. In any case, Marshall’s theory is of questionable relevance today since the postwar immigration has reversed the almost teleological evolution of citizenship rights (Castles & Davidson, 2000:105). To be more specific guestworkers enjoyed first civic and welfare rights, while political rights are yet to come⁷.

It is noteworthy that the above discussed conceptions of citizenship still appear in the respective literature, despite the fact that both of them do not match today’s scientific discourse goals or needs, at least in their original form. Their ‘survival’ is attributed to the flexibility they have shown with respect to the modern needs (Abu-Laban, 2000:513-4). To be more specific, the membership approach has incorporated ‘identity politics’⁸, while the rights’ approach is associated to the ongoing debate on welfare state’s future, thus reflecting the modern terms of the debate between communitarians and liberals respectively. Recently, a new approach of substantive citizenship has joined the precedent ones. Its advocates endorse the

⁷ Elaborated in the next section.

⁸ For the theme of ‘identity politics raised by the new social movements in industrialized western countries, see Abu-Laban, 2000:514.

conceptualization of citizenship not only as closure mechanism, but also as source of inequality –an inevitable corollary of its function as mechanism of inclusion. Taking a closer look, and without opposing to the discussed viewpoint, we have to admit that this cannot be regarded as a paradox, for the egalitarian and democratic character of citizenship refers in practice exclusively to citizens. Namely, citizenship implies attainment of a ‘bounded’ equality (Brubaker, 1989:17).

Having discussed the inherent and hitherto latent ambiguities of citizenship, as they emerge in the light of citizenship’s approaches, i.e the formal and the substantive, it is high time we focused on immigration’ part in the crisis citizenship is going through lately.

III. Immigration and Citizenship.

The inherent ambiguities of citizenship resurface as new challenges triggered by immigration unfold. We have already discussed deviations from the national citizenship model, resulting from endogenous contradictions. We have also briefly referred to the weaknesses demonstrated by the institution of citizenship when it faces the new migration realities. The present section has a dual task: it attempts to elaborate both internal and external pressures exerted directly on citizenship or indirectly via the nation-state. We should keep in mind that in these pressures lie partly the roots of citizenship’s crisis.

Making a start from pressures domestically manifested, we focus on the increasing number of the so-called ‘denizens’ (Hammar, 1986, 1989, 1990). Denizens or quasi-citizens are immigrants who have been residents in a country for a long period of time –many years- and have obtained a special legal status. The state’s criteria in granting this status can be length of stay, participation in the labor market and social integration. The granted status comprises civic, social and several, but not core, political rights. To be more accurate the rights conferred upon the individual are security of residence status; protection from deportation; right to work; entitlement to social security benefits and health services; access to education (Castles & Davidson, 2000:94). With respect to political rights the furthest concession so far has been voting in local elections, limited though in very few countries⁹.

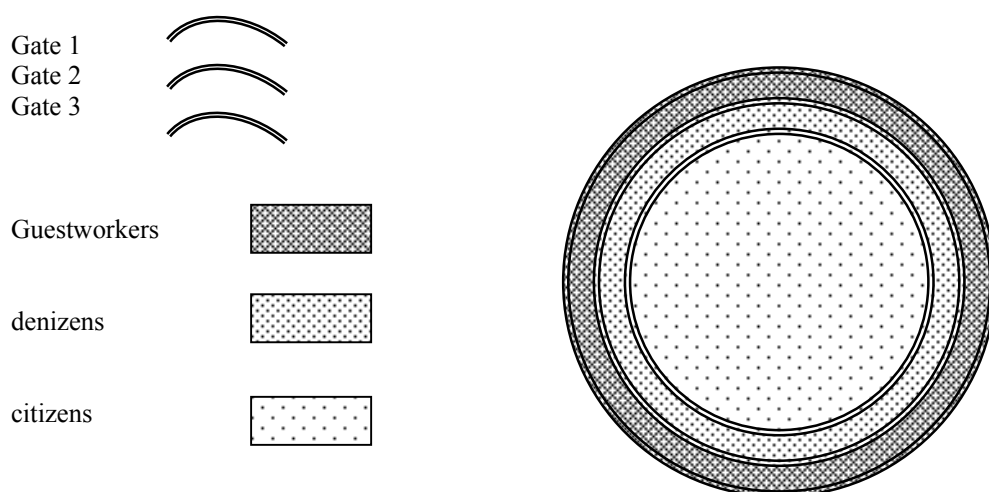
⁹ Sweden, Netherlands, Norway, Denmark (Brochmann, 1996:17,ft11)

The term ‘denizen’, invoked by Hammar to denote the aforementioned legal status, is an old English term used in 19th century when referring to privileged aliens (Hammar, 1990:14). Today it describes a status more than that of a foreigner, less than that of a citizen. Earlier, in the classical era, another word tantamount to this mid-range category of rights’ holders was employed in Athens: ‘metoikos’ (*metic*)¹⁰. Times change but *mutatis mutandis* some things remain the same. And the backbone of all these statuses is the right to residence, for once permanently settled one cannot be ignored.

Urged by this inevitable development, Hammar enhances Walzer’s theory of admittance. In his ‘Spheres of Justice’, Walzer argues that there are two control stations on the way to full admission in the host society: the regulation of entrance and access to citizenship by means of naturalization (Walzer, 1983:52). According to Hammar now there is one more entrance located between these two, which leads to the denizen status (Hammar, 1990:16-17). The three entrance gates can be illustrated as three concentric circles, analyzed as following

- Gate 1. The outer circle corresponds to the regulation of immigration. The admitted foreigners may be guestworkers or temporary workers.
- Gate 2. The second circle corresponds to the regulation of the denizen status, and the admitted immigrants are the ones Hammar calls denizens.
- Gate 3. The inner circle encompasses the naturalized citizens.

Figure 1. The three entrance gates



Source: Hammar, 1990:17

¹⁰ A ‘Metic’ is the ‘foreigner of Greek or barbarian origin, settled in a city other than his home city, member of a special class, who pay a particular [residence] fee (metikion) and enjoys limited political rights’ (Babibiotis, 1998:1097).

The denizen status has resolved difficulties arisen in countries with restrictive naturalization laws, mainly those of jus sanguinis law. By virtue of the denizen rights next immigrant generations enjoy a much improved legal status than that of guestworkers. Nevertheless it is still a status inferior to that of a citizen, a fact that creates first and second class citizens. One could certainly argue that there have always been differentiated statuses of citizenship even in western liberal democracies. For example, Pettigrew outlines at least seven different categories: a) ethnic migrants b) citizens of another EU country c) ex colonial People d) recruited workers from non colonial countries d) refugees and asylum seekers e) accepted 'illegal' migrants, known also as 'margizens' (Martiniello, 1994:42) f) rejected illegal migrants (Pettigrew, 1998:80-1). According to Brubaker these gradations of citizenship rights, unless temporary, cannot be legitimized and need always a special justification (Brubaker, 1989:3, 16).

Many scholars from different discourses converge in arguing that the denizen status contests straightforwardly the logic of national citizenship, as it strips citizenship from the conferral of fundamental rights, but the core political ones. Some of these researchers even compare this development with the recognition of socioeconomic rights to guestworkers. It is really interesting that this development is underpinned by an emerging International Human Rights Regime¹¹. It is common knowledge that international bodies such the UN, ILO, WTO as well as regional constellations as the Council of Europe, the EU, etc have developed international human rights standards. All of them are of significant importance, still we can distinguish at the international level the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966); at regional level the European Social Charter, the European Convention of Human Rights (1950), the American Convention of Human Rights (1969), the African Charter of Human and Peoples' Rights (1981). Focused especially on migrant workers is the United Nations Convention for the Protection of the rights of All Migrant Workers and members of Their Families (1990).

¹¹ For an overview of the codification of the International Human Rights Standards, see Ioannou *et al*, 1990:106 *et sec*), Papassiopi-Passia, 2004:23-27. For their strength, impact and contradictions, see Guiraudon & Lahav, 2000:167.

This growing body of international law, general and more specialized, guarantees protection for a whole range of civic and social rights, once reserved only for citizens, but now described as ‘personal rights’. Today these rights are associated to universal personhood and not national citizenship; they have been deterritorialized and anchored exclusively to personhood (Soysal, 1994:1; Sassen, 1998:70).

Something that seems to skip our attention is the context where these rights are realized and that is the nation state’s context. It is not accidental, that all rights’ provisions in international texts are careful not to impinge upon state sovereign discretion (Bosniak, 1991:741). The ultimate enforcement and sanction powers rest with the state. The latter is constrained only by the so called ‘soft law’, i.e. norms characterizing a ‘civilized’ conduct in the community of states for a minimum protection of aliens’ rights (Papassiopi-Passia, 2004:21).

On the other hand the fact that nation states have voluntarily become signatories to international human rights treaties, whose provisions draw often upon the constitutional traditions of liberal democratic states, appeases the above highlighted worries. This holds particularly in the case of EU member states.

Citizens of any E.U. member state enjoy a special citizenship status in the territory of any other E.U. member as well as in the territory of E.E.A. countries. This status results from the Treaty’s provisions on EU citizenship, and involves mainly civil and social rights. With respect to political rights they are not yet fully bestowed. Certainly this citizenship does not concern migrant population from third countries residing in any of the E.U. members, much less illegal migrants. Furthermore, the Treaty provisions, regulations and directives, such as the Race and Equality Directives (2000), the Directive regarding long term immigrants from third countries (2003), the Directive concerning the right to family reunification (2003), also bind member state practice. The E.U. Charter of Fundamental Human Rights, embedded in the famous European Constitution-to-be, is also a positive step and at the same time a powerful limit-setter for states concerned¹².

As a concluding remark we would like to draw attention on the fact that hitherto migrants have been excluded from full citizenship; instead they encounter an array of differentiated and by no means legitimized in the liberal democratic context of governance citizenship statuses. Internal and external emerging realities are about

¹² For the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights see Papademetriou, 2001:201.

to change radically this paradoxical situation in western nation states. Citizenship's inclusion among the nation state's elements to be reformed is beyond doubt. What remains to see is the nature of its reformat and nation state's part in the process. Respective prospects are discussed next.

IV. Proposing alternatives: encouraging naturalization vs. forging a post-national citizenship.

'Contemporary migration with its implications of post-national membership and multicultural identity politics must be a profound challenge to every component of the classical model of citizenship' (Joppke, 1998:23). Having discussed the nature of this challenge, we could draw two whatsoever different conclusions. One of them regarding the migration challenge as fatal for the nation state: 'citizenship patterns and nation state are changing anyway due to the inexorable global forces'; the other one being conservative: 'nation state may be weakened by internal and external constraints, but is still the only political unit in whose context democratic citizenship is realizable' (Castles & Davidson, 2000:15).

Both of them hold a good part of truth and give rise to two basic options, when thinking of 'new' migration and the concomitant challenge, between which a wide range of viewpoints lie. These options consist of: a) migration as one more challenge to be incorporated in the existing framework, since there is no alternative political organizing principle b) migration as a challenge commanding a fundamental transformation of the classical nation state¹³.

Summarizing the focal points cited hitherto, we conclude that

- Globalization is indeed inexorable regarding traditional patterns of conduct in any field of human activity.
- Globalization has given impetus to new patterns of migration, which in turn reinforced precedent migratory movements.
- The classical notion of nation state and its central institutions is challenged, because there is no satisfactory correspondence between the available state means and mechanisms and the raised demands.

¹³ Prominent advocates of these options are Brubaker and Soysal respectively.

- Despite the rise of international regimes in trade of goods and services, finance, human rights, the state remains the sole political organizing principle where internationally agreed norms can be enforced successfully.

Taking these into account, we argue that the most appropriate action to be taken is active involvement in the shaping of the new parameters of the nation state and state institutions. Especially with respect to citizenship, it has to undergo a formal change at last; de facto changes show partly the available ways. Among them we can distinguish two realizable policy options

- a) To encourage naturalization of non-citizens, especially those granted the status of denizen.
- b) To establish a post-national citizenship.

In turn we discuss separately these alternatives so as to point out the shortcomings and merits each of them possess.

Naturalization

Naturalization is the process through which access to full citizenship status is acquired. In practice full citizenship is interpreted as full political rights, since civic and social rights are already recognized –at least- to legally resident migrants. Encouraging naturalization requires taking positive measures concerning both sides involved.

Consequently, naturalization rules should become more tolerant to dual/multiple citizenship, which, as mentioned before, is a common instance for migrants, even if they do not pursue it. This policy reorientation has to be consistent and not subject to populist and clientistic motives. Motives should be given to aspirant citizens as well as to migrants who have set partial membership as their ultimate goal and not as an intermediate one. Second generation and subsequent generations' migrants are more likely to take the chance and respond to policy changes.

On the contrary, those satisfied with the partial membership, those who have accepted the fact that they are deprived of core political rights, liberalization of access to citizenship could be supplemented by redefining partial citizenship content, so as to make it less attractive. Limiting rights associated with partial membership and linking partial membership to new obligations would underpin this effort (Brubaker, 1989:17).

Naturalization, as a policy option, seems realistic and having potential in the foreseeable future, if jus sanguinis countries relax their restrictive naturalization policies. However it does not constitute a real answer to the issue. Its weakness lies in the assumption that citizenship and rights, especially political rights, are a single concept. We always seem to forget that it is a human mental construction, resulting from the parallel historical development of citizenship and political rights (Hammar, 1986:738-9). In reality, citizenship, nationality and political rights are not part and parcel of the same. Therefore decoupling them is always possible, of course not without casualties.

Post-national citizenship

Claims for considering the launch of a post-national citizenship were fuelled originally by the impact guestworkers' advent had on citizenship rights (Soysal, 1994:2). Guestworkers, in spite of being temporary labor migrants, have evolved into active economic, social and political actors in the host society. The fact that they were granted with social and economic rights turned them into 'empirical anomalies to national citizenship' according to a prominent scholar (ibid). This decoupling of rights and national identity is manifested today in the denizen status, which is in practice interpreted as deprivation of core political rights only.

On these grounds researchers from various social science fields argue that it is high time identity and rights were formally decoupled and a new pattern of citizenship arose. Their arguments for the so-called post-national citizenship have as starting point the observation that the once mighty nexus between territory and power is not as strong as it used to be (Wieviorka, 1994:25). Non-state entities, nearly autonomous from the state, can regulate the movement of individuals as workers by virtue of international agreements, such as GATS. The denationalization of capital, information, goods and lately individuals -as service providers- movement is the typical feature of international regimes. As a matter of course the coexistence of these denationalized regimes with the renationalized labor mobility regime is replete of tension. The latter is accentuated due to the establishment of the individual as 'site of rights' (Sassen, 1998:72). The direct association of rights with universal personhood has rendered the individual subject of international law, underscoring thus the move away from statism in international law and declaring human rights as a world-level organizing principle (Soysal, 1994:1; Bauböck, 1994:239-248).

Summarizing post-nationalist arguments, resulting either from an economic technocratic perspective of the world (see e.g. Ohmae, 1991, 1995) or from political theories on the development of supra-national norms of human rights (Soysal, 1994; Sassen, 1996; Jacobson, 1996), all of them converge to the imperative transformation of citizenship's content. European Union citizenship constitutes an often quoted example of efforts to launch a post-national citizenship.

Nevertheless we should not dismiss the actual 'incongruity between normative and organizational bases for rights' (Soysal, 1994:8). The state remains the final and determinant context for setting into force international treaties and enforcing the derived norms. Certainly there are constraints to its discretion, such as principles of customary law. In any case citizenship, even if it is regarded to be less important today, it is still of significant symbolic value (Brochmann, 1996:18). Hence reassertions of the identity component of citizenship, even though in the member states of the European Union economic and welfare rights have been extended to foreign population.

With respect to European Union citizenship¹⁴, indeed it can be considered as a forerunner of post-national citizenship; the final outcome though is not definite. EU citizenship may not be national, but it is founded on the citizenship one's of the member states. Consequently, it is not substitutive of national citizenship, but subsidiary or complementary to it (Joppke, 1998:29). Besides it was -originally at least- intended only to 'remove from citizens of each member state the disabilities of alienage in other member states' (Preus, 1996:28). Some scholars regard it as a rephrase of the association between citizenship and nationality (Martiniello, 1994:35).

Taking a closer look to the provisions of the founding Treaties, the Community freedoms project basically the model of the 'citizen as worker'. Series of Regulations and Directives, decisions of the ECJ¹⁵ and social policies have crafted an environment conducive to civil society, despite the reluctance some of the member states have demonstrated. Nevertheless the prospect of 'citizen as human being', granted on the criterion of residence and nationality reflects a later stage.

In conclusion the transformation of western countries into multiethnic, multicultural societies after the WW II commands a review of citizenship's content. A

¹⁴ For the discussion on the merits and drawbacks of the EU citizenship see Hardy & McCarthy, 1997:118-20; Kostakopoulou, 2000:66-7; Meehan, 1993.

¹⁵ See Guiraudon, 2000; Craig, P. & de Burca, G., 1997.

new conception of citizenship must be constructed, based on the deterritorialization or denationalization of rights and participation. Long-term residence and not national origin would serve as criterion for the acquisition of this citizenship. By adopting such a citizenship model restitution of liberal theory's tenets regarding the notion of 'citizen' would take place¹⁶.

Taking determination to rectify the formal exclusion of migrant population as granted, unwillingness to separate citizenship from nationality on behalf of any of the involved parts could only result in the autonomous granting of full rights to long term foreign residents, rendering thus the institution of citizenship a decorative element. As Carens argues a moral claim to citizenship can always be based on factual social membership, reflected in living, working and establishing ties with the host society (Carens, 1989:41).

V. The Greek case.

Theoretical discussion needs always a pragmatic view into the studied object. Having so far cited arguments and remarks associated with an abstract nation state, it would be of great interest to recourse now to the case-study method. Greece offers a suitable case as it fits the required profile of an immigration country with strong national ties, simultaneously an unquestionable member of western liberal democracies.

Our presentation starts with the migration turnaround of the last decades in Greece. In turn the legislative contexts for migration and citizenship will be cited successively with a view to ascertain the size of the gradual change of governmental stance against migration and migrants in conjunction with naturalization policy changes. A concise look into the draft Immigration Bill completes the section.

Regularizing Immigration: an unprecedented task.

Contrary to the image most of us have for Greece, mainly due to difficulties we may come across when faced with bureaucratic processes, Greece belongs in a small group of world's prosperous and privileged states. The Greek polity and society has undergone a profound change, a 'constructive transformation' (Diamantouros, 2004:10). According to a prominent scholar, this transformation has taken place in crucial ambits (Diamantouros, 2004:10-1) including:

¹⁶ For the fundamental contradiction between citizenship and nationality according to the liberal theory see Castles and Davidson, 2000:12.

- a) *Economy*. Greece is a member of the European Union and eurozone. According to OECD statistics, it holds the 28th place among the world's highest GDP rates, while UNDP considers it to be the 21st among countries with best quality of life.
- b) *Politics*. Greece is a consolidated democracy.
- c) *International Relations*. A period of isolation and marginalization has ended. Greece is member of nearly all 'exclusive' global and regional economic constellations (but the G8). It is considered to be a reliable partner.
- d) *Society*. The generations from 1974 and henceforth have no collective traumatical experience that could lead to civil disorder.

Consequently, it should not surprise us the fact that Greece –along with all southeuropean countries- has become a target country for aspirant immigrants from developing countries of Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe as well as for ethnic Greeks and Greeks of the Diaspora.

Taking things from historical point of view, immigration into Greece started in the '70s. The first migrants into Greece originated from Third World countries and regarded Greece as a transit country in their journey to Northern Europe or America. There were also many Greeks, e.g. guestworkers in FRG, returning due to the economic recession. The migratory movement of the '80s comprises mainly Pontian Greeks. At that time immigrant population constituted 1.8 % of the total population in Greek territory (Sitaropoulos, 1992:89).

The '90s brought a rupture to migratory patterns, as the massive exodus from Albania towards Greece occurred. A rise of illegal immigration through organized networks was also noted. The newcomers rarely regard Greece as a transit country; most of them are determined to stay.

Greek administration was taken by surprise. The legislative framework was not particularly helpful as it was based on an 'archaic piece of legislation', i.e. 'Aliens' Law 4310/1929' (Sitaropoulos, 1992:90), intended to meet different needs. A new law was designed from scratch and in 1991, the Law 1975/1991 on 'Entry-exit, sojourn, work, expulsion of aliens, recognition procedure of foreign refugees and other provisions' came into force.

This law was designed to curb illegal immigration and bring Greek policy into line with the strict immigration policies of the other western countries. The pivotal logic of the law was restrictive –not surprising, since the Ministry of Public Order was

entrusted with its design- and reactive in nature. As such it soon became object of severe criticism, since individual rights were not guaranteed and goals were not achieved. In 1998 two Presidential Decrees lead to the first regularization having ever taken place in Greece¹⁷. Bureaucracy, legal confusion and fear prevented the amnesty plan from having the desired results.

Against this past, the enforcement of Law 2910/2001 raised expectations. Indeed it provided the Greek state with a framework for systematic and organized approach to immigration related issues. The assignment of the policy's coordination to the Ministry of Internal Affairs constitutes a *prima facie* positive step. The new law in accordance with the international and European Union legal instruments intended to respond to modern needs (Papassiopi-Passia, 2004:44).

More specifically, it attempts to rationalize the procedures for granting residence and work permits; it includes for the first time provisions regarding naturalization requirements; it guarantees protection for migrants' rights and provides for their integration in the society (family reunification, access to education etc) etc (Hatzi, 2004; Papassiopi-Passia, 2004; Amitsis-Lazaridi, 2001). In practice these forward-oriented measures did not live up to the expectations they had raised. Successive amendments and supplements did not manage to rectify the underscored shortcomings –in personnel, in means etc. The second regularisation that took place on the grounds of the respective article in Law 2910/2001, simply reinforced the impression that migrants are objects of ambiguous legal provisions instead of subjects of rights (Hatzi, 2004:251).

A draft of a new Immigration Bill has been devised. Before we elaborate its provisions, it would be of great interest to ascertain the size and nature of the impact that the alteration of migration patterns and legislative arrangements had on the institution of citizenship and respective policies.

Becoming Citizen in Greece.

Greece is a *jus sanguinis* country. According to the discussed features of countries with such citizenship laws, this fact is revealing enough for the role of citizenship in the Greek polity.

Indeed, Greek citizenship is strongly attached to nationality. National origin determines admission to citizenship. Greek language constitutes a practical proof of

¹⁷ For the regularization and its effects see Fakiolas, 2003.

evidence for nationality. The religious element is also implicitly tied to national origin (Baltiotis, 2004:332). Consequently we speak of a particularly exclusive control mechanism, intended to achieve cultural unity through homogenization of the state members. This cultural integration should be seen through the lens of the agony that a nascent, fragile state suffers as it struggles to consolidate its existence¹⁸. The existence of diverse ethnic groups in its territory related to ethnic groups living in neighbouring states, not to mention the short distance from its ex conqueror, are considered as insurmountable obstacles, unless overcome.

The naturalization counterpart has been respectively affected. However with respect to naturalization policy in Greece there is a particular feature that permeates all periods: the discrimination between immigrants of ethnic and foreign origin as well as the discrimination between ethnic migrants, originating from different countries.

Studying Greek naturalization policy, we see that between the two World Wars all ethnic Greeks settling in Greece were eligible for acquiring the Greek citizenship¹⁹. This relaxed stance changed after World War II. In the Cold War era deprivation of citizenship was the rule. Citizenship was granted only to some ethnic Greeks that arrived massively from Eastern Europe. On the contrary, ethnic Greeks from Turkey, Albania and Cyprus did not acquire citizenship status (ibid:313). Instead they were conferred a quasi-citizenship status, differentiated from that of citizenship only with regard to voting rights. The emerged issue was definitely resolved in 1999, when these quasi-citizens were massively enabled to be naturalized (ibid:315, ft20). As far as aliens originating even from prosperous western states are concerned, they are rarely naturalized. The 1955 codification brought no particular change.

Policy changes regarding naturalization take place after 1981. First of all, discrimination between aliens and ethnic Greeks fades, as new patterns of differentiated citizenship, such as EC citizens, arise. The ‘one and only citizenship’ principle comes to its end, while requirements regarding the residence’s duration become more demanding. In ‘90s the number of naturalizations gradually increase and mainly state practices change.

¹⁸ For a concise report of the challenges for the nascent Greek state, see Diamantouros, 2004:14-5. For a detailed analysis of the formation of the modern Greek state, see Diamantouros, 2002.

¹⁹ For a brief report on the Pontian Greeks advent and intergration see Fakiolas, 2001.

In 1993 the first law regarding Returnees comes into force (2130/1993). Greece is one of the few countries able to accept the 'invited' ethnic migrants and grant them access to citizenship (Baltsiotis, 2004:318). By virtue of Law 2910/2001 requirements for admitting quasi-ethnic migrants are also relaxed. Nevertheless the state's stance against aliens of foreign origin remains the same.

The current situation.

Recently a new draft Immigration Bill came into being. This new Bill seals with its presence a series of related changes regarding issues arising from the juxtaposition of citizenship and migration. More specifically the new Code of Greek Citizenship was voted in November 2004; EU Race and Equality Directives have also been transposed in the Greek legal order; and now this law encompasses the precedent and more recent changes in a single piece of legislation.

The draft law includes provisions founded on the community *acquis*, such as Directives on family reunification (2003/86/EC); EU long term resident status for third country nationals (2003/109/EC); the package of antidiscrimination measures, namely Race (2000/43/EC) and Equality (2000/78/EC) Directives. Needless to refer to the country's conformity with provisions of internationally agreed statutes on human rights and migrant rights in particular.

In addition to this, the draft law purports to rationalize procedures and minimize required documents for residence and work permit, which henceforth constitute a single permit. Special permits for victims of trafficking are also provided. A comprehensive action plan on social integration is also explicitly referred in this draft law. No change has been noted though to the fees for the permit renewal.

As far as naturalization procedures are concerned we can still discern a more favourable stance towards ethnic migrants, e.g. no fee requirement for having their naturalization application examined. It is also striking that the requirements regarding naturalization are quite similar to those of acquiring the long term resident status (good command of Greek language; knowledge of Greek history and civilization; ethos and personality) without conferring upon the individual the same status and rights..

Summarizing the 'Greek case', the Greek state has used the institution of citizenship as a homogenizing mechanism, thus verifying our theoretical assumptions. Migration has had an impact on migration and naturalization policies to the extent that

citizens were pulled out of the ethnic migrants' pool. Furthermore, there seems to be a rather conservative transformation to citizenship status and rights, harmonized, we could say, with the one taking place in all other European Union member states. Therefore the Greek legislator soon will have to pay more attention to citizenship and naturalization legislative frameworks, as migration population increases, increasing along the population fraction that is constantly deprived of the right to participate in law-making and governance. Devising an inclusive citizenship soon will be required; proposals for a 'civic citizenship'²⁰ from the European Commission hint towards this direction (COM(2000)757). Because in a liberal democracy differentiated citizenship statuses do not fit.

VI. Concluding Remarks.

For a long time, citizenship has been a central tool of state sovereignty, an institution of significant -practical and symbolic- value. Nevertheless, forces of globalization in general, and the new migration realities in particular, intensified its inherent ambiguities, while creating new challenges for the nation state.

This paper addressed the problematic relation between citizenship in its current form and the contemporary migration reality. The interest focused on the fact that long term foreign residents are still deprived of the right to law making and governance in liberal democratic states, on the grounds of their national origin. This constitutes an exclusion, which in turn renders the integration part of immigration policy inefficient. The effects of this inefficiency are not confined only to migrants; they are extended to the society as a whole.

Therefore, reconfiguration of the institution of citizenship is a prerequisite for a successful integration policy. The new concept of citizenship has to be inclusionary, based on deterritorialized notions of rights and participation. Political rights and obligations have to be set apart from cultural particularity and difference. Because, as already said, in a liberal democracy differentiated citizenship statuses do not fit.

²⁰ Acquisition of core rights and obligations gradually over a period of years, so that eventually immigrants are treated in the same way as nationals of the host state, without being naturalized (COM(2000)757).

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Title:

‘Greek national identity’ within the framework of the post-1990’s migration from the Balkans: A discursive social constructionist approach

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Abstract

The aim of the paper proposed is to explore the ways in which elements of Greek identity have taken on board the presence of ‘new’ migrant populations from the Balkans in Central Northern Greece. It will do so through the consideration of national identity as a social construct negotiated, produced and reproduced in interaction, as a form of life by appealing to spatiotemporally available discourses.

While the literature on Greek national identity reveals a long tradition of binary oppositions, cultural dualisms, or ideological dilemmas penetrating through culture and identifying polarizations of construction, statistical data on the post 1990’s migrant population influx from the Balkans attest to the emerging significance of the topic.

Using a discursive social constructionist approach, the key theoretical concepts employed are: *national identity as a social construct negotiated in (interactional) contexts*; the Foucaultian notion of discourses as being *productive* and *constitutive*, as having force and regulating practice; the *normalization/naturalization* of dominant discourses and their elevation into *common sense ideologies and forms of life*. These are explored in Greek people’s accounts in focus groups focusing on discourse analytic practices, strategies and resources. In terms of target population, this research focuses on two main parameters; namely *locality*, as defined by the distinction between *urban/rural* spaces, and *age*. The *urban/rural* distinction builds on and is expected to highlight issues occurring from both societal differences per se and from the differences in the percentage concentration of migrants, while the age groups identified are: i. *18-21 (as growing alongside ‘new’ migration)* and ii. *34-45 (as recipients of ‘new’ migration)*.

The paper’s discussion focuses on the ways in which Greeks perform their national identity within the framework of ‘new’ migration from the Balkans. Preliminary results are presented as occurring within the parameters of *locality* (urban,) and *age* (18-21, 35-45).

The period following the 1990's has been characterized for calling into question previous understandings of social, economic and political identity in Europe. Greek accounts of national identity seem to be informed by a number of recent forces, of which migration from the Balkans is one. The focus of this study is to explore these accounts in Northern Greece by identifying the dominant discourses in the literature and by analyzing accounts and descriptions of Greek people in the area.

Aim:

The aim of the research proposed is to explore the ways in which elements of Greek identity have taken on board the presence of 'new' migrant populations from the Balkans in Central Northern Greece. It will do so through the consideration of national identity as a social construct negotiated, produced and reproduced in interaction, as a form of life by appealing to spatiotemporally available discourses.

Research Questions:

1. What does it mean to be Greek?
2. What impressions of migration and migrants do Greeks express?
3. How does the concept/construct of Greek national identity (Greekness) evolve in talk-in-interaction within the framework of 'new' migration from the Balkans?
4. a. How do Greeks perceive their identity to have *changed*?
b. How do they *talk about/perform* this change in question?
5. How do accounts on the above might differ or vary according to age and locality?

Background:

Research Context

Modern Greek national identity

Writings on Greek national identity reveal a long tradition of binary oppositions (see Tziovas in Bozatzis, N., 1999), cultural dualisms (see Fermor in Bozatzis, N., 1999) or ideological dilemmas (see Billig, M. 1995, 2001) penetrating through culture (see Hertzfeld, M., 1986). When these were regarded as *essentialised* and not symbolic *resources* or ideological constructs, they were often criticized for stemming from a colonial mentality or orientalist approach. At the same time, they have also invariably been employed in the occidentally-oriented discourse of nationalism in the formation of the Greek nation-state.

Modern Greek national identity is seen to have drawn from multiple interpretations, embedded in Greek national history. National histories are written through narratives entailing ways of life and cultural stereotypes. In Greece as in many other cases, national history in the process of nation-state building was contingent upon political aims, stressing therefore a concrete continuity between past and present between Classical and Modern Greece which is also reflected in recurrent discursive and constitutive binaries to be addressed below.

At the same time, Bozatzis stresses that national histories reflect the dominant discourses and symbolic resources at the time, thus identifying polarizations of construction, such as Western hegemony by means of “large-scale institutional practices” (see Bozatzis, N., 1999, pp. 23-43). These inform the practices of social actors. This is the reason why Bozatzis considers Greek national identity an exemplary case study since Greece has symbolically been both included and excluded from the western context of identity formation. It should be noted, however, that modern Greece is not the sole case of symbolic inclusion and exclusion from the Western norm.

According to Greek national history and the *evaluatively charged* bipolar framework of East and West, key interpretations on which the concept of Greekness or Greek national identity draw are Hellenism an *atemporal ideal* tracing its origins to ancient Hellas, including elements of association with western/European attributes and paganism; and Romiossini associated with Byzantine cultural characteristics and folk culture filtering through the Ottoman Empire and supported by the Orthodox church.

The Hellenic-Romeic distinction has another role in Greek discourse, one less obtrusive but nevertheless fundamental to the ideological division in question: the difference between an outward-directed conformity to international expectations about the national image (Hellenism) and an inward-looking, self-critical collective appraisal (Romeic) (Herzfeld, 1986, p. 20).

This division is what Herzfeld (1987) terms the ‘everyday rhetoric of morality’ reflected in the oppositions of symbolic resources such as people and nation, collectivism and individualism, shame and honour, female and male. At the same time and beyond this analytic stance, Herzfeld also claims that Hellenism and Romiossini are performative European discourses whose function has been to symbolically and politically include and exclude Greece in and from European structures of power (in Bozatzis, 1999, p.39).

Modern Greek national identity reveals tensions and invariable combinations of the two sets of *discourses* as they are communicated and performed in everyday life social interactions. Most importantly, the stereotypes and binaries of the discourses of Hellenism and Romiossini are reiterated in various forms, meanings, ends, polarities and perspectives in their use by social actors.

Within these, there are, elements of xenophobia and racism as well as a disengagement of Greek social actors as regards discourses about the “the West” and “the Rest”, which

naturalises and reproduces within casual (Greek) habits of thought and talk not merely Greece as a nation in a world of nations, but also the “natural”

division of the world of nations between nations of “the West” and of “the Rest” and Greece’s ambivalent position within this hegemonic, imaginary and politically real world division (Bozatzis, 1999, p. 127).

Within this framework, Balkan identity is also viewed within this constructed bipolarity. When on Hellenism’s end of the binary described above, drawing on discourses polarised to Western/European identity constructs, the Balkans is associated with the ‘other’ within, the oriental and the exotic whereas in the inward-looking Romeic end, similarities are drawn between the constructs of Greek national identity and Balkan identity (especially as regards historical and religious continuities). However, this is not an exhaustive framework as further constructs exist for different regions and peoples in the Balkans.

This pertains to the notion of the ‘other’, which has a prominent role in considering the construction/formation of (national) identity. Othering is perceived differently by different schools in psychology and social psychology ranging from social identity theory¹ (comparison and categorization, see Tajfel and Turner in Gough. B. and McFadden, M. 2001) to discursive social constructionist stances focusing on interaction and positioning (to be discussed in a subsequent section).

To that end Triandafyllidou (1998) argues that “[I]dentity is always constituted in interaction. Thus, some of its features become salient because they distinguish the in-group from others, while other features remain latent” (Triandafyllidou, 1998, p. 600). Similarly to the hegemonic discourses mentioned above, which distinguish ‘others’ ranging from the ones to be admired to the ones to be dismissed, Triandafyllidou introduces the notion of ‘significant other’ in shaping national identity. Significant others refer to those groups which threaten the in-group, especially their identity. That may account for the fact that uniqueness is always sought through interaction between similarity and dissimilarity.

¹ In social identity theory, a social identity is a person’s knowledge that he or she belongs to a social category or group (Stets and Burke, 2000). Through a social comparison process, persons who are similar to the self are categorized with the self and are classified as the in-group. Similarly, persons who are different from the self are categorized as different and are classified as the out-group. Categorization, comparison and classification (identification) are recurrent processes of social identity.

Significant others may be internal or external to the in-group, ranging from minorities to foreigners. Nationalist reactions are then contingent upon the “type” of others. Triandafyllidou outlines different reactions to different groups, the most relevant here would be the type which refers to immigrant communities. She argues that differences in language, religion, customs may be perceived to threaten the purity of the nation. “The nation is likely then to engage in a process of reaffirmation of its identity and seek to re-define it so as to differentiate the in-group from the newcomers” (ibid, p.601). In addition, significant others also become salient in times of crises (often used as a scapegoat), against which the nation (re) unites.

Therefore, within this ambivalent relationship with Balkan identity, differences in language, religion, customs and the perceived threat to national unity inform the constructed distinction between ‘others’ and ‘significant others’ in the Balkans which is further reinforced by migration flows.

A final point to take into account is religion in Greece, which pervades accounts of otherness and ideological dilemmas. According to Chrysoloras, “religion and nationalism are so closely associated in Greece, to the extent that one can refer to Greek Orthodoxy as a ‘national religion’” (2004, p. 1). The ‘Helleno-Christian’ discourse, which constitutes a dominant element in the dilemmatic negotiation of Greek identity, as mentioned above, is embedded in everyday life through “the ritualization of certain social practices” and “the penetration of the aesthetics of the Orthodox culture in Greek public life” (ibid, p. 17). Orthodoxy is normalized in spatiotemporal traditions and as such it contributes to the current construct of Greekness as a ‘concrete unitary whole’.

Post 1990's migration

The previous identity constructs have also assumed that Greece has mainly been a relatively ethnically homogeneous society, which is debatable as to what this means and how it was constructed. For the purpose of this research, I present current migration levels. According to the 2001 census, 7% of the legal(ized) population of Greece are ‘foreigners’/immigrants (National Statistical Service of Greece, 2001), while it is estimated that another 2-3% appears not to have registered, amounting in

total to 10% of the whole population. This figure is quite high, taking into account that other Mediterranean countries, such as Spain, reported 4% of immigrants. A section of the same survey on ‘foreigners’ who declared that they have settled in Greece for employment purposes, shows that half come from Albania, followed by Bulgaria, Romania, Georgia, Pakistan, Ukraine, Poland, Russia. Twelve percent of this sample has settled in Central Macedonia (Central Northern Greece) and 47.5% in Attica. Nevertheless it should be stressed that, according to the same survey, the percentage contribution of immigrants from the Balkans to the total population of Central Macedonia is higher than in Attica, which is the main reason for focusing on this area in this research work.

In addition, Hatziprokopiou notes that the ‘capital’ of Northern Greece, and second biggest city in Greece, Thessaloniki and its regions, have thus far attracted scarce academic attention as regards to their social experience of ‘new’ migration (2003, p. 1033). The new social geography of these areas has recently been explored, mainly focusing on Albanian migrants. The findings of Hatziprokopiou himself on Albanian migrants’ incorporation into these areas provide an interesting case for the contact hypothesis, showing that interaction “may result in the eventual breakdown of cultural barriers and prejudices” (ibid, p. 1050). According to the same study, Albanian participants seem to consider the refugee tradition of Northern Greece– from Asia Minor - and the emigration experience – to Europe, the United States and Australia - as a positive social element, which is expressed in the form of sensitivity and understanding (of common experience) by the locals.

At the same time, Greece is variably accused of (institutionalized) racism by the international media, while the Greek media are seen to both condemn and feed on this image (see for example Smith, 2003; Koulouri, 2003; Lianos, 2003; Souliotis, 2003; Psicharis, 2003). This has been accelerated in recent years as the assimilation of immigrant populations enters the realm of everyday life exigencies. While reports focus on the limitations of civil society to address the issue effectively, citing examples in legalization procedures, the educational system, welfare policies and employment opportunities (see extensive analysis in Triandafyllidou, A. and Veikou, M., 2002; Baldwin-Edwards, M. and Fakiolas, R., 1998) the discourse of ethnic primacy is reflected in ethnic citizenship, which has direct implications on migration

laws concerning all of the above. Triandafyllidou and Veikou see this in the inconclusive opposition of ethnic and civic identity in Greece. They explicitly argue that “the continuing lack of a comprehensive policy framework even after 10 years (of migration), and the political and public debate on the issue suggest that there is a relationship between this reluctance and the ethnocultural definition of the Greek nationality and citizenship” (Triandafyllidou, A. and Veikou, M., 2002, p. 191).

This image is also recorded and further fostered in the 2004 European statistics and surveys, which portray a relative tendency of the Greek population to identify with their nationality more than with Europe (55%) or with a combination of both nationality and Europe (39%); only respondents in the UK, Finland and Spain record higher figures (Eurobarometer, 2004)². Greek respondents also figure the highest rates amongst other Western European countries in not accepting immigrants (19.4%), other races (24.4%) and especially muslims (31.1%) as their neighbours (European Values Study, 1980-90-2000).

Theories and Concepts

Banal Nationalism, imagination, construction and narration

For the purpose of this research, my starting point is to examine the effect of conceptual imagining in embedding social reality. According to Anderson (1991) interaction between capitalism, technology (print), and human linguistic diversity at the end of the 18th century made national communities imaginable in homogeneous empty time (p. 43). Space/territory seem to have played a functional role, as a basis for but also a construct of the imagined communities point of departure in a world fragmented and sustained by homogeneous empty times.

Apart from these, the centrality of myths and memories in perceptions of the nation is commonplace amongst theorists. A.D. Smith (1996) considers the renewal of nations

² “The feeling of being European is more likely to be felt by men, managers, students, white-collar workers and the self-employed. The longer respondents have spent in fulltime education and the younger they are, the more likely they are to feel European to some degree or another” (Eurobarometer 61, 2004, p. B.95).

and nationalism as a repository of resources, immersed with myths and memories, and activated through temporal trends to reproduce them.

Smith sees ethnic identity as a collective identity produced by “shared memories of collective experiences and activities of successive generations of a group claiming a common origin and ancestry” (1996, p.583). Common origin is imbued with myths permeating through memories and associated with a historic and sacred homeland, as a definition of ethnicity. Above all, shared or collective memories usually concentrate on specific events, being distinguished as golden epochs, including flourishing ages, or periods of extreme suffering terminated by revolutions featuring named heroes. These periods of success or successful movements constitute cases for national recognition, distinctiveness, prestige.

At the same time national consciousness is profoundly cultivated through characteristic amnesias. Insecurity crops up in a striving for continuity and a sense of personhood, hence, creating a need for constant reminders of who we are, where we came from and where we are going. From birth certificates to national anthems and artifacts identity is recorded in order to be remembered. “As with modern persons, so it is with nations. Awareness of being embedded in secular, serial time, with all its implications of continuity, yet of ‘forgetting’ the experience of this continuity engenders the need for a narrative identity” (Anderson, B., 1991, p. 205). In this line of thought, it seems that the better recorded history is, the more impact it exerts over successive generations of a community or nation, a case being ancient Greece (Smith, A. D., 1996, p. 583). The deeper the resources on which to draw, the greater the sustainability of a community.

Billig takes the discussion beyond imagination and narrated or recorded realities imbued with myths; from the moment of the establishment of imagined communities onwards nationalism and national identity reciprocally construct and reproduce each other in a banal way. For identity is not a thing, neither does it evolve in a state of vacuum. Rather, it is to be understood as a form of talking about self and community and as a form of life (1996, p. 60).

This theory and imagination of the nation among a world of nations as well as nationhood itself became a theory which, far from describing, dictated habits of thought and life in the form of discourses, narratives and their banal symbolic manifestation (see *ibid*, p. 63). In this sense, the labeling articulated in this theory reflects mainly western prevailing politically and socially constructed stances, revealing an elevation of dominant approaches and ways of talking into normative accounts. Thus, theory becomes normative and the absence of Anderson's community 'unimaginable'.

Naturalization is the most effective mechanism for creating awareness and for sustaining identities. Nations not only have to be imagined and narrated but they also need to be flagged in everyday life. National identity seems 'natural' to have in an essentialist sense of having 'a nose and two ears' (Gellner, E. cited in *ibid*, p. 37).

In addition, these processes are legitimized in universal codes. Established nation-states may have been imagined in different ways and have particular histories, but they are routinely flagged through constructions of the universal themes of nationalism. Thus, although national particularities are stressed in reference to attributes, in a western context, nationhood is asserted through universal codes such as particular national labels, flags, identities, anthems, histories (see Billig, 1996, pp. 72-73). "In this way, 'we' imagine 'ourselves' and 'foreigners' to be equally ruled by the sociology of nationhood" (*ibid*, p. 3).

What this means in essence is that nation-related terms, adjectives and spaces form the predominant image of social and political organization. We invoke, for instance, this label as we invoke other contextually available labels to define ourselves, such as our name, our gender, age, etc. In public documents ethnicity is still listed as an objective attribute to describe people (*almost in an essentialised, normative sense*).

The relevance of this conceptual framework to the study of national identity in Greece will be explored in Greek people's accounts in Northern Greece. Nevertheless, certain considerations - though not necessarily country-specific - are in order. The thesis of Banal Nationalism develops focusing on 'established nation-states' conventionally identified both politically and socially with the 'West'. Formally

speaking, modern Greece is considered within that framework. However, writings on modern Greece, current statistical reports, social and political issues such as migration policy and the ‘Macedonian question’ respectively have been the sources of recurrent contestation as regards the terms applicability of the terms ‘established’ and ‘Western’ (see Bozatzis, 1999).

Research Approaches

Social Constructionism and Identity – Theoretical Concepts

Using a discursive social constructionist approach, this research aims to combine concepts and tools primarily from *discourse and conversation analysis*, both from the *relativist* and the more *critical* approaches. Consequently, I focus on *patterns within language* and *patterns of activity*, on the *process* and *content* of talk-in-interaction, on the *micro* and *macro* levels of analysis respectively.

Firstly, I will draw upon *national identity as a social construct negotiated in (interactional)* contexts from which the person cannot be separated (see Wetherell, M. and Maybin, J. in Stevens, 1996, pp. 222-225). The person is immersed in the social world and draws upon discourses, which are historically, contextually, culturally and spatiotemporally available. Therefore, knowledge is situated (context specific) and relative and any account is local and value-laden.

Secondly, discourses have a functional character as social actors draw upon them in negotiating and performing their identity. However, I will extend this definition and draw upon the Foucaultian notion of discourses as being *productive* and *constitutive*, as having force and regulating practice (cited in Carabine, J. in Wetherell, M., Taylor, S., Yates, S.J., 2001, pp. 268-269). Discourses make claims to the ‘truth’ but are not all equally powerful. Dominant discourses are *normalized* and constitute *common sense ideologies and forms of life*. Discourses on national identity or stereotypes, for instance, establish the norm through a process of contradiction, comparison and differentiation with counter-discourses. The homogeneity or shared social understanding produced is daily lived in the world of nation-states, which resembles Bourdieu’s concept of habitus, internalized through national socialization (see De

Cillia, Reisigl & Wodak, 1999, p. 153). The process of *normalization/naturalization* is a central assumption of this research.

Finally, I will employ a critical element of discursive social constructionism, moving beyond the functional use of language in interactional contexts (Potter and Wetherell) to understanding the selection of discourses by the participants and the social role of discourse; in other words, what their mere existence achieves.

Research Tools

As stated above, the tools selected for this research draw on a combination of traditions in discursive social constructionism. Firstly, apart from the appeal to broad discourses, I will also focus on the process of talk-in-interaction in focus groups to explore the range of *interpretative repertoires* utilized by participants. In terms of identity, personhood/selfhood draw upon representations/repertoires contextually and culturally available ('interpretative repertoires') (Burr, V., 1995, p. 123). These are 'the building blocks of conversation, a range of linguistic resources that can be drawn upon and utilized in the course of everyday social interaction' (Edley, N. in Wetherell, M., Taylor, S., Yates, S.J., 2001, p. 198). This study will identify and analyze the interpretative repertoires – in terms of (familiar) grammar and syntax and of the broad discourses they adhere to - employed by participants in order to talk about national identity and the particular 'others' in question.

Secondly, this research also takes on board that participants make use of *rhetorical strategies* in order to gain legitimacy. Billig argues that all discourse is rhetorical, "it is argumentative and seeks to persuade; as such the activities of criticism and justification are central to rhetorical discourse" (in Wetherell, M., Taylor, S., Yates, S. J., 2001, p. 214). The rhetorical strategies (such as Humor, Mitigation strategies, Extreme Case Formulations, Appeal to Personal Experience, Comparison and Impersonal Structures) used by participants in focus groups will be studied in terms of their type, organization and function in undermining alternatives and persuading. This is also expected to constitute a resource as regards to the embeddedness of rhetorical strategies in (particular) ideological discourses of national identity as well as to the constant negotiation of *subject positions*.

Thirdly, words and utterances (Davies and Harré, 2001) acquire meaning within contexts or, to use Billig's term, carry an ideological history, in the sense that they are attached to broader discourses. Lived ideological discourses constitute the way things are commonly thought and believed to be, and therefore, practiced. To some extent, they constitute a society's or culture's common sense (see Edley, N., 2001, p. 203). At the same time, *ideological discourses* are not unitary and coherent. Rather, they contain tensions or contrary themes and are *dilemmatic*, which according to Billig provides for the premises for common sense to evolve in Western cultures, through discussion or counter-positioning. With effect from that, this research focuses on the kinds of ideological dilemmas participants in focus groups enter or reveal in their perceptions and performance of their national identity; in their perceptions of migrants; and in their perceptions and performance of their national identity within and since the framework of 'new' migration from the Balkans.

Fourthly, I also draw on Garfinkel's argument that actions are meaningful through shared understandings, and that social action requires an analysis of how social actors use shared common-sense understandings (sociology of nationhood) and shared methods of reasoning in interaction (Heritage in, Wetherell, M., Taylor, S., Yates, S. J., 2001, p. 50). Joint construction - *jointly produced storylines* and *joint remembering/forgetting* - becomes practical activity, to which social actors consent, position themselves and are positioned by others and by ideological discourses (Critical Discourse Analysis). In *interactive positioning* individuals' utterances position other interacting participants, while in *reflexive positioning* individuals position themselves. This is neither necessarily intentional, nor constrain-free, as subject positions are made available in interaction according to spatiotemporally available discourses. However, individuals have the possibility of choice.

In addition, linked to the concept of positioning and managing subject positions in talk-in interaction is the concept of footing. Footing as developed by Goffman (1981) refers to alignment in relation to what is occurring in interaction, while "a change in footing implies a change in the alignment we take up to ourselves and the others present as expressed in the way we manage the production or reception of an utterance" (p. 128).

The choices of discourses, their ideological dilemmas, the positions made available through them the positions taken up and the management of alignment and shifts in alignment will all be informed by the literature and analysed in talk-in-interaction, in the focus groups conducted in Thessaloniki, a first mapping of which follows in a subsequent section.

Methodology:

Participants

The target population for the purpose of this research can be defined in two ways:

- *In a quantitative manner*, the aim is to focus on the core of Greek people in Northern Greece (born by Greek parents, and raised in Greece), in urban and rural areas, as the data of migration concentration indicates.
- *In a qualitative manner*, the criterion for inclusion in my research would be that prospective participants represent themselves as Greeks (information obtained through filter questions).

However, it is possible that both ways correspond to the same group of people, since identity is perceived as a construct and a form of life, which renders the existence of objective traits as determinants of identification insufficient to account for contemporary complexities.

Sample

Although discourses are productive and constitutive, and, thus, have force and regulating practice, the present study takes into account that there are objective differences (between parameters, characteristics), which are expected to produce different accounts. Therefore, this research focuses on two main parameters; namely locality, as defined by the distinction between urban/rural spaces, and age. The primary focus on these parameters is based on the assumption that there are significant differences in accounts provided by participants who experienced

migration from the Balkans through different forms of life and in different stages of their lifetime.

Locality seems significant in this research for both theoretical and practical reasons. The *theoretical aspect of locality* draws on accounts of local identity and attachments, which may vary from one locality to the other. It also draws on the symbolic significance of space/territory (see Smith A.D., 1996), social practices and representations associated with it. Practical reasons refer to migration concentration in different localities as well as to the practicalities and connotations attached to forms of life in urban and rural areas in general. Therefore, the urban/rural distinction builds on and is expected to highlight issues occurring from both societal differences per se and from the differences in the percentage concentration of migrants. The locality identified as urban in Central Macedonia is Thessaloniki (including its outskirts); the rural distinction, as identified for the purpose of this research, refers to villages in Central Macedonia, which is currently being researched. This distinction has been made on the basis that they differentiate significantly in types of employment available, population (in absolute numbers) and overall living conditions. The allocation of participants in the villages and therefore the choice of villages itself is guided by snowball sampling and contingent upon issues of access.

Age has been included since the 'new' migration influx in Greece was new in the sense of not previously experience in such a form and extent from the particular area to Greece and also coincided (in an interactive way) with other 'new' geopolitical events emerging in the post 1990's. In the sense of time as we understand it, there was a period prior to and during this force, for Greek society. Hence, two age groups seem more interesting for the purpose of this research.

•**35-45** (as recipients on 'new' migration): this age group is selected because migration from the Balkans has been a 'new' experience for its members, especially within the previously prevailing discourse of ethnic/national homogeneity in Greece.

•**18-21** (as growing alongside 'new' migration): this age group is selected to see how accounts may vary when people grow up in an environment where their life memories

and experience have been constructed alongside migration and interaction with migrants.

It should be noted that while age and locality are focused on from the beginning, I control for gender, class and education in the sampling process by selecting allocated participants in a way to ensure a widespread representation of the above in the focus groups overall (see Sampling Strategy below). Most importantly, apart from acknowledging and controlling for objective differences, the primary focus is to explore gender, class, education and refugee origin background (for example second generation refugees from Asia Minor) in positioning, if these become relevant to the participants (in the case of systematic differences).

Data Collection Methods

The main stage of primary data collection is focus groups, estimated to amount to eight; two from the urban area of Thessaloniki including participants from the age group of 18-21; two of the same age group coming from rural areas within a 100 miles radius from Thessaloniki; two from the same area including participants from the age group of 35-25; and two from the same age group including participants from the urban area of Thessaloniki. It is estimated that the number of participants per focus group will be 4-6, amounting to 32-48 participants in total (according to social science standards).

Parameters	Urban	Rural
18-21	2: (4-6 participants)	2: (4-6 participants)
35-45	2: (4-6 participants)	2: (4-6 participants)

For the purposes of this paper the indicative/first results of the focus groups from the urban area of Thessaloniki corresponding to the two identified age groups will be presented below.

Further research could be conducted in the form of follow-up interviews. These could address issues arising from the focus groups and explore them further in one-to-one discussions.

Justification

Focus groups have been selected in order to obtain a variety of perspectives about the topic. The benefits of focus groups include gaining insights into people's shared views and perceptions of everyday life and the ways in which participants interact with each other in a group situation (positioning). Discussion in the focus groups is introduced by a paragraph with the intention to topicalize them and avoid getting off track.

Focus Group themes include:

- Perceptions of migrants from the Balkans
- Contact with migrants from the Balkans
- Greekness in everyday life
- Presence of migrants and the feeling of Greekness
- Presence of migrants and practices of everyday life
- Presence of migrants and the physical space (see schedule attached)

Sampling Strategy

The sampling method selected for the purposes of this research is snowball sampling. Snowball sampling “is based on the assumption that a ‘bond’ or ‘link’ exists between the initial sample and others in the same target population, allowing a series of referrals to be made within a circle of acquaintance” (Berg, 1988).

This has been selected since focus groups work better with participants who know one another. The main limitation of snowball sampling is that due to the ‘circle of acquaintance’ there may be too much similarity between participants. I control for this limitation by controlling for variables such as gender, class and education complementing it with quota sampling in composing the focus groups. In quota sampling data is gathered from individuals possessing identified characteristics (see

Blaxter, 2001). Therefore, snowball sampling is used to allocate prospective participants, while quota sampling is used to select participants on the basis that there is a widespread representation of the above variables in the focus groups overall.

Analytic Process

The analytic process evolves in the following stages: Focus group recordings are transcribed; transcriptions are read initially taking notes identifying broad themes and producing an index of codes, which is presented below. Subsequent reading and narrowing down will follow using the analytical tools compiled above. Extracts will be selected and translated; these will be further analysed and selected for inclusion in the thesis.

It should be noted that the language used in the data collection process (focus groups, interviews, transcriptions) is Greek. Analysis will be carried out on Greek transcripts; selected extracts will be translated into English after the first phase of analysis.

Positionality

The selection of a (discursive) social constructionist approach has a dual function as regards to this research. First, it expresses my overall philosophical perspective; second, it guides my reflective stance in the collection and analysis of information. My position as a researcher and a member of the in-group (Greek people in Northern Greece (who were born by Greek parents, were raised in Greece and represent themselves as Greek), in an urban area, with migration concentration), will be acknowledged for the subjectivity risks and opportunities it may have.

Preliminary Mapping of Themes & Strategies

The discussion of indicative results from a preliminary coding is centred around rhetorical strategies, their function in talk-in-interaction, and the broad themes which have commonly occurred in the focus groups conducted in Thessaloniki on the age groups 18-21 and 35-45.

The broad themes participants draw on in discussing their national identity and the post 1990s migration from the Balkans are the following: the media as 1. the medium of learning about migrants and 2. as the reason for negative stereotyping; language as an indication, definition and criterion of national identity; contact hypothesis as the idea that contact with immigrants fosters positive attitudes and understanding; acculturation, assimilation and integration as normative processes in relation to migrants and the host communities; the West, particularly Germany and the US due to being destination places for Greek emigrants. The West is considered 1. as a positive example of development and tolerance and 2. as a negative example of inconsumate globalization; the State 1. being challenged as regards migration policy (and legalization) and social policy and 2. being equated to its constituent parts – people; religion; the past and the present (and the future) penetrating discussions of change and different circumstances. The most used binaries identified thus far are: legal - illegal, good - bad, Ancient Greece - Modern Greece, Prejudice - Tolerance, theory - practice, past - present. The classification of these themes and binaries into discourses and their rhetorical uses will be complete upon completion of data collection and analysis.

The rhetorical strategies which occur from a first coding are the following: Appeal to personal experience, Extreme case formulation, Comparison, Impersonal Structures, Mitigation/Hedges and Humor. A discussion of the identified functions of these tools and an example of their dynamic interaction with broad themes/discourses seems appropriate in order to stir up further analysis.

Rhetorical Strategies: Functions (& Dynamics)

The first rhetorical strategy to be presented is participants' appeal to personal experience, which constitutes an example on how further coding will proceed in the following rhetorical strategies in the process of mapping strategies to themes and discourses. Therefore, the uses that participants put to personal experience are explored at two levels; namely function, in the sense of what is being achieved (or aimed to) and dynamics, in the sense of the discourses it most commonly combines with.

Appeal to Personal experience is a common form of argument legitimation. It refers to a narrative of active or passive experience of events which are offered by participants in support or evidence of an unfolding view or argument (see Tusting et al, 2002). Preliminary coding of the focus groups conducted in Thessaloniki indicates that appeal to personal experience is made to enable the legitimation of generalizations in a mitigated-cum-uncontested way. Generalisations occur at two levels; First, from one instance to the whole of a person/group. For example, personal experience is used to talk about single cases of Greek people who would not accept low-paid jobs to generalize about the ‘Greeks’ as a whole. Second, from one instance to the whole of a culture. For example, ‘not accepting low-paid jobs’ is discussed as a characteristic of ‘Greek culture’.

Contact hypothesis

At the level of discourse, appeal to personal experience seems combined with the discourse of contact hypothesis, which assumes that it is due to ignorance, indifference and lack of familiarity/contact that derogatory stereotypes, prejudice and racism are constructed. Therefore, it hypothesizes that knowledge and experience of ‘others’ would solve these problems (see for example Sigelman and Welch; Ahmed, Nicolson and Spencer, 1993). Participants site their experience of personal contact which has led them to think ‘otherwise’, or in other words positively about immigrants.

There is a discursive and a critical element here. First, “the implication of this discourse is that it allows for a strategy of doing nothing but waiting, until people get used to those they are unfamiliar with, by a process of increased and continued contact” (Ahmed et al, 2000, p. 39). This has appeared in the focus groups in statements such as “in 20-30 years from now things will be different” or “prejudice will be extinct” without articulating personal an societal input but rather seeing as natural evolution.

Secondly, contact hypothesis also classifies as a normative discourse as it implies the existence of a ‘norm’ against which everyone must be compared, thus, implicitly denying difference which means that “the conditions for successful intervention – the recognition of these differences and the analysis of their cause – cannot be achieved”

(Henriques, 1984, p. 89). For example, statements such as “they (migrants) will be like us”.

The second rhetorical strategy presented is **Impersonal Structures**. **Impersonal Structures** consist words, phrases, idioms, sayings, grammar, syntax and hedges which enable the expression of a view or argument in an objective manner. A commonly repeated example is the use of passive voice. This functions to blur agency and disavow accountability by using ‘out-there’ structures which are not immediately identifiable with the speaker or which exist independently of the speaker. Socially, impersonal structures as explicit mitigators “offer an almost transparent mask of ‘political correctness’” (Galasinska and Galasinski, 2003, p. 853). A common example in this first coding is the word ‘It’s logical’. It should be noted that logical in the Greek language and context translates to ‘normal’, ‘expected’, ‘common sense’. In the focus groups this functions to 1. be shared by the group and to 2. normatively reproduce discursive resources as normative, mitigating generalisations and stereotyping.

The fourth rhetorical strategy presented is **Extreme case formulations**. **Extreme case formulations** consists of referring to examples or making statements which are not mainstream and are stronger than normally expected because they are made in an extreme form. Extreme case formulations are encouraged in focus groups due to the preference for intersubjective agreement which is not as often the case in one-to-one interactions (see Tusting et al, 2002). Preliminary coding of the focus groups conducted in Thessaloniki indicates that extreme case formulations function to mitigate the legitimacy of stereotypes and generalizations. One such example could be claiming that traditions are withering away when “on Easter day MacDonald’s was packed”.

The fourth rhetorical strategy presented is **Comparison**. **Comparison** is a common discursive practice used to understand and classify others based on one’s own experience – that being personal and/or social. Beyond the notion of comparison of Social Identity theory afore-mentioned, it seems useful to note that comparison becomes analytically relevant in how and when it is being used. From a first coding, comparison appears - implicitly or explicitly - in the description of migrants and

migration experience as well as in the description of Greekness or Greek national identity. One such example could be “they (migrants) speak Greek better than us”. Comparison implies the existence of a ‘norm,’ which in the case of the focus groups analysed, is Greece and/or the West appearing interchangeably or in isolation depending on how one is positioned in discourse (ideological dilemmas).

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

Conclusion

In conclusion, literature and research thus far shows that there are dominant discourses which participants draw on in talking about their national identity. These discourses, though, comprise polarizations, stereotypes, binaries and ideological dilemmas and become analytically relevant in exploring the uses participants put to them, the strategies of these uses and the dynamic interaction between strategies and their function(s). Discursive social constructionism focusing on the interactional context as well as the providing a vigorous thesis for the analysis afore-mentioned is expected to highlight further participants’ perceptions and performance of their national identity; their perceptions of migrants; and in their perceptions and performance of their national identity within and since the framework of ‘new’ migration from the Balkans.

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**Immigrants' integration and social change:
Greece as a multicultural society**

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Immigrants integration and social change: Greece as a multicultural society

Panos Hatziprokopiou

Abstract

This paper develops from arguments framed in the context of my PhD research. My thesis seeks to understand the patterns, processes and practices that shape immigrants' lives in Greece: in other words, the dynamics of immigrants integration. The empirical focus is on the second largest Greek city, Thessaloniki, and on the two most numerous migrant groups, Albanians and Bulgarians. The starting point for the analysis is set within the debates on globalisation and migration; from a theoretical point of view, the thesis attempts to locate the Greek case in the global map of migration. The thesis is based on fieldwork research that involved both qualitative and quantitative methods. Primary data come from structured questionnaires and in-depth interviews with immigrants. Secondary material includes official statistics and documents, background and grey literature, press articles and systematic observation.

Early assumptions in the literature regarding, for instance, the temporary character of the phenomenon, or the marginal position of migrants in Greece, are rejected in the light of empirical findings. The integration of immigrants appears to be a complex, multifaceted and contradictory process, touching several aspects of contemporary Greek society: politics and policy, economy and the labour market, geography and space, education and culture. Despite the exclusionary mechanisms that are still in place, immigrants do make a living in the host country and gradually become organic elements, turning Greece into a multicultural society. The paper builds on selected empirical evidence from my PhD to sketch the main factors explaining this process. On the basis of the analysis, the paper argues that migration and the process of immigrants' integration should be seen as major factor of societal change in contemporary Greece.

Introduction

At the end of the past century, Greece emerged in the European landscape as a new migrant-receiving country. With the collapse of the Iron Curtain and the developments after 1989, immigration flows intensify, especially from Eastern European and neighbouring Balkan states, with Albania being by far the major sending-country. Political ambivalence, xenophobia, economic exploitation and social polarisation are the thresholds marking Greece's path to multiculturalism. At present, 15 years later, it appears that many of the initial problems gradually fade out, while new ones arise. Successive regularisation programmes have resulted in an increasing number of immigrants acquiring legal status. By 2004, there were 672,584 residence permit holders in Greece, but the actual figure might approach one million people if we take into account the significant numbers of migrants who are undocumented or are subject to a different status, such as refugees, asylum seekers and ethnic Greeks (mainly from the former Soviet Union and Albania) - making up a share of about 9-10 percent of the country's population. Migrants have become "visible" and the public debates raise concerns regarding the issue of integration. They are "here", to prove that Greece has de facto become a multiethnic, plural society. They live, work and consume

in Greece; their children go to Greek schools; most importantly, they increasingly interact with the local population, producing not only new social tensions, but also new kinds of relationships, new patterns of mobility, new types of cultural expression and exchange.

This paper develops from arguments framed in the context of my PhD research. My doctoral thesis is a study of immigration and the integration of migrants in Greece. The research is set within the debates on globalisation and migration: from a theoretical point of view, the thesis attempts to locate the Greek case in the global map of migration (see Hatziprokopiou, 2004). The focus is on the two largest migrant groups, Albanians and Bulgarians, both from neighbouring Balkan countries of different, though comparable, migration experiences; and on the second largest Greek city, Thessaloniki, geographically close to the migrants' homes and with a longstanding history of multiethnic coexistence and transnational ties. The principal aim was to examine the parallel but opposing processes of social exclusion and integration of immigrants in the city. I was concerned with identifying, describing and analysing the patterns, processes and practices that condition the ways migrants organise their lives in the specific locality where they live and work. To do so, I looked at both objective and perceptual factors relating to the characteristics of the migrants themselves and at aspects of their lives in different social spheres, of their own understandings of their experiences and of the various ways they interact with the local population. These were analysed in relation to the contexts within which different processes of integration/exclusion take place. Economy, policy, culture or space can be seen as such contexts shaping immigrants' lives and determining the dynamics of integration: for instance, the policy framework that conditions their entry, work and legal presence in the country; racist hostility (or, on the contrary, friendly reception), which affects people's everyday relationships; the local labour market where immigrants are looking for work; the place of residence, which becomes the terrain where migrants build their lives and develop their sense of belonging. However, all these different though interconnected "spheres" of social existence are not a-historic, nor unchangeable. They are historically developed and subject to transformation, and they are interacting with the dynamics of migration, whether invisible social structures, faceless institutions, hidden cultural attributes or common daily practices. The study of migrants' integration may reveal elements regarding the relationship between the dynamics of migration and the processes of social change.

The space here does not allow for a detailed presentation and analysis of the results. The paper proceeds with a review of the literature on immigration to Greece. Next, I give an account of the patterns and dynamics of migration in the light of empirical findings. In the fourth section, four different "spheres" of immigrants' integration are examined: the policy framework, the socio-political environment, the labour market context and the socio-spatial conditions. Research findings are discussed from a broad perspective, aiming at exploring the links between migration trends and the dynamics of socio-economic transformation. The paper concludes that migration and the processes of immigrants' integration should be seen as major factor of societal change in contemporary Greece.

The integration of immigrants in Greece: the limits of existing literature

During the past decade, interest in migration to Greece and in a wide range of related issues has been growing, resulting in a large amount of relevant research and publications.

Listing and reviewing this literature is beyond the scope of this paper (for details see Petronoti and Triandafyllidou, 2003¹). The aim here is to briefly overview the main topics addressed and to identify the limits and gaps in the existing literature, especially in relation to issues related to the integration of immigrants.

Given the lack of available data, early publications tended to rely on observations, assumptions and estimations; most of them were mainly descriptive and particularly concerned with the demographic and/or economic characteristics of immigrants², or with their rights and legal status³. Many studies of the first generation failed to understand the transformation of Greece into a receiving country, by assuming that the phenomenon was temporary, thus neglecting the implications for integration. Studies multiplied during the second half of the 1990s, especially after the 1998 regularisation programme and the publication of the first official statistics (Cavounidis and Hatzaki, 1999). One can observe a loose disciplinary division between economic studies⁴, on the one hand, and a series of other works that can be labelled as sociological ones⁵, combining however a variety of social science traditions ranging from historical accounts⁶ to political economy⁷ or human geography⁸, and from criminology⁹ to education¹⁰. The interest in the legal framework and the policy implications remains strong¹¹. Much research focuses on specific migrant groups¹², including publications dealing with ethnic Greek migrants and refugees.

Research output has grown further since 2000, spreading across the whole spectrum of the social sciences and involving both qualitative and quantitative studies and interdisciplinary works. The migrants' voice is increasingly "being heard" as a number of empirical studies are addressed directly to immigrants. Apart from individual or co-authored publications, a number of edited volumes offer combined and comparative accounts on several migration-related topics including elements previously neglected and factors underestimated, such as gender, agency, or migrant networks¹³. Exclusion and integration are now central themes in research agendas and public debates. Integration is discussed in relation to the labour market¹⁴, language and identity¹⁵, or recent policy

¹ This includes over 130 titles published between 1970-2001, about one third of them in Greek.

² Petrinioti (1993); Linardos-Rylmon (1993).

³ E.g. Theodoropoulos and Sykiotou (1994).

⁴ Lianos *et al.* (1996); Markova and Sarris (1997); Sarris and Zographakis (1999).

⁵ E.g. Psimmenos (1995); Fakiolas and Maratou-Alipranti (2000).

⁶ Fakiolas and King (1996).

⁷ Droukas (1998); Fakiolas (1999); Baldwin-Edwards and Safilios-Rothschild (1999).

⁸ Iosifides and King (1998).

⁹ Karydis (1996).

¹⁰ Damanakis (1997); Tsiakalos (2000).

¹¹ Triandafyllidou (1996); Baldwin-Edwards and Fakiolas (1999); Lazaridis and Poyago-Theotoki (1999); Baldwin-Edwards (2001).

¹² E.g. Psimmenos (1995) on undocumented Albanians; Romaniszyn (1996) on Poles; Markova and Sarris (1997) on Bulgarians; Lazaridis and Romaniszyn (1998) on Albanians and Poles; Iosifides and King (1998) on Albanians, Filipinos and Egyptians; Droukas (1998) on Albanians; Cañete (2001) on Filipinos; Labrianidis and Lyberaki (2001) on Albanians.

¹³ E.g. King *et al.* (2000); Marvakis *et al.* (2001); Naxakis and Hletsos (2001); Amitsis and Lazaridis (2001); Tastsoglou and Maratou-Alipranti (2003).

¹⁴ E.g. Fakiolas (1999); Maratou-Alipranti (2002).

¹⁵ Koiliari (1997).

steps¹⁶. Exclusion attracts much of the scholarly interest and focuses on the legal framework that led to migrants' stigmatisation¹⁷, on the public discourse and the exclusionary construction of Greek national identity¹⁸, or on broad socio-economic and socio-spatial mechanisms¹⁹.

However, as Petronoti and Triandafyllidou (2003) note, the patterns of interaction between migrants and locals remain largely under-researched, while the literature generally lacks thorough interpretations and linkages between empirical research on migration to Greece and broad theoretical discussions on globalisation, capitalism, multiculturalism and modernity. This is because the existing literature approaches the phenomenon mainly from two perspectives, in many cases simultaneously apparent or even fused:

- (a) *From the perspective of the host society*. The interest here is either in the effects of immigration on the host economy, society and culture, or in the Greek reactions/responses to immigration (policy, xenophobia, etc.).
- (b) *From the perspective of the migrants themselves*. This includes studies focusing on the characteristics and living conditions of the migrants, on issues of identity, etc. In a sense, many works can be seen as attempts to “know” the newcomers, to “defend” them against xenophobic arguments and to “respond” to exaggerations and “inform” the (Greek) public.

No conscious efforts have been made to synthesise dialectically the two perspectives in order to understand the dynamism of the phenomenon, its contradictions and the patterns of interaction. Both the “host society” and the “immigrants” are largely treated as unitary and homogeneous entities, limiting our capacity to locate and explain change in either case. Despite their qualities, many studies fail to address the dynamism of migration-related developments and give rather static pictures capturing the “moment”, which are then reproduced in the literature with a “distorted” version of reality as a result²⁰. In addition, despite the criticisms against the policy framework, racism or exploitation, references to Greece as a “multicultural” society are scarce and only recently have the implications of this started to be discussed. Moreover, the “immigrant” is frequently portrayed as a “victim” - of the legal framework, employers or the police, of xenophobic attitudes and abstract social structures - and agency and action (through informal strategies, social networks, or associational action and unionisation) are rather underestimated and often ignored. This one-sided “victimisation” reproduces, to an extent, binaries between “us” and “them” and - despite obvious “good will” in favour of the migrants - contributes to the consolidation of new stereotypes (e.g. the migrants as excluded, or destined to perform the jobs Greeks reject)²¹. Furthermore, several elements remain under-researched or totally

¹⁶ Fakiolas (2003).

¹⁷ Karydis (1996).

¹⁸ Veikou (1998); Triandafyllidou (2000).

¹⁹ Psimmenos (1995); Iosifides and King (1998); Lazaridis and Psimmenos (2000); Halkos and Salamouris, (2003).

²⁰ E.g. the research of Psimmenos (1995) on social exclusion of Albanians in Athens provided a thorough analysis of the mechanisms of migrants' marginalisation, underestimating though the early phase of migration at the time (early 1990s). The book by Labrianidis and Lyneraki (2001) on Albanians in Thessaloniki was the first major work to “see” the migrants' pathways to integration.

²¹ See previous footnote. Of relevance here is also the economic logic of some studies, despite their analytical thoroughness (e.g. Linardos-Rylmon, 1993; Lianos *et al.*, 1996; or even Labrianidis and Lyberaki,

neglected: despite recent efforts, research on migration in Greece lacks coherent theoretical frameworks of analysis and reference, for instance to understand the role of both market and non-market forces, agency and structure, identity and institutions, space and place. There is a need for interdisciplinary approaches, prismatic views and dialectical understandings, in order to capture the patterns of interaction between migrants and locals and to locate the interplay between migration, integration and social change.

Structure, patterns and dynamics of migration

Research findings show that the figure of the “young single male Albanian” no more represents the “typical” immigrant in Greece. By contrast, the sample is characterised by a great heterogeneity: gender, age and family status play a role, as well as ethnicity, geographic and religious origin, education level and professional background. Despite common characteristics, there are differences between the two migrant groups, between males and females, between ethnic Greeks and “others”, urban and rural residents, highly educated and the low-skilled, etc. Beyond the dominant picture of the male-dominated Albanian migration, the sample uncovered other features of mobility that are equally important in order to understand integration. For instance, a more independent female migration pathway is apparent in the Bulgarian case, contrasting the relatively dependent Albanian female migration routes. In addition, a significant number of educated professionals from both countries challenges the dominant perception of the “poor, rural, illiterate Balkan migrant”. In addition, specific categories of people that keep coming and going to satisfy immediate needs and thus they might not be “here to stay”.

The findings reflect some of the chief differences in the situation in the two sending countries, suggesting how one should understand the dynamics of migration in either case. For Albanians, who witnessed a massive devaluation of their professional attributes after the collapse of the system, emigration arose as an “option” out of immediate necessity: initially at least, they had to go abroad simply because they could not do otherwise, and the scale of the phenomenon was so massive that it touched all sections of the population. For Bulgarians the situation was rather different: some may have lost their previous jobs, usually jobs in factories and especially in northern Bulgaria (see Markova, 2001); most would have made a living in Bulgaria, but they decided to emigrate in order to improve their financial conditions. Moreover, there are some additional elements uncovering “hidden” aspects of the dynamics of migration within this three-country system: network factors and historical links, family strategies and lifestyle preferences. For example, migration can be an “option of necessity” for divorced women, while factors such as love and marriage play a role in what is usually seen as movement due to “economic” reasons. In addition, places of destination are not always a casual choice or an estimation of benefits and losses, but depend on historical or relational factors. For instance, for Albanian immigrants from the city of Korçë, Thessaloniki has been a choice based on the historical bonds between the two cities, dating back to the pre-war era. Proximity thus, geographical but also cultural, appears to be a distinct feature of the migration system between Albania,

2001). Pointing out, for instance, that the jobs migrants do are mostly in the informal sector and “would not be done” without foreign labour is certainly true and useful, but assumes either that migration is temporary, or that migrants (and their children) will *always* perform this kind of jobs.

Bulgaria and Greece that inevitably determines mobility patterns, suggesting that the dynamics of migration and integration involve elements of transnationalism.

The heterogeneity characterising the sample, as well as the variety of reasons, modes and routes of migration, suggests a multiplicity of individual migratory journeys, strategies and plans that explain the diversity of integration pathways and experiences. In addition, proximity between Greece and the countries of origin of the groups studied here not only has conditioned the reasons for migration (e.g. Greece being an “easy” destination), and the structure of the migrant population as a whole, but it continues to play a role (and will do so in the future), with back and forth migratory flows inducing other forms of mobility, including the development of transnational networks and practices that are part and parcel of the integration pathways of these migrants in Thessaloniki. Finally, there is the question of time, since the sample allowed comparisons between migrants who arrived in Greece at different stages. It seems that, as the years pass by and migrants settle in the city, many of their background characteristics lose the significance they may have had at an initial stage, since experiences now refer to “here”, or are lived “in-between” places of origin and destination. Practices are changing, adapting or reacting, new relationships are formed and old ones break, identities are constantly renegotiated, while the host society, its structures and institutions, but also its population, values and ideologies are transforming as well. Migration, after all, is a process of transition: for the countries of origin, for Greek society, and for the migrants themselves.

Main findings: dynamics and contexts of integration

The policy framework: from illegality to regularisation

The influx of large numbers of immigrants at the dawn of the 1990s, found the Greek government totally unprepared. The New Democracy (conservative) government introduced the new immigration policy with Law 1975/1991, which determined all matters of entry, work and residence of immigrants in Greece almost throughout the whole decade. This was characterised by a strict, “police” logic and by a failure to address realistically the new situation (see Karydis, 1996; Kourtovic, 2001). In that sense, the most outstanding feature of Greece’s exclusionary policy framework in its initial phase was the issue of prolonged illegality. The vast majority of immigrants had either crossed the border illegally, or they had overstayed their visas, and had not had any opportunity to apply for regularisation until 1997. The only exceptions, apart from the ethnic Greeks, who were also subject to a fragmented framework applying different measures to migrants from different countries, was a small minority of “elite” migrants, professionals employed in highly skilled positions or people who came as spouses of Greek nationals.

Life under clandestine status entailed much more than working informally: irregular migrants experience a constant insecurity: they are afraid of being arrested by the police, they hide and limit their public presence to what is necessary. The in-depth interviews confirmed that stops by the police for document checks were daily routine; inspections often took place at the workplace, or even at migrants’ homes. Deportations were frequent, and some of the respondents had the experience of being arrested in one of the so-called “skoopa” operations, or they had such a story to tell about a relative or friend. When a period of detention before deportation was involved, conditions were far from appropriate,

as certified by inspections of the Greek Ombudsman (e.g. Cert. N. 1956, 10.12.01) and other organisations. Migrants' treatment depended largely on the attitude of individual policemen, and was often offensive, involving verbal or even physical violence.

Within this context, the news regarding the first amnesty programme (1997) was welcomed, even if it was marked by several problems that excluded many migrants from that initial regularisation process. The most common of these problems were: the breakdown of the process in two separate stages; the financial costs of regularisation; the requirement of documents that had to be issued by the authorities in the sending countries; the bureaucratic procedures and significant delays in the issuing of stay permits; and the burden of unregistered employment that did not allow to the majority of immigrants to collect the number of social security stamps necessary for applying. Nevertheless, despite problems and constraints, it appears that during this first regularisation programme, and the one that followed (2001) gave the opportunity to the majority of the respondents to obtain legal status. At the time of the fieldwork, only 4 persons were undocumented; the majority were holders of the so-called "Green Card", about 30 percent had ethnic Greek status and 8 persons had been granted Greek citizenship.

Nevertheless, despite significant improvements brought by Law 2910/2001, the existing legal framework does not guarantee a stable and long-term feeling of security. The Law is being constantly revised; long-term residence is still denied to the majority; there is no established system for permit renewals running throughout the year; bureaucracy and delays generate problematic situations; prejudices and discriminatory attitudes by officials are rare but exist; immigrants' informal employment and lack of insurance make it difficult for them to remain regular - the list of existing and potential problems could be endless. What they highlight in sum is that the development of a coherent, realistic immigration policy in Greece, to solve more problems than it creates, is currently at the nursery stage. Meanwhile, things are evolving slowly, with the majority of the migrant population being in a state of uncertainty. Even so, however, the fact that regularisation procedures have been put into a kind of repetitive schedule is indicative of a more pragmatic spirit characterising the polity's approach to immigration, which helped the majority of immigrants to ensure a certain degree of dignity within Greek society and facilitated many practical aspects of their lives in Greece.

Socio-political responses to immigration: xenophobia versus solidarity

Despite the rather marginal, although growing, presence of the organised extreme right, xenophobic prejudices and attitudes are rather widely spread within contemporary Greek society. "Traditional" stereotypes about "the Turks", "the Blacks", or the country's "northern neighbours" have been reinforced, or gave place to new ones directly related to the presence of immigrants (Tsimouris, 2003). The initial, and to a certain degree expected, xenophobic reactions towards the massive influx of immigrants have led to open racist feelings. High unemployment rates and the rise in criminality during the 1990s have been the main arguments used in racist discourse, connected directly to the coming of immigrants. The experiences of my respondents, clearly confirm this situation. How are we to explain xenophobia and the growth of racism in the Greek context?

To an extent, it has appeared as a spasmodic reaction to the "immigration boom" and the massive arrival of Albanians in the early 1990s. The transition of the country into a host

society took place quite suddenly and the migrant population is often perceived as alarmingly large, especially compared to what is referred to as “the demographic problem” in Greece, i.e. declining fertility rates and ageing of the population. Research on xenophobia in Northern Greece has identified feelings of “excessive numbers of foreigners” among the local population (Kafetzis *et al.*, 1998). The legal framework itself has been another factor that contributed significantly to the rise and spread of xenophobic sentiments: the police-logic of governmental policy stigmatised migrants through the criminalisation of their clandestine status, building thus the stereotype of the “illegal immigrant = Albanian criminal” (Karydis, 1996). Such stereotypes have been widely used in the mass media, especially television, through “the common use of an overtly racist and offensive language” (Triandafyllidou, 2002: 157). The media in particular have cultivated sentiments of alarm, by exaggerating the numbers of “foreigners” in the country, by focusing on their harsh living conditions, by showing repeatedly images of mass arrests of clandestine migrants, and by emphasising the contribution of immigrants to rising criminality. The media discourse is largely responsible for the spread of the myth of immigrants as criminals. As Pavlou (2001) has noted, writing on Thessaloniki, local media have created this negative image in four ways: by being selective with the information they publish; by “inventing” daily affairs through references to past events as if they were current; by adopting a style of reportage much resembling police reports, focusing on the nationality of the offender; and by presenting high concentrations of immigrants in specific districts as worrying situations. TV series too passed from an initial neglecting of migrants’ presence to the reproduction of dominant perceptions and prejudices, cultivating the new exclusionary ideology of xenophobia by picturing immigrants in stereotypic ways (the domestic servant, the prostitute, the worker, or the criminal).

Above all, the public discourse on immigration reflects the exclusionary construction of the Greek national identity, which defines the concept of “Greekness” on the basis of religious, linguistic and genealogical criteria, rather than civic ones (Triandafyllidou, 2000). Greek political culture is based on the conception of Orthodox religion as an integral part of the national myth, which identifies itself in a line of historical continuity from ancient Hellas to the modern Greek nation state, directly passing from, and incorporating, the Orthodox Byzantine tradition (Lipovac, 1993). Research in northern Greece located widespread sentiments of mistrust towards distinct national and religious identities of the migrants, particularly “the Albanians” and “the Muslims” (Kafetzis *et al.*, 1998). This finding not only points to the fear of the “Other” in a society that for long and at large had perceived itself as a homogeneous one, but also highlights the particular weight of elements prominent in the Greek national imaginary (ethnicity, religion) which crucially determines stances towards immigrants. Such elements are reflected in the experiences of the interviewees regarding the reactions of Greek people towards them: Albanian migrants are treated with mistrust since they are considered to be Muslims, while Bulgarians have also faced negative attitudes, articulated in the context of the Balkan wars.

Nevertheless, there is a certain degree of ignorance connected to the novelty of the phenomenon that should be taken into account in order to understand the particularities of xenophobia in Greece. Almost 50 years of separate histories and closed borders imposed by the Iron Curtain, resulted in a certain degree of ignorance regarding Greece’s northern neighbours. This formed the terrain on which prejudices and stereotypes have been built during the 1990s, under the influence of governmental policy, due to exposure to negative

media images, and on the basis of the factors outlined above. However, as contact between immigrants and locals is enhanced and interpersonal relationships are developed over time on the basis of mutual trust, collaboration, friendship, etc., xenophobic sentiments gradually fade and racist attitudes become characteristic of only a small minority among the local population. The “curative” effect of time appears to be a gradual smoothing of “host-stranger” relations, and this can be observed in both the public discourse and the experiences of the migrants themselves. The media, for instance, now take more seriously into account the relevant anti-discriminatory regulations, and positive portraits of migrants are more frequently pictured, while some state TV and radio channels have included special multilingual programmes for immigrants. This overall positive development in their “level of acceptance” is highlighted in the narratives of many interviewees.

The maturation of the host society’s stances towards immigration over time however, should not be considered as a “natural” process. Apart from multiple social developments at the informal level, the role of organised pro-migrant voices should not be underestimated. Some of the policy gaps regarding the welfare of immigrants have been covered to an extent by non-state initiatives: community associations, NGOs, left-wing parties, antiracist groups, Trade Unions, the Church, etc.; in short, what can be labelled as “civil society organisations”, grassroots initiatives and the community and voluntary sectors. Since the early 1990s, there have been growing positive responses from such initiatives, whether state-funded institutions or grassroots collectives, aiming to support immigrants and to defend their rights. The outcomes of such attempts might be rather limited in scope, in geographical scale and in the numbers of people they affect; but the moral, political but also practical support from these sections of society encouraged and/or assisted migrant groups to get organised in associations and hence to acquire their own institutional “voice”. In the recent past such activities were rather marginal, often trapped in the political isolationism of traditional radical-left activism, or in the limited influential power and elitism of small think-tanks. Through networking and coordination of activities, however, but most importantly through the mobilisation of immigrants themselves, there are traces of an anti-racist, pro-migrant social movement, characterised by organisational, political and ideological diversity (see Glarnetatzis, 2001).

Immigrants’ employment and the labour market: exploitation and integration

With respect to immigrants’ labour market integration, the overwhelming majority works at jobs for which indigenous labour supply is insufficient and/or which would not be done in the absence of foreign labour. A first key-observation concerns the concentration of migrant labour in two basic types of jobs: either manual positions in construction and manufacture (including small workshops), or posts at the lowest ladders of the service sector (retail trade, cafes and restaurants, domestic service and care). A second observation relates to the nature of work migrants do, which is usually physically demanding, often of a servile character, and, for most of them, in low-skilled positions. A third observation has to do with the types of employers that tend to rely on immigrant labour: these are usually small or medium sized enterprises, in many cases family owned, on the one hand, and individuals or households, on the other. A fourth observation points to the different employment niches male and female migrants cover in the local labour market. Men usually work in construction or industry, or as assistants in workshops and small retail shops, while some are involved in casual manual work. Women comprise more than one

third who are domestic servants and carers, while many are manufacture workers and waitresses or assistants in cafes, bars and restaurants and retail shops. A significant number are entrepreneurs, white-collar employees and highly skilled professionals - these last two categories including high shares of women. The respondents' working conditions reflect to an extent the cheap and flexible labour offered by migrants. The working day is often much longer than the usual 8-hours one, while about half of the respondents earns between 20-29 Euros a day. Unregistered work is still the case for many - only 61.5 percent had social security during the fieldwork, and the figure drops to 30.3 percent for women working in personal services. Union participation is extremely low: only 4 percent were members of a trade union, the majority men with 9 or more years in the country, more than half working in manufacturing. Finally, temporariness in working arrangements is common: for 43.4 percent their current occupation dated no more than a year before the time of the fieldwork.

A single migrant is likely to have changed many occupations while in Greece, performing various different tasks, in many cases unrelated one to another. Only 26.9 percent of the respondents were practicing the same profession since they arrived, but even in such cases it is exceptional to have been doing this for the same employer. This means that, being in urgent need, immigrants had to accept any job that was offered to them, despite their qualifications and experience back home. Thus, apart from constituting a "pool" of cheap, hard-working labour, unregistered for the most part, they are also extremely flexible regarding the types of jobs they do. Many of the barriers imposed by the market, or by the limited knowledge migrants have about its geographies and its conditions, as well as language barriers, are overcome in practice by the flexibility itself and the low cost of their labour, but also because they possess a particular "advantage" in terms of social capital. This refers to the strength and density of social networks, which function as an important source of information about job opportunities in particular places, or are of direct assistance in finding employment. At least half of the respondents acknowledged that their main way of finding work in Greece has been through the help of relatives, friends or acquaintances. Especially for those who have been in Greece for longer periods and have also contacts with locals, social networks provide a guarantee for securing access to employment. On these grounds, long-term and/or structural unemployment has not been so far the case. Obviously, during their period in Greece and in-between different occupations, many migrants have experienced shorter or longer periods of unemployment. Generally, however, immigrants in Greece have not faced serious difficulties of access to the labour market. But while this might be true for migrants who go for unskilled or low skilled positions, it does not seem to be the case for those who look for more qualified posts in sectors where competition is sharper, even among Greeks. This contrasts with the educational and professional background of the migrants, a significant number of whom are specialised or qualified: the shares of those with university and technical/professional education reach 27.9 and 29.3 percent respectively; among those working in their home country, about two thirds were occupied in skilled positions.

Migrants are thus "forced" to do the jobs available in Greece, despite their educational qualifications and professional experience. In that sense, migration involves a significant devaluation of the individuals' employment profile and occupational status. It has a deep "de-skilling" effect, since what used to be a "marketable" educational capital in the countries of origin becomes almost useless and obsolete in the Greek labour market, where the high demand for foreign labour is for the bottom-end jobs in the employment

pyramid. The economic conditions in the home countries, which have been at the root of people's decision to emigrate, and the family or personal needs generated by the process of transition, push people to "throw away" what can be characterised as acceptable employment standards. Hence, they accept to perform any job in order to survive or to support their family back home, by sacrificing the present for gaining a future life in dignity. Moreover, linguistic or cultural obstacles, as well as institutional factors (e.g. concerning the highly bureaucratic procedures for the recognition of foreign degrees), put immigrants in a weak "bargaining" position that makes them keen to accept any job. And certainly, there are the problems arising from the uncertain legal status of immigrants in Greece. But it would be quite naïve to overestimate such parameters at the expense of the structural conditions that seem far more important for understanding the patterns of immigrants' insertion in the labour market. The demand for migrant labour in Greece is precisely for the low-skilled manual and servile posts where most of the respondents work. When migrants seek to get out of the space "reserved" for them in the labour market, they face difficulties of access, structural and institutional obstacles, discrimination or even exclusion. Under such conditions, the flexibility of migrant labour can be clearly translated into high degrees of exploitation. Employers have profited greatly from the migrants' desperate need to work. For the majority, exploitation has been expressed in long working days, lack of insurance and poor wages. It used to be particularly intense and far more common during their first years in Greece, also as an outcome of their weak "bargaining position" and their clandestine status. There are stories of semi-slavery conditions, with employers not paying migrant workers under the threat to inform the police.

However, there are significant shifts in the occupational structure of the sample. At the time of the fieldwork none was working in agriculture and fewer people were working in the leisure and catering industry, in personal services, or were employed as general manual workers. Now there are more industrial workers, shop assistants, skilled workers, technicians and white-collar employees, including some in highly skilled positions. Looking at the migrants' trajectories in the Greek labour market, we can observe important changes in the types of jobs and the remuneration of immigrants in the city. Many have experienced a gradual improvement of their position and their real wages have risen since their arrival. The rather humiliating initial conditions do not seem to be the case any more, while there is strong evidence of many successful employment trajectories. Many interviewees expressed satisfaction from their progress in the Greek labour market, which seems to compensate for - although never justifying - the years of hardship. Hard work in that sense has not been "for nothing": as the years pass by conditions get better, whether because of regularisation, social security, language fluency, more effective networks and relationships with Greeks, or a combination of all these factors. Sometimes, what has been previously described as a devaluation of the individuals' human capital, imposed by necessity and by conditions that force migrants to accept any low-skilled post, is succeeded, after a period, by a reverse process of re-skilling, although in a different field. Immigrants who stay in the same trade tend to specialise and become skilled workers; in some cases, such an experience may lead towards self-employment or entrepreneurship, for instance in small businesses, or small construction projects and house-repair work. Similarly, qualified migrants gradually make their way towards more responsibilities and duties that correspond more closely to their academic and professional experience.

Nevertheless, it is not meant here that migrants always overcome the obstacles put by the legal framework and the labour market, or that they do not face exclusion, discrimination and exploitation in several forms and at various levels. Neither do such examples of upward employment trajectories imply any idealising stereotype of “the successful immigrant”. But assuming that immigrants in Greece are eternally destined to perform the same types of jobs in the same exploitative conditions is equally misleading by victimising the migrants’ experience. The phenomenon of socio-economic mobility rather reflects the fact that immigrants form a dynamic section of the labour force and also recognises an important temporal factor in their labour market integration.

Immigrants in the city: living conditions, housing and the urban space

The migrants’ conditions in the labour market are to an extent reflected on their housing and residential experiences. The vast majority of the participants in my survey live with their families in rented flats, usually on the lower floors of relatively old buildings. Cheap accommodation is preferred by many, and low rents, expectedly, usually mean bad-quality housing (e.g. in the areas within and around the inner city), properties lacking basic facilities (e.g. central heating), or small inadequate apartments (often in ground floors or in basements). The spatial distribution of immigrants mirrors the social geography of the city. There are high concentrations in overpopulated inner city neighbourhoods or areas at the supposedly more deprived north-western part of Thessaloniki, where rents are relatively cheaper. However, segregation patterns are not that sharp and ghetto-like situations do not seem to be the case so far in Thessaloniki. The Albanian community in particular, expectedly perhaps given its size, is spatially dispersed across the city. Apart from the price of the rent, other factors that condition the choice of a particular property by individual migrants are: knowledge of a neighbourhood, convenient distance from the workplace, or the location of the children’s school, as well as the quality and size of a particular property, to suit family needs, and kinship ties that allow mutual help and support.

In a speculative housing market, where urban expansion goes on with rents following an upward route, immigrants, who are often looking for temporary accommodation and are particularly vulnerable due to their legal status, experience high degrees of exploitation in the housing market. In many cases, landlords avoid signing a tenancy agreement, or even sign false ones, to escape taxation for renting the property. Another practice is renting properties that were not built to be used for accommodation, such as storerooms in the basements of inner-city buildings, de facto exempt from the relevant (higher) taxation. The splitting of properties in order to host a higher number of tenants, often without providing basic facilities in the separated spaces (kitchens, bathrooms), serves again landlords in multiple ways, through the exploitation of a situation of high demand and the vulnerability of this special category of tenants. The immigrants’ undocumented status is sometimes used as a means to convince them to accept the terms of tenancy, or even to vacate the property without notice in some cases, under the threat (or simply the fear) to inform the authorities. And while access to housing is not a problem as such, the interviewees’ residential experiences suggest that there exist also non-market obstacles, which create difficulties in the migrants’ pathways of access to housing. By this I refer to the common prejudices about immigrants in Greece, and to xenophobic attitudes that are apparent in their daily interaction with (some) locals. So, one of the most important features of immigrants’ experiences is the discrimination they face in the housing market. Some landlords refuse to

rent their property to a foreigner, particularly to Albanians (and especially to young unaccompanied males). However, this is not an absolutely exclusionary phenomenon; the housing market, as any other market, operates in terms of exchange, of supply and demand: if a landlord refuses to rent his/her property to a migrant family, someone else will accept. And in most cases, any initial hesitation will disappear over time, when the relationships between migrants and landlords or neighbours reach a more personal level.

A more dynamic analysis of the residential experiences of immigrants in the city would lead us to take into account their housing conditions before the fieldwork took place. Many of the interviewees talked about negative experiences in the past; they spoke about harsh conditions initially and problems they had encountered in the course of their residential pathways in the country and in Thessaloniki. Whatever their housing quality was at the time of the fieldwork, things had been worse in the beginning for the majority, especially for unaccompanied males during the first ambiguous years of their migratory journey. Initial conditions, clandestine status, uncertainty and fear had pushed people to sleep at the workplace, or even out in the open air. However, as in the previous section on employment, the residential trajectories of individual migrants do change over time. Following these trajectories we see that not only do immigrants experience a high degree of residential mobility, much higher than that of the locals, but also that the quality of housing conditions gradually improves.

Inevitably the presence of immigrants reshapes the face of the city: certain areas (parks, squares, etc.) become places where immigrants gather, in order to meet each other or to look for work. Examples are the Aristotle University campus, the Courts Square (Plateia Dikastirion), the Railway Station, all at the heart of the city, as well as other strategic points (e.g. motorway junctions, green spaces). This development is also evident at a neighbourhood level, in areas with high concentrations of immigrants, where, for instance, the surrounding kiosks sell Albanian, Russian, Bulgarian and other newspapers. The demand for specific types of services on the part of the migrants (e.g. translations, newspapers, special products, food) and the entrepreneurial action of both themselves and of locals, transform the urban landscape in certain streets and neighbourhoods, giving it multicultural characteristics. For example, in the Vardaris area (western part of the centre), in the streets below the main (Egnatia) street, there is a growing Chinese market that has emerged during the past few years (mainly clothing stores)²². In the Courts Square, which functions as a meeting place for migrants from the former Soviet Union, we can observe the development of several small ethnic businesses, ranging from street traders to specialised food stores and ethnic restaurants with self-descriptive, place-specific names (e.g. “the Caucasus tavern”). I should note that the groups studied here do not exhibit similar tendencies of *visibility* within the city, at least not in such a particular and distinct way; this points to certain aspects of cultural proximity (in terms of food, for instance), as mentioned by many interviewees, but also a degree of *adaptability* to the local environment, especially in the case of Albanians. In general, however, immigrants add new “colours” and character in the changing urban morphology and they develop new social uses of space, which

²² During the fieldwork, I personally witnessed the expansion of a small “Chinatown” in Thessaloniki, counting 4 shops (shoes and clothing mainly) located on the main street in 2000, 21 in 2002, while many more had mushroomed in the surrounding streets in my last visit in 2003.

acquires a particular meaning for them and becomes their “place”. In the narratives of many interviewees, the city is “imagined” as a new home.

Conclusion: immigration and social change: identifying the trends

The transformation of Greece into a host society coincided with a series of parallel developments that have signalled processes of increasing exposure to global trends. In fact, migration can be seen as one of the factors indicating Greece’s particular experience of globalisation; other factors may include:

- The redefinition of the regional position and role of Greece in the Balkans, in the advent of post-1989 developments in Eastern Europe and the former USSR.
- The ongoing process of European integration and the transfer of certain powers to European bodies, especially in respect to Greece’s membership in the Common Market, the Euro-zone and the Schengen Area.
- The general trends of restructuring and internationalisation of the national economy, as expressed by: the privatisation of key state companies and the process of de-industrialisation; the liberalisation of exchange rates; the growing amount of Greek capital invested abroad and the relocation of production; the further tertiarisation of the economy, particularly regarding banking, finance, business and IT services, etc.

Contemporary trends of migration and integration in Greece differ from any past experience in the history of the country; but they also differ from past European and other experiences. On the other hand, there is a range of processes, practices and phenomena resembling other contemporary cases, especially Southern European ones with which Greece shares many common characteristics (King, 2000). The integration of immigrants appears to be a complex, multifaceted and contradictory process, touching several aspects of contemporary Greek society: politics and policy, economy and the labour market, geography and space, education and culture. Despite the exclusionary mechanisms that are still in place, immigrants do make a living in the host country and gradually become organic elements, turning Greece into a multicultural society. Rather than searching for single factors and one-way paths leading to integration, the main conclusion is this depends on a combination of interdependent processes at the level of structures and institutions, on the one hand, and at the level of agency and relationships, on the other. It thus appears that neither “integration”, nor “exclusion” are definite and stable one-way processes. They are both subject to time, thus they may evolve in parallel directions and they may be reversed, whether for specific groups or for individual migrants. In addition, it is not only migrants that “adjust”, but the host society itself is adapting, in conflicting ways, to the new situations imposed by the fact that it is now a multicultural society - and develops as such. The integration of immigrants is characterised by a series of contradictions, expressed in the diversity of experiences and reflecting broader social mechanisms, processes of economic restructuring, political trends and institutional changes. What this reveals is the key-issue of social change: Greece, as a host society, is changing anyway, but now it does so because of, and with the immigrants. Migration becomes part of the dynamics of socio-economic transformation, therefore it should be understood as a “critical force in history” (Papastergiadis, 2000: 53). In a rapidly transforming reality, where Greece found itself to

have become within a decade or so a multicultural society, no certainties apply. The phenomenon is still unfolding, which suggests that things may change constantly and it is particularly difficult to make projections. At best, the findings presented here draw the picture of the emerging trends and set out a framework for future research and analysis.

Naturally, a first area where one can capture change is the structure and composition of the country's population. A population that was for long perceived as a homogenous entity is now characterised by pluralism and diversity. Greece is now a multicultural society, and this development crucially alters political traditions, cultural beliefs and perceptions of identity. Faced directly with "the Other", national identity is transforming and responds to difference in multiple ways. To an extent these are reactionary, as the spread of racist and xenophobic feelings and the growing influence of extreme right parties show. However, current debates on citizenship and senses of belonging suggest that certain things that were unchallenged in the past are now at least discussed. The rhetoric of the public discourse has shifted and immigration issues are now part of the political agendas of the main parties. Not only has the far right been growing, but also the range of the pro-migrant voice is expanding to the whole spectrum of the Left. Civil society organisations are "learning" how to deal with migrants, how to interact creatively with their associations and, given the limitations, to inspire participation and collective action. Despite the persistence of xenophobic attitudes, reciprocity between immigrants and locals is growing at an informal level and there are signs that (some) locals start to esteem the value of diversity. As interaction increases and the "second generation" comes into play, hybrid and transnational identities and practices are beginning to emerge.

Another area is that of the economy and the social structure. A particular space has been created for immigrants at the boundaries between the formal and the informal labour market, which keeps them at the bottom of the social hierarchy through processes and relations that turn them into "servants". Such a development implies also changes in the class structure within the Greek social formation, which is now characterised by ethnic and cultural difference. This space has a structural function in the way forces of restructuring and internationalisation are affecting specific localities within Greece. However it is fluid and dynamic and its boundaries are blurred: individual migrants may find ways out through the acquisition of legal status and the move to the formal labour market. What this reveals in respect to social change is that even under harsh and exploitative conditions the position of migrants within the host country is not given and may be reversed. The economic impact of immigration²³ has been rather positive so far, regarding the complementarity of foreign labour, the survival (or even expansion) of certain sectors, growth in consumption, the strengthening of insurance systems and the public budget (through contributions and taxation). In respect to negative outcomes, economic studies tend to emphasise labour market issues, such as the distorted and short-sighted development path based on labour-intensive activities, the expansion of the informal economy, the replacement of locals by migrants in some sectors, and the impact on indigenous wages. Empirical studies do confirm a low degree of substitution of indigenous labour by foreign workers, in sectors

²³ The issues touched here are those addressed by studies looking specifically at the Greek case: e.g. Lianos *et al.* (1996), Fakiolas (1999), Labrianidis and Lyberaki (2001), Lyberaki and Pelagidis (2000), Sarris and Zografakis (1999), Lianos (2003).

such as agriculture and construction²⁴. However, part of the replaced labour force is moving towards better posts or supervising positions, while the presence of migrants seems to be creating more jobs than those it actually “takes away”²⁵. As for the rest, these are not exclusively direct effects of immigration as such, but rather a result of the exclusionary policy, the failure of successive governments to regulate the labour market and processes of economic restructuring that induce flexibility and keep wages down. However, the overall socio-economic effects cannot be limited solely to such “standard” economic indicators. Background material from my own research and findings of other studies (e.g. Romaniszyn, 1996) suggest that there is a whole range of economic activity addressed especially to immigrants. Specific economic niches have emerged, in some cases with direct involvement of migrants as entrepreneurs: from taverns or bars serving the migrants, to retail shops selling goods from the sending countries (food and drinks, books and newspapers, DVDs and music, etc.); and from translation offices or travel agencies specialising in the countries where immigrants come from to specialised lawyers dealing with cases of regularisation, expulsion, or human rights.

Then comes the issue of urban transformation. In cities, where restructuring processes are more explicitly manifested, difference and diversity, but also poverty, are now more apparent at the local spatial level. The emergence and consolidation of new ethnic communities celebrates a *de facto* multiculturalism, particularly visible in specific locales. The urban space itself is redefined on the basis of new social uses and new geographies. Empty public spaces are revitalised and areas with high immigrant concentrations and/or ethnic businesses acquire a multicultural character. However, the structural position of immigrants has a concrete spatial face, translated into old, bad-quality properties and into sharpening segregation patterns which may confine migrants in specific areas and create ghetto-like situations. Even if my findings do not suggest high levels of socio-spatial exclusion of immigrants in Thessaloniki, this might be an issue for concern in the future, as polarisation in the labour market grows and urban inequalities become more intense.

Most of the above elements are policy-relevant; but recent developments suggest that policy approaches change as well. The positive effects of the “rationalisation” of immigration policy have been pointed out, while new developments include the design of specific measures aiming at integration and non-discrimination legislation according to EU standards. Practical problems persist, but reflect wider malfunctions in the public sector, coupled by widespread xenophobic attitudes. Together with issues applying specifically to migrants (naturalisation procedures, access to health care and benefits, etc.), these problems underline the necessity for a redefinition of policy but also of the culture of service delivery. The successive legalisation programmes gave the opportunity to migrants to acquire documents, and thus be entitled to basic rights. However, their ambiguous status in Greece regarding a variety of issues - from long-term residence to pensions and civil rights - constitutes a major problem with respect to welfare. To what extent Greece will manage to “integrate” migrants at a time of restructuring and social change is both a concern and a challenge for the future.

²⁴ E.g. Lianos *et al.* (1996); Labrianidis and Lyberaki (2001).

²⁵ See Sarris and Zografakis (1999); also Labrianidis and Lyberaki (2001).

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