

# “Ask the Assyrians, Armenians, Kurds”

## *Transcultural Memory and Nationalism in Greek Historical Discourse on Turkey*

HUW HALSTEAD

Recent research has suggested that in the contemporary globalized and digitized world memories transcend national boundaries in a manner that might replace exclusive and antagonistic national histories with inclusive cosmopolitan solidarities. This article critically engages with such models by exploring transcultural cross-referencing in narratives about Greek-Turkish relationships in two different settings: print media produced by memory activists from the expatriated Greek minority of Turkey; and peer-to-peer debates in the “comments” section on YouTube. Whilst such transcultural discourses might indeed draw different victim communities closer together, they nevertheless also have the capacity to reinforce national histories and identities.

*Keywords:* digital humanities; Greek-Turkish relationships; Imbros; Istanbul; memory studies; nationalism; transcultural memory; YouTube

*The Armenian genocide found its imitator in the person of Hitler who followed the Turkish example with the genocide of the Jews during the Second World War. Another genocide was committed by the Turks against the Cypriot people, and by the very same human rights have been flagrantly violated in Cyprus, Constantinople, Imbros, [and] in Anatolia against the Kurds.<sup>1</sup>*

In his posthumous volume *The Collective Memory*, the French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs wrote that “[e]very collective memory requires the support of a group delimited in space and time.”<sup>2</sup> His notion that there is

a direct correlation between the vitality of a particular collective memory and the persistence of a specific, coherent group has underpinned much subsequent thought in the field of social memory studies. Yet if we take for granted that every memory depends upon the active support of a particular group, how can we account for the content of the extract cited above, in which an effort by an expatriated Greek from Istanbul to articulate a memory of their own community's persecution in Turkey simultaneously accommodates and sustains the memories of other communities? Do such discourses demonstrate that the "container of the nation-state" as the principal repository of memory is "in the process of slowly being cracked"<sup>3</sup> and that memories might be adopted and kept alive by "others," or is the persistence of an exclusive national outlook lurking beneath this overtly transnational language?

In this article, I explore the use of transcultural cross-referencing in Greek historical narratives about Greek-Turkish relationships. The article derives from two research projects, the first dealing with the experiences and memories of the expatriated Greeks of Istanbul and Imbros (Gökçeada) now resident in Greece, and the second investigating the construction, negotiation and contestation of the history of the Ottoman Empire by Armenian, Greek, Kurdish and Turkish Internet users. I therefore focus on two sets of data produced by two (rather different) groups of "memory activists": representatives of the expatriated Greeks of Turkey writing formally in newspapers and publicity materials, and (primarily Greek) Internet users engaging in informal debates through YouTube comments. In both contexts, narrators offering antagonistic accounts of Greek-Turkish relationships have frequent recourse to comparisons and analogies drawn from the histories of other communities, notably Turkey's Armenian, Assyrian and Kurdish communities and Europe's Jews. Such mnemonic cross-fertilization confirms the argument advanced in recent literature that representations of the past are commonly articulated within a transcultural field of reference, and that different histories of suffering need not necessarily be locked in a competition for primacy.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, my discussion lends credence to the suggestion that transcultural cross-referencing might lead to the elaboration of solidarities between different victim communities or even lay the groundwork for reconciliation between historical antagonists. I also seek to demonstrate, however, that memory's extraterritorial journeys do not always or necessarily have

“cosmopolitan”<sup>5</sup> or even “postnational” implications, and may frequently consolidate rather than undermine national identities and antagonisms. I suggest, moreover, that scholarship on transcultural memory would benefit from more explicitly recognizing the variable strength and depth of the “knotting” that connects different histories, which may have implications for our understanding of how transcultural memory is experienced by individuals on local levels, and how it finds meaningful expression in their narratives and understandings of the past.<sup>6</sup>

#### THE TRANSCULTURAL TURN IN MEMORY STUDIES

In recent years, there has been a “transcultural turn” in the field of memory studies, developed by scholars who felt that earlier work was circumscribed by a “methodological nationalism” that took for granted a close link between a given collective memory and a particular national or ethnic group.<sup>7</sup> These interventions have come from several disciplines, but have been driven primarily by studies of Holocaust memory and mediated memory,<sup>8</sup> and have shared a desire to explore the “expanded field” in which memories cross or transcend national boundaries.<sup>9</sup> Focusing on academic, artistic, literary or mass-mediated representations, such scholarship has often emphasized the productive moral potential of transcultural mnemonic engagements to undermine exclusivist and competitive understandings of identity and history.

Alison Landsberg, for instance, suggested that when individuals attend “an experiential site such as a movie theater or museum,” they might acquire “prosthetic” memories “that are not naturally—ethnically, racially, or biologically—one’s intended inheritance.” Drawing on examples ranging from the American television series *Roots* to the film *Schindler’s List* and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, she emphasized that because such memories “feel real, they help condition how a person thinks about the world and might be instrumental in articulating an ethical relation to the other.”<sup>10</sup> Jeffrey Alexander, Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider made comparable claims about the evolution of a transnational Holocaust memory. Alexander argued that under the influence of widely circulated literary and media representations, the televised trial of Adolf Eichmann and the consolidation of the label “the Holocaust,” the Nazi genocide

of the Jews became a universal symbol of evil, such that what was “once experienced as traumatic only by Jewish victims” came to be construed as a “trauma for all humankind” and a device to “measure the evil of a non-Holocaust event.” As a result, memory of the Holocaust became “free-floating rather than situated,” creating a “universalized symbol whose very existence has created historically unprecedented opportunities for ethnic, racial, and religious justice.”<sup>11</sup> In their analysis of the trajectories of Holocaust remembrance in the United States, Israel and Germany, Levy and Sznajder similarly argued that the Holocaust was on its way to becoming a “cosmopolitan memory.” They described how, in a globalizing world, memory of the Holocaust became “dislocated from space and time, resulting in its inscription into other acts of injustice and other traumatic national memories across the globe.”<sup>12</sup> Like Alexander, Levy and Sznajder placed emphasis upon the moral potential of this dislocated Holocaust memory, arguing that it “harbours the possibility of transcending ethnic and national boundaries” and of becoming “the cultural foundation for global human-rights politics.” They boldly proclaimed, for example, that “[i]t does not take a huge leap to go from identifying with Schindler to taking the ensuing role of liberating Kosovo.”<sup>13</sup>

More recently, Michael Rothberg, discussing the interrelationship between Holocaust memory and memories of decolonization and slavery, described memory as “multidirectional.” He criticized the assumption that different memories attached to particular groups are inevitably locked in a “zero-sum struggle,” competing over “scarce” mnemonic space in a contest with clear “winners and losers,” and instead argued that memories interact within a “malleable discursive space,” where they do not simply compete but are “subject to ongoing negotiation, cross-referencing, and borrowing.”<sup>14</sup> Rothberg distinguished his approach, however, by emphasizing that the Holocaust is not simply a “floating, universal signifier.” He criticized earlier scholars for “overlooking Holocaust memory’s dialogic interactions” with other histories, and argued that the concept of the Holocaust’s particularity and universality was in the first place produced by the ways in which it was evoked in emerging discourses surrounding slavery and decolonization. Nevertheless, Rothberg too emphasized that “solidarity ... is a frequent—if not guaranteed—outcome of the remembrance of suffering” (though he conceded that memory’s multidirectionality might function “in the interests of violence or exclusion”).<sup>15</sup>

Subsequent scholars have echoed Rothberg's conclusions: Max Silverman, for instance, in his study of Francophone film and literature, characterized memory as "palimpsestic"—as composed of "hybrid and overlapping rather than separate pasts"—and shared Rothberg's conviction that uncovering the "interconnecting traces" of different histories might generate "new solidarities across the lines of race and nation."<sup>16</sup>

I tackle three principal questions arising from this literature. First, how valid is the emphasis often placed upon the productive potential of the transcultural sharing of memories of suffering to replace traditional identities and enmities with nation-transcending solidarities? Although I do not necessarily share the assessment of A. Dirk Moses that the "constant instrumentalization of the Holocaust" invalidates a "cosmopolitan" approach to transcultural memory, I nevertheless address an imbalance in the literature by more systematically considering instances in which memory's extraterritorial journeys serve to consolidate antagonisms or entrench hatreds, even if they simultaneously produce new transnational solidarities.<sup>17</sup> Second, can theoretical models developed primarily in relation to the Holocaust, slavery and decolonization be sustained when applied to other contexts of remembrance? Whilst I do consider transcultural cross-referencing with the Nazi genocide, my focus is on the ways in which Greek narrators articulate their accounts in dialogue with other traumatic legacies, particularly the 1915 Armenian genocide and the more contemporary Kurdish-Turkish conflict. Third, how do the transcultural dynamics of memory manifest themselves in people's narratives, and how do they impact upon their understandings of the past and their own experiences? In answering this question, I seek to uncover "what people actually 'do'" with the histories of other times and places, and how the extraterritorial flows of memory are internalized and reproduced in local contexts "by specific people with specific agendas."<sup>18</sup>

TRANSCULTURAL CROSS-REFERENCING BY THE EXPATRIATED GREEKS  
OF TURKEY

The Ottoman millet system—under which non-Muslim communities were organized into separate millets or "nations"—came under increasing pressure during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, due to

a complex interplay of a centralizing and modernizing Ottoman state, the rise of nationalism amongst the Empire's constituent groups, the actions of international powers and a myriad of more local factors.<sup>19</sup> The transition from this multiethnic Ottoman Empire to the Republic of Turkey (founded in 1923) was accompanied by widespread conflict and bloodshed, and has been the source of much political and historiographical debate and controversy. As Ryan Gingeras has outlined, whilst Turkish nationalist narratives place emphasis on Turkish sacrifice and national awakening in response to foreign intervention and invasion—and on the persecution and death of Muslim civilians during the Balkan Wars, the First World War and the 1919–22 Greek-Turkish War—many other studies point to the victimization of non-Muslim minorities within Ottoman territories, in particular the Armenians, Assyrians and Greeks.<sup>20</sup> Most infamous is the 1915 Armenian genocide, but there were also other massacres and mass deportations, especially during the First World War and the Greek-Turkish War, but also, for instance, in Adana in 1909.<sup>21</sup>

At the end of the First World War, the Treaty of Sèvres was concluded between the victorious Allies and the defeated Ottoman Empire, which ceded Ottoman territory in Eastern Thrace and on the Aegean coast of Anatolia to Greece. In 1919 the Greek army began to occupy these areas, and also to push further into Anatolia, triggering the Greek-Turkish War. Despite early territorial gains, by 1922 the Greek campaign had stalled, and an emergent Turkish nationalist movement led by Mustafa Kemal routed the Greek army, forcing a full-scale retreat and culminating in the July 1923 Treaty of Lausanne, which brought the war to an end. By this time, a large proportion of the Ottoman Empire's Orthodox Christian population had been displaced, fleeing to Greece and elsewhere ahead of the advancing Turkish troops after the collapse of the Greek forces. In light of this postwar demographic chaos, the Convention Concerning the Exchange of Greek and Turkish Populations was signed in January 1923, envisaging a compulsory exchange of populations between Greece and Turkey. The defining characteristic for the exchange was religion: Muslims resident in Greece were to be expelled to Turkey, and Orthodox Christians living in Turkey were to be expelled to Greece.

At the insistence of the Greek delegation at the negotiations, the Greeks of Istanbul, Imbros and Tenedos were exempted from this population exchange (as were the Muslims of Western Thrace in Greece).

They were Orthodox Christians and primarily (though not exclusively) had Greek as their mother tongue, and by the time the dust from the exchange had settled they numbered some 110,000. During the course of the twentieth century, however, and particularly from around 1940 to 1980, the Greeks of Turkey overwhelmingly left their places of birth, primarily due to persecution from the Turkish state. Chief among their grievances are the 1941 mobilization of non-Muslims into forced labor battalions; the 1942–44 *Varlık Vergisi* or “wealth tax” that disproportionately targeted non-Muslims with burdensome and sometimes unpayable duties; the 1955 Istanbul Riots (known in Greek as the *Septemvriáná*) in which rioters attacked non-Muslim persons and property, resulting in widespread injury, damage, fear and even death;<sup>22</sup> the 1964 expulsion of Greek citizens from Turkey;<sup>23</sup> and a series of restrictive measures enacted on the island of Imbros in the 1960s and 1970s (on which, see below). In what follows, I collectively refer to these Greeks who left Turkey *after* 1923 as “expatriates.” Most settled in Greece, where they received something of a lukewarm reception, both from a government that saw them as abandoning historic Greek territories and from segments of the Greek population who viewed them with suspicion due to their Turkish birthplace and seemed largely unaware of the circumstances surrounding their emigration from Turkey. When I conducted ethnographic research with the expatriated Greeks of Istanbul and Imbros in 2012–15, I found that they variably self-define as “Hellenes” and as “Romioi” (i.e. Orthodox Christians or, more specifically, descendants of Byzantium/the Eastern Roman Empire), often using the latter as a means to distinguish themselves from the Greeks of Greece whilst simultaneously emphasizing the authenticity of their own Hellenic credentials.<sup>24</sup>

Memory activists from the expatriated community have expended a considerable amount of time (and ink) raising awareness about their persecution in Turkey in order to combat the perceived domestic ambivalence toward the expatriates in Greece and to familiarize European and international audiences with their experiences. This frequently involves not only the adaptation of archetypes from Greek national history but also the adoption of a broader frame of reference incorporating the memories of other minority communities in Turkey. In the mid-to-late 1970s, against the backdrop of the rise of the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) and the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia, expatriate news-

papers based in Athens began to carry sympathetic articles discussing the Armenian genocide, Armenian efforts to obtain international recognition for its occurrence, and the armed conflict between Turkey and the PKK. In 1975, for instance, the monthly newspaper *O Politis*—founded by expatriated Greeks from Istanbul in 1967—responded to Turkish press reports that Armenian, Greek and Kurdish diaspora groups were working cooperatively in opposition to Turkey by declaring on its front page that Greeks should support the efforts of these other communities. The author wrote favorably of the Armenians and Kurds as “ancient peoples” who must “be vindicated,” castigated the “Turkish chauvinists” who have “thought of nothing but how to exterminate the ethnic groups that they found on the land that they conquered by fire and sword,” and drew linkages between the Armenian genocide and the “persecutions of the Hellenes and the Kurds that have been committed for centuries by the Turks with disregard for morality and humanity.”<sup>25</sup>

This article appeared in the specific context of a discussion about intercommunal cooperation, but before long both the Armenians and the Kurds were making regular appearances in expatriate newspapers, even when the piece in question had no direct relevance to either community. In 1977, for example, *O Politis* printed an article that begins by enumerating ancient Greek victories against the Persians, before equating these confrontations with a contemporary conflict between Greeks and Turks. Within this protracted narrative of Greek-Turkish antagonism, the Armenians and Kurds feature as fellow victims of Turkish aggression:

The place of the Great King [Persian Xerxes I] has been taken by the Turkish invader. For 500 years he has pillaged Hellenic Asia Minor and the Aegean. Various circumstances prevented Hellenism from giving the appropriate lesson to that Conqueror. By contrast [due to] their conflicting interests various [presumably Western] countries not only supported [the Turk] but also covered up the genocides he committed against the Hellenes, the Armenians and the Kurds, genocides that still cast their shame on our world today. And we arrive at the drama of Cyprus and the disregard by the Turkish invaders of all of the votes and decisions of the United Nations ... Kurds, Armenians and Hellenes ask for justice, awaiting the liberation of their lands on which they have inalienable rights.<sup>26</sup>



Cutting across huge swathes of history, the author of this article drew equivalences between the Persian Wars, the Greek-Turkish War, the Armenian Genocide, the Kurdish-Turkish struggle and Turkish military action on Cyprus in 1974, casually eliding the drastically different historical circumstances surrounding these various moments. In a December 1990 article, *O Politis* similarly equated the genocide of non-Muslim minorities in the final years of the Ottoman Empire with the persecution of the Greeks of Istanbul and the Kurds after 1923 in the Republic of Turkey, writing that “[o]ur neighboring Turkey solved the problem of minorities with the Armenians through genocide from 1915 to 1923, with the Hellenes with another genocide from 1914 to 1922 and with repressions and expulsions from 1955 and later ... the same genocide was also used against the Kurds, many millions of people.” Comparable narratives have appeared in the newspaper *Imvros*—established in Athens in 1971 by expatriates from Imbros—as in a 1983 article in which the author wrote of Turkish actions on Imbros:

Same formula, same execution. Lausanne [i.e. the Convention Concerning the Exchange of Greek and Turkish Populations] and afterwards our uprooting. [The London and] Zürich [Agreements] and afterwards 40 percent of Cyprus under occupation. Similar of course applies both for the Armenians previously and the Kurds more recently.... Turkey found in the following decade the opportunity to achieve the final blow on Imbros (the events of 1964, the expropriations, the closure of the schools, terrorism, and much more).<sup>27</sup>

In this extract, the experiences of the Greek refugees from the Ottoman Empire, the Greek Cypriots, the Armenians and the Kurds are equated with those of the Greeks on Imbros after 1964, when Turkey closed the Greek minority schools (which had been belatedly opened, in accordance with the provisions of the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne, in 1951), expropriated around 90 percent of the Greeks’ cultivable land and established open prisons on the island for serious offenders brought from the Turkish mainland (who committed a series of thefts, assaults and even murders).<sup>28</sup>

Comparisons with Armenian and Kurdish experience offer expatriate writers a means to make their own persecution more broadly recognizable and intelligible, and, correspondingly, the articulation of these parallel histories is particularly common in expatriate efforts to raise awareness

internationally. In 1995, a group of cooperating expatriate organizations representing the Greeks of Istanbul marked the fortieth anniversary of the Istanbul Riots by issuing a resolution in English with the aim of exposing Turkey “in the eyes of global opinion.” They wrote:

WE PROTEST Turkish expansionist policies, militarist practices and flagrant violations of international treaties regarding the basic human rights of minority populations as well as the ethnic cleansing this country is presently undertaking against minority populations such as the Kurds, the Armenians and the (remnants of) Greeks and a number of religious denominations which are denied the free assertion of their identity.<sup>29</sup>

In a 1994 English-language article, *Imvros* likewise published an appeal that incorporated both the Armenians and the Kurds alongside the Greeks:

[T]o the civilized World: the Treaty of Lausanne must be respected by Tur[key], RESPONSIBLE FOR TWO EXTERMINATIO[N]S in our century: of the Armenians in 1915, and of Greeks of Pontus in 1922 ... now it is time for the Tur[key] to be initiated to the Civilization, guarantor of the human rights. IMBROS and TENEDOS, CYRPUS, the KURDS—a TOUCHSTONE fo[r] the Civilized World to taste his civilization.<sup>30</sup>

In 1997, *O Politis* similarly printed a gruesome cartoon in which a caricatured Turk, complete with fez and a blooded scimitar, stands at the gates of Europe proclaiming to be European, whilst behind him lie four severed heads labeled, respectively, as the Cypriots, the Kurds, the Armenians and the Greeks (figure 1).<sup>31</sup> In this illustration, there is no effort to prioritize the suffering of the Greeks—who, lying in the background, are in fact the least visible of the victims—because the implication that the “true nature” of the Turks is hidden behind a European façade is made more arresting by broadening the field of victims, and subsuming Greek victimhood within historical atrocities more recognizable to European eyes.

In such examples, the Armenian genocide and the Kurdish-Turkish conflict fill in the empty background space surrounding seminal moments in Greek national history, thereby providing expatriate narratives with greater spatial breadth and temporal depth. The memories of others serve as tropes through which expatriate writers seek to validate, explicate and



Fig. 1. “Open the gate. I’m a European!” Cartoon by Zavikos from *O Politis*, November 1997. Courtesy of the copyright holder Ekdóseis Tsoukátou.

communicate their own experiences and ideological stances, both to themselves and unfamiliar third parties, and to reassure themselves that they did not suffer alone but were rather victims of a diachronic Turkish policy of national homogenization. By the 1990s, such transcultural cross-referencing had become commonplace in formal expatriate discourse, persistently cropping up in discussions that remained focused on Greek suffering, often accompanied by little (if any) explanatory context. Expatriate writers were evidently confident that readers would immediately appreciate the relevance of bringing up these other communities, so much so that they were often content simply to mention them in passing by name, as in a *Politis* article that referred to the “characteristic acquaintance of the Turkish race with genocide (Hellenes, Armenians, Kurds).”<sup>32</sup> Repeatedly name-dropped as fellow sufferers of Turkish atrocity, the Armenians and Kurds became part of a regular cast of persecuted minorities totemically cited by expatriate writers whenever they had cause to articulate their own grievances with Turkey.

The connections envisaged by expatriate Greeks with the histories of the Armenians and the Kurds demonstrate that the Holocaust is not unique in offering a potential point of reference through which other persecuted communities might attempt to understand and represent their own experiences. Nevertheless, in this case at least, we are dealing with regional rather than global touchstones, and with the Armenian genocide and the Kurdish-Turkish conflict as metonyms for *Turkish* atrocity

rather than atrocity per se. In this sense, the examples presented above are somewhat different from Alexander's and Levy/Sznaider's description of the Holocaust as a global "cosmopolitan" memory, in that the symbols derived from Armenian and Kurdish experience still remain interconnected and rooted in a particular geographic context. I treat these examples as transcultural articulations of memory, since they involve reaching across significant (and, in some cases, antagonistic) cultural and national boundaries, but, to varying degrees, they are also *entangled* histories, particularly in the case of the Armenians and the Ottoman Greeks, insofar as they unfolded largely within the common context of the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and Turkish nation building.

A perception of the Holocaust as what Alexander terms "a standard of evaluation for judging the evilty of other threatening acts," however, does sometimes incline expatriate activists to draw analogies between Turkish actions and the Nazi genocide.<sup>33</sup> In June 1988, for instance, *O Politis* wrote that Turkish military action on Cyprus in 1974 "resembles Nazi methods, such as when Hitler attacked Czechoslovakia to liberate, allegedly, the Sudeten Germans," and in a 1985 piece entitled "And Yet... The Nazi-esque Crimes Continue" rhetorically asked its readers "[w]hat differences are there between the Nazi crimes and those that have been committed and continue to be committed, for twenty years now, against the Cypriots by the Turks? Perhaps Turkey is excused, as the first teacher of genocide, with the extermination of the Armenians ... and we must leave her free to commit crimes against humanity?"<sup>34</sup> A 1992 English-language article in *Imvros* aimed at second-generation expatriates living outside Greece similarly dubbed the anti-Greek policies on Imbros the Turks' "final solution" for the island, whilst in a 1993 speech reprinted in *Imvros* one prominent member of the Imvrian Association—a community organization based in Athens representing the expatriated Greeks of Imbros—declared that Turkish policy toward the Greeks of Imbros was so crafty that "even Hitler's Nazi regime against the Jews would envy it."<sup>35</sup> In a 2015 press release coinciding with the sixtieth anniversary of the Istanbul Riots, the Constantinopolitan Society—one of several Athenian community organizations representing the Greeks of Istanbul—likewise wrote that the *Septemvrianá* "can be compared only to the atrocities of the Nazis of Germany."<sup>36</sup> Levy and Schnaider suggested that because "Jewish victims can come to represent victimhood in general," it becomes pos-

sible for “diverse oppressed groups to recognise themselves in the role of the Jewish victims.”<sup>37</sup> Equally significant, however, is that diverse groups can also recognize their antagonists in the role of the Nazis, and thereby establish the culpability and villainy of their oppressors within a widely intelligible narrative framework.<sup>38</sup>

The Ecumenical Federation of Constantinopolitans—an umbrella organization established in Athens in 2006 by twenty-five existing expatriate associations (in Greece and elsewhere) with the aim of uniting and providing a common voice for the expatriate community—persistently deploys one particular analogy with Nazi violence: the comparison between the Istanbul Riots and *Kristallnacht*.<sup>39</sup> The Federation organizes an annual international conference to mark the anniversary of 1955, aiming to raise awareness about the riots and identify their causes and consequences within a comparative perspective. The inaugural 2008 conference, for instance, was intended “to heighten international awareness of the mechanisms underlying acts of state-sponsored terrorism and ethnic cleansing as illustrated in the cases of *Septemvriana* (Istanbul, 6–7/9/1955), *Kristallnacht* (Crystal Night) (Germany, 8–9/11/1938) and other similar, but less well publicized, events.”<sup>40</sup> In the conference proceedings, the Federation observed that the Istanbul Riots have been “described by some as the ‘*kristallnacht of Romiosyni*’” (i.e. of the modern Greeks).<sup>41</sup> In 2013 and 2014, the Federation pursued this comparison further by advertising the annual conference as the “anniversary of the *Kristallnacht* 6–7/9/1955 for the Hellenism of Constantinople,” and in public presentations it has consistently drawn attention to similarities between the two events.<sup>42</sup> A 2007 English-language presentation, for instance, contained a slide that made the following observations:

THE SIMILARITY OF THE “SEPTEMBRIANA” WITH THE KRISTAL NIGHT OF NAZI GERMANY

- There is a very high degree of similarity between the Kristal Night Riots [that] occurred against the Jewish Minority in Nazi Germany in 8-9/11/1938 and the Events of 6-7/9/1955 in Constantinople.
- The similarities are:
  - The involvement of Provocation
  - Action of Para-state mechanisms and use of storming troops

- Attack to pre-marked shops and houses
- The attack to sacred Places and Cemeteries
- The orders of not massacres [i.e. instructions to rioters not to kill anyone].

The next slide of the presentation staged a photographic dialogue between *Kristallnacht* and the *Septemvriáná*, juxtaposing an image of the broken shop window of a Jewish business in Berlin in 1938 with one depicting rioters throwing merchandise from a shop into the streets of Istanbul in 1955, and a photograph of the ruined Fasanenstrasse Synagogue in Berlin with one of Patriarch Athenagoras I standing in the looted Church of Saints Constantine and Helen in Istanbul.<sup>43</sup>

Other organizations and writers have likewise adopted *Kristallnacht* as a moniker for the Istanbul Riots: for example, Ekdóseis Tsoukátou (the publishers of *O Polítis*) released a compilation of testimonies from witnesses to the Istanbul Riots in 1999 with the title *Septemvriáná 1955: The “Kristallnacht” of the Hellenism of Constantinople*; the Greek American academic Speros Vryonis titled a 2007 article about the riots “September 6–7, 1955: Krystallnacht in Constantinople”; a special supplement printed by the Greek newspaper *Kathimeriní* to mark the sixtieth anniversary of the riots contained an article by Tassos Boulmetis (director of a well-known film about the Greeks of Istanbul called *Polítiki Kouzína*) entitled “The *Kristallnacht* of Constantinople”; and Greek bloggers have often dubbed the events “Greek *Kristallnacht*.”<sup>44</sup>

Federation President Nikos Ouzounoglou has suggested that interrogating the “amazing similarity between *Kristallnacht* ... and the *Septemvriáná*” might contribute to academic understanding of how state-sponsored acts of violence are organized and put into practice.<sup>45</sup> Perhaps more significantly, however, analogies between 1938 and 1955 can be seen as part of the Federation’s broader efforts to demonstrate that the Istanbul Riots “had nothing to do with the Greek-Turkish bilateral relations but were related to the decline of the rule of law principles and democratic rights [in Turkey]” and should therefore be dealt with within the framework of international human rights legislation.<sup>46</sup> By eschewing commonplace comparisons with events from Greek national history such as the Fall of Constantinople in favor of an explicitly transcultural frame of reference, the Federation seeks to separate the Istanbul Riots from nar-

row association with Greek-Turkish relationships, and instead to assimilate the events to broader human rights discourses, hoping in this way to secure greater international recognition and bolster claims for restitution.<sup>47</sup> From this perspective, presenting the Istanbul Riots as “*Kristallnacht* in Constantinople” could be described as a process of “remediation” by which an older mnemonic form is “repurposed” in order to “make the past intelligible,” both for those who were there (insofar as it provides an established language and imagery through which to interpret and represent their experiences) and for unfamiliar external audiences (who, in the West at least, are more likely to be familiar with *Kristallnacht*, and for whom the comparison will likely direct an interpretation of the *Septemvriáná*).<sup>48</sup>

Not all expatriate commentators, however, are satisfied with such comparisons between Nazi anti-Semitic persecution and the experiences of the Greeks of Turkey. In his book *Unregistered Genocide*, Vasilis Kyrtzopoulos—an outspoken Istanbul Greek and writer for the nationalist website *Antívaro*—wrote disapprovingly of the tendency for Greek and foreign writers to use the terms “pogrom” or “Kristallnacht” to characterize the *Septemvriáná*, arguing instead that the riots, along with other measures targeting the Greek minority of Turkey, should be classified as “genocide” as defined by the International Criminal Court and by Genocide Watch. He concluded with a controversial (to say the least) comparison with other genocides, through which he sought to argue that Turkey’s persecution of its Greek minority ultimately had a more severe demographic impact on its target population than did the Holocaust or the Rwandan genocide. Casually conflating mass extermination and expatriation, he compared historical and contemporary population statistics to claim that by 2005 both the Jewish population of Europe and the Tutsi population of Rwanda had been more substantially “replenished” than the Greek population of Turkey.<sup>49</sup> In his effort to demonstrate its severity in the face of alleged indifference from the European community, Kyrtzopoulos thus placed the expatriation of the Greek minority into implicit competition with the genocide of the Jews and the Tutsi.

Explicit transcultural cross-referencing could also sometimes be found in expatriate oral testimony.<sup>50</sup> For example, when I asked Loukas, born on Imbros in 1967, whether he had had any Kurdish acquaintances whilst living in Turkey, he replied “I have never met anyone in my life speaking Kurdish. They were afraid, of course. As I was afraid to speak

Greek in the street, so they too were afraid to speak Kurdish.” Reminiscing about the Kurds who used to work in his shop in Istanbul, Spyros, born in Istanbul in 1930, similarly exclaimed that, “the Kurds are another race, they are not Turks. Now they are trying to make them into Turks ... we also had two Armenians [in the shop], and great damage befell them also, the Armenians: 1.5 million.” Another informant—Gerasimos, who left Istanbul in 1964 as a teenager—accused the Turks of implementing “Hitler-esque methods” in their attempts to eradicate Kurdish ethnic identity, and likened Mustafa Kemal to Hitler. Nevertheless, in the case of my interviewees, at least, such transcultural comparisons were less prevalent than in the formal written discourse of expatriate memory activists.

#### TRANSCULTURAL CROSS-REFERENCING ON YOUTUBE

Alongside the burgeoning literature on transcultural memory, scholars have shown increasing interest in the relationship between memory and web 2.0 platforms such as Facebook, YouTube and Wikipedia.<sup>51</sup> This has included a growing awareness of how collective memories might be shaped and contested through peer-to-peer discussion in digital settings, as in the “comments” section of the video-sharing website YouTube, described by Paulo Drinot as “a crowded, very loud, and very angry debating chamber where everyone speaks at once, no one much listens to one another, and where arguments cannot be formulated without being wrapped in vitriol and invective.”<sup>52</sup> In light of Landsberg’s suggestion that “mass culture makes particular memories more widely available, so that people who have no ‘natural’ claim to them might nevertheless incorporate them into their own archive of experience,” I sought to explore YouTube commenters’ uses of historical cross-referencing within this rancorous, deterritorialized debating chamber.<sup>53</sup> The comments on which I focus below were primarily left by users self-defining as Greeks or Greek Cypriots, and where possible I identify users’ stated ethnicity and/or nationality based on information they provide in comments they have authored. Of course, this information is user-generated, so it is not possible to verify its authenticity, and in many cases users simply refer to themselves as “Greek,” making it difficult to more precisely disaggregate their identity and origin.<sup>54</sup> It should also be noted that the antagonistic nature of this particular forum may



well attract individuals who thrive in such an environment, and that the opinions they express are in no way representative of Greeks or Greek Internet users in general.

I analyzed the comments (numbering thousands) on twelve YouTube videos dealing with Greek-Turkish relationships.<sup>55</sup> Despite the varied subject matter of the videos, the comments almost invariably descend into acrimonious clashes over the two communities' historical interactions. Typically, these debates pit Greek and Turkish users offering narratives of harmonious Greek-Turkish coexistence against users from both sides propounding narratives of strife and hostility, and/or Greek "strife narrators" against Turkish "strife narrators."<sup>56</sup> "Harmony narrators" from both communities revel in shared cultural and linguistic features, tell stories of intercommunal harmony in the Ottoman Empire and Cyprus and greet one another with the portmanteau *kalimerhaba* (a combination of the Greek *kaliméra* [good morning] and the Turkish *merhaba* [hello]). Meanwhile, Greek and Turkish strife narrators accuse one another of a litany of historical atrocities, berate one another with claims of racial impurity and/or sexual impotency and lambast harmony narrators from their own communities for ethnic betrayal and historical ignorance, dismissing cultural similarity as being the result of contamination or theft.

In articulating their narratives, these strife narrators have recourse not only to events from Greek national history—such as the 1919–22 Greek-Turkish war, or the 1974 Cyprus conflict, memories to which Landsberg might say they make a "natural" claim<sup>57</sup>—but also scour history (and, frequently, the Internet) for comparisons and analogies to bolster their arguments. Commenting on the video "Istanbul Pogrom," for instance, a Greek expatriate from Istanbul and witness to the 1955 Istanbul Riots responded to the suggestion by another user that Greeks have also been guilty of committing acts of violence by writing:

War brings out the worst in people. I don't doubt that atrocities occurred on BOTH sides during the Greco-Turkish war of 1921–22. Unlike the Turks however Greeks never engaged in government directed genocide. This is a Turkish speciality. Ask the Assyrians, Armenians, Kurds. The atrocities committed against the Greeks of Constantinople occurred during peacetime.

Calling upon other communities to testify as witnesses to Turkish atrocity, this YouTube user attempted to “prove” the veracity and severity of his own experiences in 1955 by suggesting parallels with other minorities alleged to have suffered at Turkish hands. Commenting on the video “Cyprus 1974,” another Greek user responded angrily to the claim by a Turkish user that Turkish military intervention on Cyprus was a “Peace Operation” (to restore order after the coup d’état by the Greek Cypriot paramilitary organization EOKA-B) by citing the Armenian genocide as a precedent for Turkish “aggression”: “Turks killed 8000 Greeks made 200000 homeless, how is that a peace operation? Was the Armenian genocide a peace operation too?” On the video “Septemvriana,” meanwhile, one Greek commenter countered the suggestion by another Greek user that he/she was behaving like a nationalist by analogizing with the contemporary Kurdish-Turkish conflict:

I want every people to create their own country and to have equal friendship with their neighbors. Unfortunately we have the misfortune of having the most barbarous neighbor upon this earth, which created its state on the corpses of the Armenians, the *Romioi* [i.e. the Greeks] and the Kurds. Really what opinion do you have about the Kurds? Are they racists and nationalists? Are they wrong to demand their land?<sup>58</sup>

On occasion, some Greek users even seem to vicariously enact revenge on Turkey through the envisaged future actions of the Kurds. On the video “A Touch of Spice,” one commenter taunted a Turkish user by stating, “[d]o not worry PKK will fix you well. Your time will come,” whilst on the video “Septemvriana” another user commemorated the victims of the Istanbul Riots with the epitaph, “[m]ay the souls of the murdered Greeks rest in Peace. Turkey will pay [for] it. Kurds will bring them the bill.” Whilst references to the Armenian and Assyrian genocides serve primarily to validate Greek claims against the Turks by offering an extension to—or further precedents for—Greek victimhood, linkages with the ongoing Kurdish-Turkish conflict additionally allow commenters to reframe historic Greek suffering in a contemporary setting, providing a present-day visualization of the past as well as vicarious vengeance for its injustices.

It is also common for YouTube users to liken Turkish actions against ethnic or religious minorities to Nazi atrocities against the Jews. Respond-

ing to a video about the Istanbul Riots, for instance, two commenters dubbed the events of 1955 “Turkish Kristalnacht! [*sic*]” and “Kristallnacht ala Turka,” thereby equating the *Septemvrianá* with the Nazi attack on the Jews in 1938, whilst in the comments section for the video “BEKLEDIM” another Greek user reacted with incredulity to calls for Greek-Turkish reconciliation by declaring:

We are the victims you fool!!! nazis are the turks!!! remember the genozid on armenians??? greeks??? the p[og]rom in konstantinop[le] 1955??? how many greeks are left??? 1974 cyprus??? now you will claim the Greeks also did wrong thin[g]s...but not 1955, not the Armenians, not the alevit in sivas [a reference to the 1993 Sivas massacre of Alevi intellectuals], the[y] burned them alive in a hotel only because they are alevit and this [in] 1993!!!

Shortly afterwards, the same user wrote: “Whats about the jews and the germans (only ten years of suffer[ing]) ... with the turks 1922 1955 1974 imia, isaak solomou etc. thrace ágais...not long time ago [I] saw pictures [of] behead[ed] kurds (1998) how [many] Greeks are left, armenians you fool...”<sup>59</sup> Commenting on the video “Septemvrianá,” meanwhile, a Greek user whose father’s shop was damaged during the Istanbul Riots became embroiled in a lengthy debate with another Greek user who had responded critically to his antagonistic stance toward Turkey. In an attempt to justify his position, the first user sought to frame the Istanbul Riots in terms that he thought his sparring partner might better understand, or that might speak more directly to the latter’s own (inherited) memories, by analogizing with the Nazi occupation of Greece: “If the Germans had been victorious and had taken the house of your father from for example Crete and they had colonized it and they had killed your grandfather, what would you have done? Would you have gone to Crete as a tourist and would you have talked to me about the good Germans???”<sup>60</sup> In such examples, the experiences of Armenians, Alevis, Greek Cypriots, Greeks and Kurds are allowed to commingle, thereby broadening the field of victims of Turkish actions, whilst Turkey is cast as the villain through equation with Nazism, an analogy that is not only internationally intelligible but also has particular resonance with a Greek domestic audience.

Most YouTube viewers do not post responses to the videos they watch, but among those who do comment the level of interaction is high.<sup>61</sup>

This pattern is borne out in the videos I analyzed, in which multiple back-and-forth exchanges between relatively small groups of interlocutors are commonplace. As previous studies have found, whilst these posts are typically characterized not by productive dialogue but by a crude “quest for one-upmanship,” they are nevertheless often simultaneously “structured by a desire for understanding by the readers of these comments.”<sup>62</sup> In other words, YouTube commenters are driven by a desire not only to provoke reactions and belittle their opponents but also to be perceived by other interlocutors and onlookers as having won the argument, leading to what Goode et al. aptly referred to as a “Monty Python-esque juxtaposition of substantive reasoning and extreme personal attack.”<sup>63</sup> As both individual comments and the lifespan of extended dialogues tend to be short, there is an imperative for users to make their case in the most concise, compelling and immediately intelligible manner possible, leading to the repetition of certain tropes that are “deployed to *trigger* reactions and to *capture* attention.”<sup>64</sup> This seems to encourage YouTube users to borrow the memories of other communities in order to maximize the scale of the suffering they accused others of inflicting, and to analogize with infamous and widely recognizable events from history such as Nazi genocide. Notably, users commonly draw on online sources—in particular, news media sites, Wikipedia and other YouTube videos—and sometimes assign other users “reading lists” in the form of web links, indicating that they have been “shopping” for or “Googling” appropriate material to append to their narratives.

#### TRANSNATIONAL NATIONALISM?

As Rothberg observed, it has often been assumed that the memories of different victim communities must interact competitively in a battle over the scarce resource of public recognition; that “[a]s I struggle to achieve recognition of *my* memories and *my* identity, I necessarily exclude the memories and identities of others.”<sup>65</sup> If this assumption were accurate, we might expect the juxtaposition of different memories of atrocity in the examples presented above to generate a competitive hierarchy of suffering, what the author Daniel Mendelsohn has aptly termed the “my-genocide-was-worse-than-your-genocide thing.”<sup>66</sup> Competitive victimhood

is certainly an aspect of memory's multidirectionality, as Rothberg himself made clear in a later piece of work and as Kyrtzopoulos's arguments (see above) vividly demonstrate.<sup>67</sup> Generally, however, cross-referencing with Armenian, Assyrian, Jewish and Kurdish experience follows an *anti*-hierarchical logic: Greek narrators seem more concerned with constructing rhetorical solidarities premised on the equality and interchangeability of victimhood than with establishing competitive victim stratification. This provides them with a means to legitimate their narratives of persecution by asserting that other communities had similar experiences at the hands of the same perpetrators, and to visualize and represent comparatively obscure events such as the *Septemvrianá* through analogy to more well-known events familiar to European and international audiences. In this sense, *including* the memories of others in their narratives serves to bolster rather than undermine these narrators' efforts to achieve recognition of their own memories.

The question remains, however, as to whether such transcultural cross-referencing simply serves to structure and buttress narratives about the self or whether it also had a transformative effect on Greek narrators' perceptions of others. Certainly, invocations of the Armenians, Assyrians and Kurds were not restricted to totemic name-dropping within narratives of Greek suffering and sometimes found expression in impassioned proclamations of empathy, angry denunciations of Turkish actions or appeals for readers and the Greek public to support their campaigns for recognition or liberation. In 1999, for instance, PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan was captured by Turkish intelligence services in Kenya en route from the Greek embassy in Nairobi to the airport. There was a strong outpouring of support for the Kurdish leader in *O Politis*, and in the March edition one writer responded to the arrest—and to rumors of Greek complicity—by reflecting on her own prejudices toward Kurdish and other political refugees who had taken shelter in Greece. She recalled how, as a young girl, she felt that the Kurds should “stay in their own country to fight for their rights,” and complained that “they are dirty, they smell ... they will give us lice,” for which she was reprimanded by her mother—an expatriated Greek from Istanbul—who reminded her that “[w]e were the same when we first came as little children to the homeland [that is, Greece].” On the day of Öcalan's arrest, the author found her mother “shedding tears whilst watching the news”:

– We ended up handing him over, [my mother said], we forced him to leave the embassy, everything has been revealed. Poor Öcalan, the Turks are torturing him now.

I, however, did not believe it and I sat down ... and watched the news, for many hours ... searching to find an explanation, which would justify our actions. And then I saw ARO [nickname for Öcalan] the powerful leader of 30 million repressed people, fatigued, distressed and with the look of a small child who had become lost and was afraid. And I too began to cry. And I know that shortly, when the noise has died down ... I too will have forgotten that look....

There is, however, that burning that remains in the stomach and the guilt that weighs heavily on me. And I know that every time my gaze meets that Kurd, that Iranian, that Albanian and whichever repressed person on this planet, I will be the first one to bow her head in shame. And that hurts. Good morning Kurdistan, good morning ARO. One thousand times sorry.<sup>68</sup>

Landsberg suggested that when we hear the testimony of another we “construct a memory triggered by the testimony that also is closely connected to our own archive of experience.”<sup>69</sup> Indeed, in this extract, it was precisely by equating the past experiences of her parents as Greeks in Turkey with the contemporary plight of the Kurds that the author of the article came to reevaluate her prejudice toward political refugees in Greece: a postmemory of her parents’ suffering acted as a cipher for engaging with the otherwise intangible suffering of others.<sup>70</sup>

There is, moreover, evidence that Greek expressions of solidarity toward other communities are frequently reciprocated. On YouTube, Armenian, Assyrian and Kurdish users often include Greeks in their own narratives of suffering and post messages of support on their uploads. Commenting on the video “19 May Pontian-Greek Genocide,” an Armenian user wrote “[c]ondolences on ur Genocide, Armenian communities spent that day with [the] Greek [ones] just like they were with us on 24 April [Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day],” whilst on the video “Istanbul Pogrom” another user left the comment, “Armenian here. Terrible memories from this. My grandparents barely survived the genocide.... Love to our Greek brothers. Thank you for taking care of us,” to which the (Greek) uploader of the video responded: “Never forget. With respect to

our Armenian brothers.” Responding to the video “Kurds Greeks Assyrians Cypriots Armenians united,” one Kurdish user from South America similarly declared that “no matter what a map says TURKEY ... belongs to KURDS GREEKS CYPRIOTS AND ARMENIANS.” Likewise, the rhetorical solidarities extended to the Armenians and Kurds by the organs of the expatriated Greek minority of Turkey have in the past been mirrored by Armenian and Kurdish diaspora organizations in Greece. On the seventy-eighth anniversary of the Armenian genocide, for instance, the Armenian National Committee of Greece wrote in their newsletter of a “chain of Turkish expansionist policy,” incorporating the Armenian genocide, the killings of Pontic Greeks between 1916 and 1923, the burning of Smyrna during the Greek-Turkish War, the Istanbul Riots, the 1974 Cyprus conflict, the Kurdish-Turkish conflict and contemporary tensions between Armenia and Turkey over Nagorno-Karabakh.<sup>71</sup> In January 1997, the Balkan branch of the National Liberation Front of Kurdistan sent words of support to the Constantinopolitan Society that similarly paralleled the experiences of the Greeks of Istanbul and the Kurds:

The peoples who were victims of Turkish Kemalist racism do not differ from one another. We are the children of the same land of Asia Minor, whatever religion and whatever language we might have. Victims of the same barbarity, we strongly believe that every Kurd is today also a Constantinopolitan of 1941–44, of 1955, of 1964.... The Kurdish rebel of the National Liberation Front of Kurdistan carries in his heart the pain and the hope of the Constantinopolitan.<sup>72</sup>

In this extract, contemporary Kurdish guerrilla fighters are portrayed as embodying the persecuted Istanbul Greeks of the past, or as present-day auxiliaries for past Greek victims, carrying into their fight with Turkey not just their own pain but also an “affiliative postmemory” of Greek suffering in mid-twentieth-century Istanbul.<sup>73</sup>

As such examples demonstrate, by the 1990s writers representing all three communities in Greece had become fluent in each other’s languages of victimhood, trading iconic dates such as 1915 and 1955 from each other’s mnemonic repertoires and displaying them as badges of solidarity and tropes to demonstrate the universality of minority experience in Turkey. Such rhetorical solidarities could also be translated into real-world actions: in 1988, for instance, the expatriated Greeks worked collabora-

tively with Armenian and Kurdish diaspora groups in Athens to organize a protest coinciding with the diplomatic visit of Turkish Prime Minister Turgut Özal.<sup>74</sup> The discursive practice of paralleling Greek and Armenian experience with that of the Kurds, furthermore, lends some credence to Landsberg's suggestion that the transcultural circulation of memories "might serve as the grounds for unexpected alliances across chasms of difference."<sup>75</sup> Both Armenian and Greek writers and activists have in the past held the Kurds accountable for participating in Ottoman-era and later Turkish anti-minority persecution, in particular the Armenian genocide, atrocities during the Greek-Turkish war, and—to a lesser degree—the *Septemvrianá*. From this perspective, incorporating the experiences of all three communities into a narrative of shared victimhood might help to promote intercommunal reconciliation by foregrounding their commonality as victims over their differences as antagonists.

There are, nevertheless, reasons to be cautious about the emphasis in recent scholarship on the capacity for the remembrance of suffering along transcultural lines to challenge essentialist national identities and replace these with nation-transcending solidarities. To begin with, the chasm of difference between the Armenians and the Greeks, on the one hand, and the Kurds, on the other, is not always so easily overcome, and historical enmities may simmer beneath the surface in spite of rhetorical and public expressions of solidarity. In an interview with me, for instance, a former president of the Constantinopolitan Society had the following recollections of planning meetings between the three communities for the 1988 protest: "the representatives of the Armenians were sitting next to me, and the Kurds were sitting opposite.... I said to the Armenian woman, 'now we are all sitting down together and we are speaking in a friendly manner, but don't forget that those Kurds opposite us slaughtered you, and others during the *Septemvrianá*.'"<sup>76</sup> During YouTube debates, narratives of intercommunal solidarity between the Armenians/Assyrians/Greeks and the Kurds are likewise frequently contested. When one Greek user responded to the video "19 May Pontian-Greek Genocide" by writing, "[e]ven until this day, Kurds go through the same...because they are Kurds, may God stand by them," he was reprimanded by another Greek user in the following terms: "Do not forget that [at] those period[s] of time Kurds were included in the Ottoman army and Kurds killed a lot of Greeks since the genocide was based in religion. Of course it is wellknown



that today in Turkey Kurds are second-class citizens...but we can't compare what Greeks had gone through with the current oppression of Kurds."

These examples show that narratives that cut across boundaries and call received historical knowledge into question may encounter resistance, and it cannot be assumed that the historical connections individuals draw in particular discursive contexts will carry over into other social situations and have a lasting effect on individual subjectivity. Indeed, although transcultural comparison seems to be fairly common in formal expatriate writing and (relatively) informal online debate—both contexts in which narrators were explicitly engaged in publicly advancing and justifying their representations of the past—it is comparatively uncommon in oral testimonies offered to me by members of the expatriated communities, raising a question mark over the extent to which these connections have been internalized by individuals and become part of their mental apparatus for understanding their lives. This is not to suggest that transcultural cross-referencing is in some sense unique to written rather than oral discourse, but rather that it may be most expedient, and therefore most common, in particular discursive contexts: namely when memory activists are explicitly seeking to make their narratives compelling and intelligible in public forums.

If the practice of transcultural cross-referencing is to a significant extent the domain of memory activists seeking to achieve recognition of their own memories, we must confront the possibility that such comparisons might sometimes be as much (if not more) about the *subject* making the connections as about the *objects* of those connections. Although in some contexts Greek narrators draw on perceived parallels with the experiences of others to call for mutual intercommunal support, or even to reevaluate their own preconceptions about these communities, in other cases the Armenians, Assyrians and Kurds appear in Greek strife narratives not so much as distinctive communities with distinctive identities and histories, but rather as truncated contextual depth for a protracted narrative of Greek suffering. In such cases, *pace* Landsberg, Greek narrators do not “suture [themselves] into a larger history” so much as suture compelling motifs onto their *own* history.<sup>77</sup> This highlights certain limitations to the productive moral potential of multidirectional mnemonic engagements. First, as Silverman cautioned, there is an inherent risk of “clothing ourselves in others’ victimhood, which we have neither experienced nor properly

understood, for the purpose of identity and, consequently, participating in a banal culture of empathy which is often more self- than other-oriented.”<sup>78</sup> Second, the effort to find counterparts to Greek suffering often leads narrators to disregard the historical particularities of different past occurrences.

In order to account for “some of the more difficult and even troubling cases of multidirectionality,” Rothberg proposed that connections between different histories might be plotted along both an “axis of comparison”—with equation at one extreme and differentiation at the other—and an “axis of political affect”—ranging from solidarity to competition.<sup>79</sup> Most of the examples in this article could be placed in the solidarity-equation quadrant, as, in the process of articulating solidarities between the Armenians, Assyrians, Greeks and Kurds and drawing parallels between Nazi persecution of the Jews and Turkish treatment of other ethnic groups, they tend to a greater or lesser degree to elide these different histories. In a 1995 *Politis* article paralleling the histories of the Greeks and the Kurds, for instance, Istanbul Greek author Leonidas Koumakis was keen to emphasize that “the dramatic moments that the Kurdish people are currently experiencing do not differ from those that the Armenians in 1915 or the Greeks of Asia Minor lived through,” whilst in 1999 another author in the same newspaper asserted that the *Septemvrianá* could be described as “a ‘photocopy’ from Pontus, Asia Minor, Erzurum with the Armenians” (i.e. attacks on the Greeks of Pontus/Asia Minor during the First World War and the Greek-Turkish War, and on Armenians in Erzurum during the 1894–96 Hamidian massacres).<sup>80</sup> As Rothberg identified, although such discourses might be preferable to those governed by a logic of competitive victimhood, they nevertheless carry certain dangers, not only of distortion and misrepresentation, but also, more seriously, of the imposition of reified moral absolutes of good versus evil on complex contemporary problems and the importation of “a dangerous model of victimization” from one context to another.<sup>81</sup> For instance, there is a risk that equating frozen or ongoing conflicts, like the division of Cyprus or the Kurdish-Turkish conflict, with historical atrocities like the Armenian genocide or the Holocaust might make the former seem intractable and bound for a catastrophic conclusion.

There is, moreover, ample evidence to suggest that transcultural connections between different violent histories might be as likely to strengthen as to abrogate existing national identities and frameworks of

remembrance. Staging Greek suffering as part of an unchanging pattern of Turkish behavior stretching from the Armenian genocide to the contemporary conflict with the Kurds only serves to fortify hostility toward the Turks and to consolidate the rhythms of Greek national history. After watching the video “Septemvriáná,” one Greek user was moved to write: “The Turks will never change! They did the same in Smyrna, the same in Constantinople, the same with the Armenians, the same in our Cyprus!”<sup>82</sup> Discussing Turkey’s relationship with the EU, *O Politis* similarly declared that the Turks “do not change tactic. Only the people and the victims change: Armenians, Greeks, Kurds.”<sup>83</sup> Sharing memories of suffering may thus also involve sharing abstract enmities. Similar risks apply to the drawing of parallels between Turkey and Nazi Germany. Though analogies between *Kristallnacht* and the Istanbul Riots represent for the Ecumenical Federation of Constantinopolitans an attempt to move *away* from a narrow national perspective, discourses that liken Turkish actions to those of Nazi Germany are always potentially liable to reinforce negative nationalist perceptions of the Turkish other as a homogenous community of perpetrators, as illustrated by the tendency for some Greek YouTube users to offer sentiments along the lines of “nazis are the turks,” thereby equating an entire national group with a genocidal political movement. Although (rhetorical) solidarities may be a common product of multidirectional thinking, these may often go hand-in-hand with the perpetuation of historical enmities in relation to a common antagonist, demonstrating that transcultural “entanglements” between different memories might “reinforce national memory communities that at first appearance they seem to supersede.”<sup>84</sup>

## CONCLUSIONS

In a discussion of First World War poetry, Geoff Dyer argued that the image of war as horrific had become so clichéd that it had lost its power to express that horror: “War may be horrible,” he wrote, “but that should not distract us from acknowledging what a horrible cliché this has become.” Dyer termed these instinctive clichés “[o]ff-the-peg formulae [that] free you from thinking for yourself about what is being said,” and warned that “[w]henver words are bandied about automatically and easily, their

meaning is in the process of leaking away or evaporating.”<sup>85</sup> In a similar vein, we might describe many of the references considered in this article to the Armenian and Assyrian genocides, the Kurdish-Turkish conflict and the Nazi genocide as “off-the-peg memories”: abstracted and simplified formulae, often accompanied by little historical baggage, that were temporarily adopted by Greek narrators, without necessarily triggering, or indicating, any particularly in-depth engagement with the experiences of the others concerned. These off-the-peg memories typically come across as knee-jerk reactions to particular discursive situations and often stand in for substantive independent thinking about Greek-Turkish relationships and histories of violence more generally. Just as Greek strife narrators on YouTube attempt to bolster antagonistic arguments during quick-fire debates, so expatriate writers seek to establish perceived “patterns” of Turkish behavior by name-dropping persecuted communities and totemically citing decontextualized atrocities, in the process entrenching hostility toward the Turks and eliding distinctive historical events. At the same time, however, such off-the-peg memories free Greek narrators from thinking about history *on their own*. On the one hand, the construction of parallel histories with Armenians, Assyrians and Kurds serves to endorse and rationalize Greek victimhood by suggesting that other communities had similar experiences at the hands of the same perpetrators, and thereby multiplying the witnesses able to “testify” to the accused’s record of atrocity. On the other hand, analogizing with other, more well-known historical atrocities such as Nazi genocide makes these claims evocative and intelligible for unfamiliar audiences.

By introducing this terminology, I do not want to propose a prescriptive model to classify—or evaluate—different transcultural discourses, nor do I intend to dismiss all such references as irrelevant, frivolous or disingenuous. Indeed, I have tried to draw attention to instances in which transcultural cross-referencing might draw diverse victim communities closer together, in a practical as well as a rhetorical sense, or lead narrators to more reflective engagement with others’ histories and their own preconceived ideas. Rather, I intend to draw attention to the fact that not every act of cross-referencing is necessarily evidence of lasting and pervasive “knotting” between different histories that might radically challenge existing national(ist) understandings of the past, and that the discursive connections drawn by narrators in certain contexts will not necessarily

carry over into other settings and reconfigure their perceptions of past, self and other. Indeed, it is notable that transcultural cross-referencing often serves to reaffirm what Greek narrators thought they already knew about the Turks and to make the articulation of more differentiated representations of the Turkish other less likely. These “off-the-peg memories” provide frameworks through which Greek experiences could be represented or communicated in particular contexts, but could likely be abandoned if necessary—placed “back on the peg”—without major surgery to self-understanding or received historical knowledge. This is not to say that such cross-referencing has no discernible impact on Greek narratives: the comparisons, for instance, with the histories of the Armenians, Kurds and Jews envisaged by expatriate activists may well have played a significant role in developing the tendency to present Greek experiences in Istanbul and Imbros in terms of human rights discourse. What it does suggest, however, is that multidirectional thinking may often produce transnational translations of national(ist) narratives, or even contribute to their consolidation and ongoing explanatory appeal, rather than producing more reflective and inclusive understandings of the past.

## NOTES

I am grateful to Kostas Arvanitis, Geoffrey Cubitt, Sharon Macdonald, Sebastian Owen, Shane O’Rourke and the two anonymous reviewers from *History & Memory* for insightful comments and constructive criticism on the research presented in this article. I thank the Constantinopolitan Society, Ekdóseis Tsoukátou, the Ecumenical Federation of Constantinopolitans and the Imvrian Association for providing advice, guidance and access to critical resources. I am indebted to Ekdóseis Tsoukátou for permission to reprint figure 1. This article draws on research that was funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC).

1. “Dúo Magikés Léxeis” [Two magic words], *O Polítis*, June 1977. Istanbul is still known as “Constantinople” in contemporary Greece. (All translations from Greek are mine unless otherwise noted.)

2. Maurice Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory*, trans. Francis J. Ditter and Vida Yazdi Ditter (New York: Harper & Row, 1980), 84.

3. Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider, *The Holocaust and Memory in the Global Age*, trans. Assenka Oksiloff (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2006), 2.

4. Michael Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009), 3–6.
5. Levy and Sznajder, *The Holocaust and Memory in the Global Age*.
6. Michael Rothberg, “Introduction: Between Memory and Memory: From *Lieux de Mémoire* to *Noeuds de Mémoire*,” *Yale French Studies*, no. 118/119 (2010): 7; Max Silverman, *Palimpsestic Memory: The Holocaust and Colonialism in French and Francophone Fiction and Film* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2013), 8.
7. Astrid Erll, “Traumatic Pasts, Literary Afterlives, and Transcultural Memory: New Directions of Literary and Media Memory Studies,” *Journal of Aesthetics & Culture* 3, no. 1 (2011); Levy and Sznajder, *The Holocaust and Memory in the Global Age*, 103.
8. Stef Craps and Michael Rothberg, “Introduction: Transcultural Negotiations of Holocaust Memory,” *Criticism* 53, no. 4 (2011): 517; Astrid Erll, “Travelling Memory,” *Parallax* 17, no. 4 (2011): 9.
9. Andreas Huyssen, *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), 97.
10. Alison Landsberg, *Prosthetic Memory: The Transformation of American Remembrance in the Age of Mass Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 2, 26. Landsberg did concede that prosthetic memories may not “always produce utopian results,” pointing, for instance, to how cinematic representations of the American “melting pot” might have a homogenizing effect on immigrant culture. *Ibid.*, 21–23.
11. Jeffrey C Alexander, “The Social Construction of Moral Universals,” in Alexander, *Remembering the Holocaust: A Debate* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 3, 30–31, 37–42, 59.
12. Levy and Sznajder, *The Holocaust and Memory in the Global Age*, 4, 5.
13. *Ibid.*, 4, 141.
14. Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, 3, 5–7.
15. *Ibid.*, 12, 118–19, 244, 265; Rothberg, “Introduction,” 11.
16. Silverman, *Palimpsestic Memory*, 8, 179.
17. A. Dirk Moses, “Genocide and the Terror of History,” *Parallax* 17, no. 4 (2011): 104.
18. Alon Confino and Peter Fritzsche, “Introduction: Noises of the Past,” in Confino and Fritzsche, eds., *The Work of Memory: New Directions in the Study of German Society and Culture* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002), 5; Erll, “Travelling Memory,” 15.
19. Ryan Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores: Violence, Ethnicity, and the End of the Ottoman Empire, 1912–1923* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).
20. *Ibid.*

21. Eugene Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans: The Great War in the Middle East* (New York: Basic Books, 2016), 13–14, 159–84.

22. It is generally agreed that the Istanbul Riots were state orchestrated or at the very least state sanctioned. Alexis Alexandris, “Religion or Ethnicity: The Identity Issue of the Minorities in Greece and Turkey,” in Renée Hirschon, ed. *Crossing the Aegean: An Appraisal of the 1923 Compulsory Population Exchange between Greece and Turkey* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2004), 119; Dilek Güven, *Ethnikismós, Koinonikés Metavólés kai Meionótites: ta Epeisódia enantíon ton mi Mousoulmánon ths Tourkías (6/7 Septémvriou 1955)* [Nationalism, social changes and minorities: The episodes against the non-Muslims of Turkey (6/7 September 1955)], translated from German by S. Avgerinou (Athens: Estía, 2009), 14–15; Baskin Oran, “The Story of Those Who Stayed: Lessons from Articles 1 and 2 of the 1923 Convention,” in Hirschon, ed., *Crossing the Aegean*, 113; Speros Vryonis, *The Mechanism of Catastrophe: The Turkish Pogrom of September 6–7, 1955, and the Destruction of the Greek Community of Istanbul* (New York: Greekworks, 2005), 97–99; Alfred de Zayas, “The Istanbul Pogrom of 6–7 September 1955 in the Light of International Law,” *Genocide Studies and Prevention* 2, no. 2 (2007): 137–38.

23. Around two-thirds of the Orthodox Christians exempted from the 1923 population exchange had been Ottoman subjects and were given Turkish citizenship, whilst one third, Greek citizens who had been established in Turkey before October 30, 1918, retained Greek citizenship. The 12,000–13,000 Greek citizens expelled from Turkey after March 1964 were followed out of the country by an estimated 30,000–40,000 Orthodox Christians with Turkish citizenship, particularly those whose family or friends had been expelled as Greek citizens. Alexandris, “Religion or Ethnicity,” 118–19; Oran, “The Story of Those Who Stayed,” 104; Vryonis, *The Mechanism of Catastrophe*, 565.

24. Huw Halstead, “Heirs to Byzantium: Identity and the Helleno-Romaic Dichotomy amongst the Istanbul Greek Migrant Community in Greece,” *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, 38, no. 2 (2014): 265–84; Huw Halstead, *Greeks without Greece: Homelands, Belonging, and Memory amongst the Expatriated Greeks of Turkey* (Routledge, forthcoming).

25. “Prépei Na Dikaiothoún” [They must be vindicated], *O Polítis*, September 1975.

26. “Dúo Magikés Léxeis” [Two magic words], *O Polítis*, September 1977.

27. “Ap’ ti Lozànni os tin Kýpro” [From Lausanne to Cyprus], *Imvros*, September 1983.

28. Alexis Alexandris, “Imbros and Tenedos: A Study of Turkish Attitudes toward Two Ethnic Greek Island Communities since 1923,” *Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora* 7, no. 1 (Apr. 1980): 24–26; Giorgos Tsimouris, “Reconstructing

‘Home’ among the ‘Enemy’: The Greeks of Gökseada (Imvros) after Lausanne,” *Balkanologie* 5, no. 1–2 (2001): 2–3; Giorgos Tsimouris, *Imvrioi* (Athens: Elliniká Grámmata, 2008), 120, 134, 145; Giorgos Xeinós, *Imvros kai Ténédos: Istoría Parállili* [Imbros and Tenedos: Parallel histories] (Athens: Etaireía Melétis tis Kath’ Imás Anatolís, 2011), 149–50.

29. Constantinopolitan Society, New Circle of Constantinopolitans, Association of Hellenic Citizens Expelled from Turkey, Union of Constantinopolitans of Northern Greece, Thracian Association of Imbros, Constantinople, Tenedos and Eastern Thrace and Society for the Advancement of National Heritage, “To Protest the Ethnic Cleansing Perpetrated by Turkey against the Greeks of Istanbul in 1955” (1995), archive of the Constantinopolitan Society, Athens.

30. “Imbros,” *Imvros*, May–June 1994.

31. “Anoíxte tin Pýli. Eímai Evropaíos!” [Open the gate. I’m a European!], *O Polítis*, November 1997.

32. “O Néos Omér kai ta Omeriká Épi” [The new Homer and the Homeric epics], *O Polítis*, March 1990.

33. Alexander, “The Social Construction of Moral Universals,” 58.

34. “Ta Anýparkta Tourkiká Dikaiómata stin Kýpro” [The non-existent Turkish rights on Cyprus], *O Polítis*, June 1988; “Kai Ómos... ta Nazistiká Egklímata Synechízontai” [And yet... the Nazi-esque crimes continue], *O Polítis*, June 1985.

35. “Violations of Treaties and Accords,” *Imvros*, June 1992; “Paraváseis ton Anthropínou Dikaiomáton kai tis Synthíkis tis Lozánis sta Nisiá tis Imvrou kai tis Tenédou” [Violations of human rights and the Treaty of Lausanne on the islands of Imbros and Tenedos], *Imvros*, November–December 1993.

36. Constantinopolitan Society, “60 Chrónia, 6–7 Septemvriou 1955, Iméra Mnímis tou Ellinismou tis Pólis” [60 years, September 6–7, 1955, memorial day of the Hellenism of Constantinople], September 4, 2015, available at <https://www.cpolitan.gr/news/δελτιο-τυπου-60-χρονια-6-7-σεπτεμβριου-1955-η> (accessed May 12, 2014).

37. Levy and Sznajder, *The Holocaust and Memory in the Global Age*, 43, 46.

38. In this context, it is curious to note that the Jews as a minority community *within Turkey* are not very commonly mentioned by expatriate activists, in spite of a history of anti-Semitic persecution in Republican Turkey, though there are some exceptions. For instance, a 1991 *Polítis* article made reference to the persecution of the Jews in Eastern Thrace in the late 1930s and noted that the 1942 discriminatory wealth tax was directed “against the Hellenes, Jews and Armenians.” “Systematikós Diogmós ton Meionótiton tis Tourkías” [Systematic persecution of the minorities of Turkey], *O Polítis*, September 1991.



39. Ecumenical Federation of Constantinopolitans, "Proceedings of International Conference: Septemvriana 6–7/9/1955 an Act of Annihilation of the Greek Community of Istanbul," September 13, 2008), 7, available at <http://www.conpolis.eu/Septemvriana/2008/Πρακτικά%20Συνεδρίου%20Σε%20τεμβριανών%20ΟΙ.ΟΜ.Κ%202008.pdf> (accessed May 15, 2014); Nikos Ouzounoglou, Skype interview with the author (in Greek), May 16, 2014.

40. Ecumenical Federation of Constantinopolitans, "Proceedings of International Conference," 104.

41. Ibid.

42. Ecumenical Federation of Constantinopolitans, "Πρόσκλησι stin Imerída tis 58<sup>is</sup> Epeteíou tis Nýktas Krystállon 6–7/9/1955 gia ton Ellinismó tis Konstantinoúpolis" [Invitation to the day-conference on the 58th anniversary of the *Kristallnacht* 6–7/9/1955 for the Hellenism of Constantinople], 2013, available at: <http://www.conpolis.eu/uploadedNews/Σε%20τεμβριανά%20Εκδήλωση%202013.pdf>; Ecumenical Federation of Constantinopolitans, "Πρόσκλησι stin Imerída tis 59<sup>is</sup> Epeteíou tis Nýktas Krystállon 6–7/9/1955 gia ton Ellinismó tis Konstantinoúpolis" [Invitation to the day-conference on the 59th Anniversary of the *Kristallnacht* 6–7/9/1955 for the Hellenism of Constantinople], 2014, available at <http://www.conpolis.eu/uploadedNews/Septembriana%202014.pdf> (both accessed May 15, 2014).

43. Ecumenical Federation of Constantinopolitans, "The Tragic Anniversary of the 6–7 September 1955 Turkish State Organised Ethnic Cleansing Night of the Greek Community of Istanbul," 2007, available at <http://www.conpolis.eu/Septemvriana/Septemvriana.aspx> (accessed May 15, 2014).

44. *Septemvriana 1955: The "Kristallnacht" of the Hellenism of Constantinople* (Athens: Ekdóseis Tsoukátou, 1999); Speros Vryonis, "September 6–7, 1955: Krystallnacht in Constantinople," *Greek America Magazine*, September/October 2007; Tassos Boulmetis, "The *Kristallnacht* of Constantinople," *Kathimeriní*, special issue, *The Septemvriana: The Persecution of the Hellenes of Constantinople*, September 10, 2015, 89–90; for instance, Egolpio, "The Greek Krystallnacht," September 5, 2010, available at <https://egolpoi.wordpress.com/2010/09/05/septembriana> (accessed April 29, 2014).

45. Nikos Ouzounoglou, "I 'Nýchta ton Krystállon' tou Ellinismóu" [The "*Kristallnacht*" of Hellenism], *Eleftherotypía*, September 1, 2013, available at <http://www.enet.gr/?i=news.el.article&cid=382836> (accessed April 29, 2014).

46. Ecumenical Federation of Constantinopolitans, "Statement of the Administrative Board of the Ec.Fe.Con Done by Its President Prof. Nikolas Uzunoglu towards the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Republic of Turkey Prof. Ahmet Davutoglu," December 13, 2013, available at <http://www.conpolis.eu/uploadedNews/Statement%20Meeting%20of%20Ec.Fe.Con%20with%20MFA%20of%20Turkey%20in%203%20languages.pdf> (accessed May 15, 2014).

47. On the commonplace comparisons, see Halstead, *Greeks without Greece*.

48. Astrid Erll, *Memory in Culture*, trans. Sara B. Young (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 143; Astrid Erll and Ann Rigney, "Introduction: Cultural Memory and Its Dynamics," in Erll and Rigney, eds. *Mediation, Remediation, and the Dynamics of Cultural Memory* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2009), 5. Erll and Rigney adopted the term "repurposing" from Jay David Boulter and Richard Grusin, *Remediation: Understanding New Media* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999), 45.

49. Vasilis Kyratzopoulos, *I Agraphi Genoktonía: Konstantinoúpoli Septémvrios 1955* [Unregistered genocide: Constantinople September 1955] (Athens: Ekdóseis Tsoukátou, 2006), 22, 79, 100–103, 115–31, 129–30. Specifically, based on figures of between 3,800,000 and 6,500,000 Jewish victims of the Holocaust and a present-day Jewish population in Europe of 1,375,000, and a pre-genocide Tutsi population of 1,800,000 and a contemporary population of 1,250,000 Tutsi, Kyratzopoulos calculated that the Jewish population of Europe had been "replenished" by between 21 and 36 percent, and the Tutsi population of Rwanda by 66 percent. He contrasted these figures with the Greek population of Turkey, writing that between 1950 and the present day the size of the Greek community of Turkey had declined from 6.9 percent to 0.025 percent of the total Turkish population. He proceeded to make further comparisons based on the contemporary economic situation of the three communities, reaching similar conclusions.

50. During the course of my research, I conducted oral history interviews (in Greek) with 107 first- and second-generation Greek expatriates from Turkey (49 from Istanbul, 58 from Imbros). (Interviewees are referred to by pseudonyms.)

51. Joanne Garde-Hansen, "MyMemories? Personal Digital Archive Fever and Facebook," in Joanne Garde-Hansen, Andrew Hoskins and Anna Reading, eds., *Save as ... Digital Memories* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 135–50; Paulo Drinot, "Website of Memory: The War of the Pacific (1879–84) in the Global Age of YouTube," *Memory Studies* 4, no. 4 (2011): 370–85; Luke Goode, Alexis McCullough and Gelise O'Hare, "Unruly Publics and the Fourth Estate on YouTube," *Participations: Journal of Audience and Reception Studies* 8, no. 2 (2011): 594–615; Lucas Hilderbrand, "Youtube: Where Cultural Memory and Copyright Converge," *Film Quarterly* 61, no. 1 (2007): 48–57; Michela Ferron and Paolo Massa, "Beyond the Encyclopedia: Collective Memories in Wikipedia," *Memory Studies* 7, no. 1 (2014): 22–45; Christian Pentzold, "Fixing the Floating Gap: The Online Encyclopaedia Wikipedia as a Global Memory Place," *Memory Studies* 2, no. 2 (2009): 255–72.

52. Drinot, "Website of Memory," 375.

53. Landsberg, *Prosthetic Memory*, 9.

54. After careful consideration, extensive discussion with colleagues and consultation of YouTube's terms of use, it was decided to omit usernames from the text in the interests of protecting users' privacy. In incorporating short quotations from users' comments I have followed the principle, established in previous work by other scholars (such as Stephen Pihlaja, *Antagonism on YouTube: Metaphor in Online Discourse* [London Bloomsbury Publishing, 2014], 27) that this material is public, published and subject to copyright, and therefore that its use for academic analysis constitutes "fair use" or "fair dealing."

55. The selection of these videos was made to include a variety of topics (political, cultural, historical), a range of different stances on Greek-Turkish relationships (antagonistic, neutral, pro-reconciliation) and varying degrees of popularity in terms of number of views/comments. Four of the videos were dedicated to the shared musical heritage of the two communities: "BEKLEDIM," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IFrQ6M6ZRoc> (accessed July 1, 2013); "Fedon-Dostluk Şarkısı," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hJYLvYRqBPI> (accessed July 1, 2013); "Greek Turkish Shared Musics—Kizim Seni Aliye (Istemem Babacim)," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XPPtZPZ6gzk> (accessed June 18, 2015); "Turkish Songs Recorded by Greeks in USA (Old)," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NO8DHSi99bk> (accessed July 1, 2013). Two were concerned with damage dealt to the Greek community during the 1955 Istanbul Riots: "Istanbul Pogrom," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lhpvNmQuB04> (accessed July 1, 2013); "Septemvriáná," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kKTrOX9U6Xo> (accessed July 1, 2013; no longer available due to termination of uploader's YouTube account). Two marked the anniversary of the Pontic genocide: "19 May Pontian-Greek Genocide," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yW256u3ZMmw>; "Yenoktonia Pontion—Pontian Hellenism Genocide," [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_264tbl6wgw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_264tbl6wgw) (both accessed June 18, 2015). One condemned the "illegal turkish invasion" of Cyprus in 1974: "Cyprus 1974," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iHQXNKus03Q> (accessed July 1, 2013). One showed the opening scene of the film *Politiki Kouzína*, which told the story of the Greek citizens deported from Istanbul in 1964: "A Touch of Spice," [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CZ\\_XI4QvJ5o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CZ_XI4QvJ5o) (accessed July 3, 2013). And two explicitly constructed solidarities between different communities: "History of Turkish Ottoman Genocide of Armenians, Assyrians and Pontic Greeks," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rwpw5xVKstM>; and "Kurds Greeks Assyrians Cypriots Armenians United," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IHdkrGOsWr8> (both accessed June 18, 2015). At the time of analysis, a total of 14,448 comments had been left on these videos, of which 12,368 were in response to the video "Cyprus 1974."

56. On “harmony” and “strife” narratives, see Huw Halstead, “Harmony and Strife in Memories of Greek-Turkish Intercommunal Relationships in Istanbul and Cyprus,” *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, 32, no. 2 (2014): 393–415.

57. Landsberg, *Prosthetic Memory*, 9.

58. Original in Greek.

59. “1922” refers to the flight of Greek refugees from Asia Minor; “1955” to the Istanbul Riots; “1974” to the conflict on Cyprus; “imia” to two uninhabited islets at the center of a 1996 military incident between Greece and Turkey; Tassos Isaak and Solomos Solomou were two Greek Cypriot refugees killed in 1996 during demonstrations in the United Nations Buffer Zone near Deryneia; “thrace” refers to perceived Turkish designs on Greek Western Thrace; and “ägais” to disputes over territorial waters and maritime borders in the Aegean Sea.

60. Original in Greek.

61. According to Mike Thelwall et al.’s study, which was based on a large sample of YouTube videos, whilst just 0.5 percent of viewers who watched a video left a comment, almost a quarter of those comments were replies to earlier posts. Mike Thelwall, Pardeep Sud and Farida Vis, “Commenting on YouTube Videos: From Guatemalan Rock to El Big Bang,” *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 63, no. 3 (2012): 617, 627.

62. Goode, McCullough and O’Hare, “Unruly Publics and the Fourth Estate,” 610; Nico Carpentier, “‘Fuck the Clowns from Grease!!’ Fantasies of Participation and Agency in the YouTube Comments on a Cypriot Problem Documentary,” *Information, Communication & Society* 17, no. 8 (2014): 1011.

63. Goode, McCullough and O’Hare, “Unruly Publics and the Fourth Estate,” 611.

64. *Ibid.*, 603.

65. Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, 5.

66. Saidiya Hartman, Eva Hoffman, Daniel Mendelsohn and Nancy K. Miller, “Memoirs of Return,” in Marianne Hirsch and Nancy K. Miller, eds., *Rites of Return: Diaspora Poetics and the Politics of Memory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 119.

67. Michael Rothberg, “From Gaza to Warsaw: Mapping Multidirectional Memory,” *Criticism* 53, no. 4 (2011): 523–48.

68. “Dozmpás Kourdistán, Sygnómi ARO” [*Dozmpás* Kurdistan, Sorry ARO], *O Polítis*, March 1999.

69. Landsberg, *Prosthetic Memory*, 137.

70. Marianne Hirsch, *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture after the Holocaust* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).

71. “I Apopsí Mas” [Our opinion], *Armeniká Chroniká*, April 1993.

72. “Mínyma gia tin Ekdílosi toy Syllógou Konstantinoupolitón” [Message for the event of the Constantinopolitan Society], *Phoní tou Kourdistán*, January–February 1997. The dates refer, in turn, to the forced labor battalions and the wealth tax during the Second World War, the Istanbul Riots, and the expulsion of Greek citizens from Turkey.

73. Hirsch, *The Generation of Postmemory*, 36.

74. “Ektakti Panelladikí Imvriakí Sýskepsi” [Extraordinary Panhellenic Imvrian Conference], *Imvros*, June–July 1988; “Megáli Poreía Katá tis Epískepsis Ozál” [Big march during the visit of Özal], *Imvros*, June–July 1988; Giorgos Isaakidis, interview with the author (in Greek), Athens, March 22, 2014.

75. Landsberg, *Prosthetic Memory*, 3.

76. Isaakidis, interview with the author.

77. Landsberg, *Prosthetic Memory*, 2.

78. Silverman, *Palimpsestic Memory*, 174.

79. Rothberg, “From Gaza to Warsaw,” 524–25.

80. “Ellines kai Kouórdoi: Víoi kai Viómata” [Hellenes and Kurds: Lives and experiences] *O Politis*, May 1995; “44 Chrónia: Les kai Itan Chthes [44 years: As if it was yesterday], *ibid.*, September 1999.

81. Rothberg, “From Gaza to Warsaw,” 534.

82. Original in Greek.

83. “Na Min Aphínoume tous Evropaíous na Xechnoún tis Thiriodíes ton Toúrkon” [Let’s not allow the European to forget the atrocities of the Turk], *O Politis*, April 1995.

84. Sebastian Conrad, “Entangled Memories: Versions of the Past in Germany and Japan, 1945–2001,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 38, no. 1 (2003): 86–87; Aleida Assmann and Sebastian Conrad, “Introduction,” in Assmann and Conrad, eds., *Memory in a Global Age: Discourses, Practices and Trajectories* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 9.

85. Geoff Dyer, *The Missing of the Somme* (London: Penguin, 1995), 27, 29.

---

HUW HALSTEAD is an Associate Lecturer in History and a member of the Institute for the Public Understanding of the Past (IPUP) at the University of York (UK), and the Macmillan-Rodewald Postdoctoral Student at the British School at Athens. He is author of *Greeks without Greece: Homelands, Belonging, and Memory amongst the Expatriated Greeks of Turkey* (Routledge, forthcoming). He is director of the pedagogic project *Personalising History*, which uses oral history to develop educational resources to teach about the Holocaust in secondary education. (huw.halstead@york.ac.uk)

Copyright of History & Memory is the property of Indiana University Press and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.