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THE INTERPRETATION OF THE ASIA MINOR DISASTER IN THE STORY OF ONE CAPTIVE BY STRATIS DOUKAS

The fatal peculiarity of the Asia Minor Disaster and other tragedies developed on ethnic and religious grounds in general consists in both sides claiming rightfulness of their own positions and believing themselves to be the defenders of justice. The opposite sides usually blame each other in the conflict and consider each other worthy of punishment. More often such a disposition of the confronting nations deepens the abyss of conflict and intensifies strife. This is best demonstrated in the XX century historical events in Greece, namely the Asia Minor Disaster. The present paper attempts to consider its literary version as presented in a work by a XX century Greek writer. The mentioned event may find its reflection in fiction through several approaches:

1. Ultrapatriotic approach – when a writer regards the opposite side as guilty and negative.
2. The other extremity – when a writer justifies the opposite side, i.e. when a Greek writer blames solely the Greek side and vice versa.
3. A realistic approach – when both sides are equally blamed for inspiring the conflict.

Literary works by Greek writers are especially interesting in this respect. We shall dwell on *The Story of One Captive* by Stratis Doukas. To our mind, the author is very realistic in his appreciation of the Asia Minor Disaster and the subsequent events.

We shall attempt to reveal the tendencies and the literary approach which the author applies to picture the historical cataclysms. We are also interested in the dialogue of cultures and elements of mutual understanding between the

Greek and Turkish sides, which is relevant nowadays as well.¹ The question acquires even more significance against the background of intensifying confrontation and increasing number of conflicts in the world.

The first part of the story presents a more rapid development of events as compared to the second part, as Doukas did not record the event from its very beginning; he rebuilt the first half of the story after a narrative. The second part gives a detailed story of the hero based on the writer's own records. Doukas started recording the story after it attracted his interest.

The first part of the work describes transportation of war captives from one settlement to another and pictures the hardship that accompanied the process. The captives were not locked up at night and the protagonist managed to escape together with a friend. Here starts the second half of the story richer in details and tension. For several months the fugitives took a shelter in a cave and used to break into neighboring mills to get some food. At last, tortured with hunger, they decided to go apart, disguise as Turks and wait for a suitable time to escape. So the protagonist dressed in Turkish clothes headed for nearby villages to find a job. He started to work as a shepherd for a well-to-do and kind-hearted Turkish master Khadzimemed. However, when the latter made up his mind to marry him to his niece, the disguised Greek fugitive decided to leave the place at once pretending to be going to visit his sister whom he had not seen for two years and promising to return soon. The master helped him get an identity card, which he said to have lost under the Greek domination. So the Greek fugitive boarded an Arabian ship bound for Constantinople. The ship harbored near Lesbos Island on its way. The disguised Greek revealed his true identity to the captain and disembarked on the island thus rescuing himself.

On reading the story, one is under no impression of the author's bias to any of the conflicting sides, neither does the writer seem to present the opposition of positive and negative sides. The impression is that he is distanced from the historical events.

¹ According to Angela Kastρινakis' article *1922 and Literary Reconsiderations*, literary works that deal with the Asia Minor Disaster, including *The Story of One Captive* by Stratis Doukas, reveal the following tendency: Along with every new edition, the images of Greek characters appear more and more free from the barbarian features, while Turkish images get richer in kindness and consideration. Here we should add that to our mind, despite the mentioned conception, the images and events described in the literary work of our present concern are rendered either "darkened" or "light". Anyway, it is beyond any doubt that even its first versions demonstrate humane relations between Turks and Greeks. (Αγγέλα Καστρινάκη, «Το 1922 και οι λογοτεχνικές αναθεωρήσεις» Πρακτικά του Α' Ευρωπαϊκού Συνεδρίου Νεοελληνικών Σπουδών, Βερολίνο, 2-4 Οκτωβρίου, 1998. *Ο Ελληνικός Κόσμος ανάμεσα στην Ανατολή και τη Δύση. (1453-1961)*, Εκδόσεις Ελληνικά Γράμματα, 165-174.)

Considering Doukas' story with respect to the Asia Minor Disaster we may distinguish several levels of composition. They serve to describe events significant and painful to the entire Greek people and reveal the author's attitude to them.

We may assert that the author's own interpretation maintains the balance between the positive and negative functions of Greeks and Turks at all levels. To illustrate the above, we have distinguished the following levels:

1. The level of characters
2. The level of events
3. The level of appreciations
4. The level implying the author's opinion (this level is presented in a more subtle way, in the Epilogue only)

Now allow us consider each level separately.

I. The level of characters. Taking into account its volume (68 pages), the story abounds in characters, who appear in the story one after another like in a kaleidoscope. The protagonist is constantly in motion: in the first part, he is being transported to another settlement together with other captives. While on the way, he constantly meets and parts from various peoples. The same occurs in the second part – while seeking a job, the protagonist disguised as a Turk meets and parts from various peoples. The picture changes when the fugitive captive starts working as a shepherd for a Turk called Khadzimemed and settles in one place.

Besides the main hero there are two other characters, who frequently appear in the story. They are the protagonist's friend, the other fugitive (whose name is not mentioned) and Khadzimemed, the Turkish master. There are other characters as well who appear in a few episodes only. They are the protagonist's brother (in the beginning of the story), also a khoja (who at first denied water to captives, but a week later lavishly gave away bread and water) and Khasan (another shepherd working for Khadzimemed together with the protagonist).

Along with the above mentioned, there are typically episodic characters as well, however, it would take us long to mention them all.

A remarkable tendency is distinguished in the story: the author avoids using proper names. Only 9 characters are mentioned by name. The protagonist's name is given only at the end of the basic part of the story – through the author's words: "When he (the protagonist) finished the story, I said to him: put down your signature, and he wrote down: Nickolas Kozakoglou". And before that, on page 40, we find out that when disguised as a Turk, the protagonist called himself a Turkish name Bekhtez.

At the level of characters *The Story of One Captive* presents the following picture of ethnicity: characters are chiefly Greeks and Turks (main characters)

while in episodes appear French sailors (who were amused at the misery of captured Greeks, at whom Turks were throwing glasses, tables, chairs), Armenians, Jews and an English captain.

The story reveals the following tendency as concerns proper names: names of Jews, Armenians, Frenchmen and the English are not mentioned at all. Greek characters are rarely introduced by name. The story does not give the names of the protagonist's brother and friend. Even his own real name becomes known only at the end of the story when he put down his signature. Another character mentioned by name is the owner of a hotel on Lesbos Island. He happened to come from the same country as the protagonist and testified before the jailer to the Greek fugitive's true origin. Among the rest of the mentioned names are the Turkish name of the protagonist and those of other characters chiefly Turks. It is also remarkable that if the writer avoids mentioning proper names, he scrupulously gives all toponymies where the main character happened to pass or stay.

Ethical and moral properties of the characters are described in detail below where the level appreciations is considered. Here we shall confine ourselves to the statement that the protagonist was honest to the end towards his master save that he concealed his true identity and introduced himself as a Turk. Throughout his service for Khadzimemed, Nickolas perfectly performed his duty. He did his job with affection and the master's Turkish nationality not in the least compelled him to harm or deceive him. Nickolas always described Khadzimemed as a person of positive qualities. The only unpleasant emotion that gripped him in his regard to the Turkish master was fear which accompanied him throughout the adventure. However if he never tricked Khadzimemed (save his secret identity), while boarding a ship to Constantinople, he pretended to be a poor and miserable person with a very little money who was afraid of being left off board and wasting all he possessed, although the story makes it clear that he used to earn quite a decent amount of money.

Another remarkable point to mention is the fact that the basic part of the story almost lacks descriptions of appearance. The only instance of a physical portrait is given in the prologue – that of the main hero Nickolas. He is described as a "middle sized, broad-shouldered, blond, blue-eyed ... a modest resident of the East, who sits in a corner and never speaks ...".² The author says nothing about the other characters' appearances save the protagonist's remark upon seeing Khadzimemed: "By midday I saw Khadzimemed riding

² Δούκας Σπράτης. *Ιστορία ενός Αιχμαλώτου*, εκδόσεις Κέδρος, 2002, 65-66.

his horse in solitude. By the way he sat in the saddle I understood he was a rich man".³

The protagonist's words about Khadzimemed come into contrast with his description of the latter's kindness, taking in view the common belief that a Greek captive is most likely to feel hatred towards a Turkish master, especially if the latter is well-to-do. The protagonist's only negative emotion, as stated above, was his fear of revealing his nationality, and if we dwell our attention on the emotions of the characters, the fair will appear the first thing to mention as it runs throughout the whole story. The protagonist was constantly tortured by doubts whether his documents were all in order or not. "Why do not you trust me?" worried Khadzimemed asked him. "I am known and respected in whole Thyra, and now you go and will never return".⁴ Khadzimemed felt he would never see his shepherd again. Anyway he wished him good luck and deeply appreciated the shepherd's attitude to him. It seems that the Turk was either aware or suspected the shepherd's Greek origin, but made no comments in this regard. However, this may be just a reader's impression.

At the level of characters it is reasonable to consider the characters' religious belief or their attitude to religion, as along with ethnic difference, the Asia Minor Disaster and conflict between Greeks and Turks in the region was also motivated by religious differences.

Doukas' work does not give a one-sided, biased appreciation of any religion, and though in the story Turks call Greeks "guyours" i.e. infidels, which appears synonymous to "enemies", religious creed does not determine positive and negative properties of the characters. Even at the religious level, confrontation between Christians and Muslims is always balanced. There is no evidence of religious fanaticism. Greek captives asked Turkish warders for some water for the sake of Allah, as they knew Allah was the Turkish god and the act by no means made the Greeks feel disgraced. To our mind, the following episode is very interesting in this regard. When the former captives broke into a mill, they came across a dozen of candles in a niche and took them along with some food. The fact once again emphasizes unity between Greeks and Turks, Christians and Muslims of the region. Mutual tolerance to each other's customs, religions and shrines was fostered throughout ages of common life. But for this, how could Christian candles appear in a Muslim's mill? Likewise remarkable is that the protagonist was not in the list surprised at finding the candles in the mill; he mentioned it as a mere fact. This reveals the

³ Ibid. 39.

⁴ Ibid. 53.

extent to which the two religions and nations were close to each other in Asia Minor, the region, which linked Asia to Europe. On the approach of a Muslim holiday, the fugitive Greek noticed that Muslims shaved their whole bodies. He also observed the tradition and shaved his chest. Here are his words: "My Lord forgive me, I said, and tears filled my eyes. This year all would fast to have guyaurs gone".⁵

The episode implies that although the main character observed a non-Christian rite reluctantly, at that moment his survival was more important to him than his religious creed, and he acted accordingly without much hesitation. Nickolas was a Christian; however he found no way out of a difficult situation in Christianity. Once, as the two fugitives were wandering around and robbing mills, they came across a church. The protagonist tells: "We went in to kneel down and pray for the revelation of some saint to open our hearts to. We saw nothing, just blank walls and boards. We returned to our night shelter burdened with thoughts."⁶ The narration does not imply a negative attitude to the Muslim religion. Nickolas and Khasan, the other shepherd, went to Thyra to celebrate Bairam. Here is how Nickolas described the celebration: "All around was nicely decorated. In front of the commander's office a light breeze was waving flags. Coffeehouses were full of small drums and zurnas. Their sound made my hair stand on end. I remembered our grand holidays and tears filled my eyes. Their cheerfulness and my sorrow mixed together. I lost carriage ...".⁷ The Muslim holiday did not irritate the fugitive; it only reminded him of his own native holidays full of joy and happiness cast in no remote a past. The episode is free of negative emotions on the part of the protagonist.

II. Level of events. This level is marked with the following tendency: confrontation between Greeks and Turks is presented not as a bloody strife of two fighting nations, but as reflected in human relations where confrontation, mutual appeal, negative and positive attitudes change one another. This way, unbiased approach is maintained throughout the whole story.

Remarkably, at the very beginning of the story, Doukas describes a scene in which a Turkish secretary attempts to help Greek captives. After the fall of Smyrna, Nickolas was captured together with others. Night warders started beating the captives. They chose several Greeks and took them away to shoot them loudly swearing at the men. Panic fell among the rest of the captives. A Turkish secretary whose table stood near the cell heard their lamentations,

⁵ Ibid. 46.

⁶ Ibid. 27.

⁷ Ibid. 48.

pitied them and advised to keep deep inside the cell when the warders would return. He also asked the captives to keep his advice in secret.⁸

The episode is among the first scenes in the story and marks it with the idea of mutual understanding and reconciliation. Events develop further and the following episode pictures the misery of thirsty captives.

Greek captives were not given water unless they paid for it. According to the story, Turks were merciful to the captives if the latter paid or otherwise deserved their warders' sympathy. This fact maintains balance between the positive and negative functions of Greeks and Turks. Interestingly, a character who showed a negative attitude toward the representative of the opposite side in one episode later may reveal a positive disposition. In the first part of the story, on seeing misery of thirsty Greek captives, the khoja said with satisfaction: "This is what I wish – to watch you writhing like snakes"⁹ and walked away. However, a week later the same khoja came again and calmly responded to the captives' shouts: "Keep silent or I shall go away. I have come to your rescue."¹⁰ As soon as he uttered the words, Turks came in with water vessels and their laps full of bread. What attracts our attention about this episode is that if in other cases the balance is maintained by actions of different characters, here both positive and negative functions are carried by the same hero.

The author's unbiased stand is illustrated by the episode, which demonstrates the Turkish master's kind attitude to the protagonist. Nickolas took the master's sheep to pastures. Khadzimemed immediately noticed that the shepherd had taken a good care of his sheep and said: "Now the sheep look different from what they were when I left. They seem to have pastured well,"¹¹ – he said. Khadzimemed's kindness is best shown in the episode when he set a payment for Bekhtez. Although Nickolas was in a sheer misery, which would compel him to take any terms no matter how small a pay the master would offer, he still chose to bargain. This is how Khadzimemed responded: "All right, all right, five notes will make me neither rich nor poor. I agree to increase your pay, besides, I shall provide you with food and clothes and you will be able to go to town any time you wish."

The story has another episode that constitutes the level of relations among characters of confronting nations.

While seeking a job Nickolas met a Turkish shepherd. When the latter found out that the passenger was going to Thyra, he invited him to his village

⁸ Ibid. 11.

⁹ Ibid. 15.

¹⁰ Ibid. 15.

¹¹ Ibid. 39.

to stay overnight, as it was already late and the passenger would be caught by night on his way to the town. The episode demonstrates a positive attitude and kindness of a Turk. Contrary to the above, the following episode seems to imply a negative emotion. Another Turk closed a door in the very face of the passenger in the rainy day; however in the end the positive implication seems to prevail (the passenger found a piece of cheese in a parcel with some bread given to him to have on the way).

Khadzimemed's image is more distinctly outlined in the following episode: The Turkish master observed family traditions and customs of the East and respected elders. When he made up his mind to hire a shepherd, he did not decide the matter alone but called his uncle, his father's brother to find out his opinion on the shepherd's payment.

At the level of action, the story considered in our paper implies no controversies between two cultures, traditions and ways of thinking. On the contrary, according to the story, the two cultures are more characterized with tolerance and mutual understanding than confrontation and hostility.

III. The level of appreciations. Greeks' and Turks' apprehension of the Asia Minor Disaster and their relations are outlined as well at the level of appreciations of the story.

At the present level, we may distinguish an unbiased appreciation of oneself and one's own nation. Here we mean the fact that the protagonist, Greek by nationality, admits that Greeks are also guilty of the tragedy. After a Turkish captain had chosen among the captives bakers, kneaders, carpenters, and masons, he said to them: "What you have destroyed you are to reconstruct." The protagonist left the statement without any comments. He seemed to have agreed to the idea that Greeks did not suffer undeservedly; they were due to punishment for the destruction they had committed. The author's unbiased attitude is expressed towards events as well. When Nickolas decided to leave Khadzimemed, under the pretext of seeing his sister, the Turkish master went to Thyra and found a new shepherd called Kadyr as a replacement for Bekhtez. Kadyr had been released from Greek captivity not long before that. He told the protagonist some unpleasant stories; however, it is not specified whether they concerned oppression of Turkish captives by Greeks or hardships of the war.

Likewise remarkable are the episodes in which a person appreciates the nation other than his own. Every word uttered by Khadzimemed is full of affection. He was very fond of his shepherd (Nickolas), and what he appreciated most was the shepherd's likeness to Greeks regarding his skills: "Greeks used to be here. You stand among them with your skills and knowledge of

work. You know your job the way they do".¹² Here, the word "Greek" bears a positive sense. However, later we learn that Khadzimemed was fasting. He had sworn to fast for three years for the sake of ousting Greeks from the region. He was glad to tell Bekhtez that a Greek fellow disguised as a Turk was captured in Aydin. He had entered a mosque, and what gave him away was his unawareness of the Muslim rite of washing feet. The Greek fellow was hanged in the downtown on the plane tree. These episodes demonstrate that the Turk's personal attitude to Greeks was negative, however, he admitted Greeks' positive properties as well.

As to Nickolas' attitude to his Turkish master, it gradually grew from liking to a deep appreciation. Nickolas says: "As time passed, the master would treat me better and better ...".¹³ Khadzimemed would consult him in house-keeping. Moreover, he decided to make Nickolas his family member by marrying him to his late brother's daughter.

Interestingly, Nickolas and Khadzimemed used the same words to bid each other farewell. Nickolas was the first to say to the whole family: "Thank you very much You have been so kind to me". And later, as the train started, Khadzimemed addressed Nickolas with the following words: Have a good journey You have been so kind to me".¹⁴

Along with the above, investigation of the level of appreciations reveals as well one's negative attitude to a person of the other nationality. Nickolas negatively referred to Turks; however this occurred at rare occasions. He called a Turkish tax collector, Sali effendi "a dog". He saw him as he was walking in the town and said: "He used to know us. We too had sheep and he used to come to us".¹⁵ On seeing the man, Nickolas took a sudden turn and the rest of the day he was haunted by a feeling that Sali effendi was following him.

The same word "dog" is often used by Turks to refer to Greeks. In the beginning of the story, the protagonist came up to the supervisor to ask for some water. "What do you say, you a dog, I am not going to give you even a dram,"¹⁶ said the Turk. The Greek responded in a sweet Eastern way: "Dear Soldier, it would be so merciful of you; and here is some money". The Turk took the money at once and told him to drink secretly the water which was another person's portion.

¹² Ibid. 42.

¹³ Ibid. 49-50.

¹⁴ Ibid. 52.

¹⁵ Ibid. 49.

¹⁶ dram – unit of weight, 3,2 grammes.

Lexical elements "dog" and "infidel" bear the most negative sense in *The Story of One Captive*. "Dog" is equally used by Greek and Turk characters to refer to one another.

Another interesting episode to consider is a dialogue between Turks and Jews, which Nickolas overheard while on the train on his way to Smyrna. Here are Nickolas' words: "I got on the train and adjusted myself in the corner. Opposite, there were two Jews and a Cretan Turk. They were talking about Greeks under the Greek domination (katokh).

"Panayotis had committed this and that, the dog, and now he is said to be in Padermus", said the Jew blaming the Greek "I took a corner and listened to the story of Panayotis.

"We Jews, keep writing complaints to have them hanged, but people in Thyra are against.

During the conversation, the Turk noticed that one of the Jews had a revolver in his pocket.

"Oh, you a meager Jew", he said and rose from his seat. "Why do you say so? What were you doing when we were fighting against Greeks? And now you go around with a gun, while we have none the like". Upon saying this, he attacked the Jew to take the gun away.

"So you think I am that sort of a Jew", the man with the gun said and they started fighting.

"Look here", the Jew said. "I am a man of a family, and you will see what will happen to you".

I listened to them and got amused. They quarrel gradually grew into joking and they calmed down".¹⁷

The conversation illustrates the relations between peoples in Asia Minor, where friendship and hostility, kindness and evil are interchangeable.

Here we find it suitable to cite a Greek writer from Asia Minor, Fotis Kandoghlu: "All born in the East are blessed, no matter Greek or Turk",¹⁸ "By nature Turks are kind and considerate ... War is like a disease – it equally infects the good and the evil, and turns them into beasts".¹⁹

The main hero of Stratis Doukas' story is well aware of Greek and Turkish characters, their behavior, abilities and psychology. This is illustrated in the following episode: on his way looking for a job, Nickolas saw a flock of sheep and came up to it. At the shepherd's question, "What are you looking for?", he answered: "A job", and regretted at once. "By his talk I understood

¹⁷ Δούκας Στράτης. 54.

¹⁸ Κόντογλου Φώτης. Έργα Α'. Το Αιβαλί η Πατρίδα μου, εκδοτικός οίκος Αστήρ, Αθήνα 1962. 87.

¹⁹ Ibid. 239.

that he was Arvanian,²⁰ and I did not want to live with them for they were smart. I wished to live with Turks as I knew them".²¹ This drives us to the conclusion that Greeks from Asia Minor knew Turkish character and customs so well that they preferred to live with them rather than with Greeks of Arvanian origin. Besides, Greeks spoke Turkish so fluently that Turks could hardly discover their real nationality. The only sphere that they were uncertain as regards rites and traditions, was religion.²² Especially difficult was to behave the right way at the Islamic holidays, when each Muslim was to read an appropriate surah at the service in a mosque. Of course, Nickolas was not in the least ready for the ordeal: "The Bairam holiday was approaching, and I trembled, as I did not know how to enter a mosque. I knew how to behave outside but had no idea what was happening inside, in the mosque".²³

There is one more parameter to be emphasized at the level of appreciations. This is one's attitude to manslaughter as illustrated in the following episode. The fugitives exhausted with hunger kept watching the mill in order to break into it and get some food as soon as the miller was gone. However, the latter did not seem to be going. In these circumstances, Nickolas told the other fugitive: "Dear friend, I can endure no more, let us kill the miller." The friend answered: "Stop it, never lose your soul. Soon wheat and peas will ripe and we shall have some food to eat again".²⁴ The episode makes it clear that although the fugitives had been captured by Turks and had undergone all kinds of hardship, Turkish people were not so hateful to them as to kill for no serious reason. The Greek identified murder of a Turkish miller with losing of

²⁰ Arvanian – a Greek of the remote Albanian origin. Arvanians inhabit various regions of Greece. Their history is closely related to the history of Hellenism. They fought against Turks and other invaders in the liberation war. Arvamians have inhabited Greece since 14-15cc. They completely merged with Greeks in terms of ethnicity, culture and social life. The only evidence of their remote origin is their language – the Arvanian language, an Albanian dialect. Πάπυρος Larousse Britannica, vol.10, 315-316.

²¹ Δούκας Στράτης. 38.

²² In this respect, we may draw the following parallel: A book by Mikhail Valvazaki *How I Myself Experienced the Smyrna Catastrophe* published under the heading of a historical document, gives the following episode: A Greek soldier escaped from Turks and headed for Salikhsha village to warn Greeks about the Turkish siege and the pondering attack. The Greek guard trusted neither his words nor his fluent speech. In order to identify the newcomer, the guard took him aside and told him to say the prayer "Our Father ...". Only the soldier's knowledge of the prayer persuaded him that the stranger was truly Greek. This is another proof to the fact that the only feature to distinguish a Turk from a Greek in Asia Minor was the religion while they knew each other's language and customs so well that these could not serve to identify their true nationality; cf: Βαλβαζάνης Μ. Πώς έζησα την καταστροφή της Σμύρνης, εκδόσεις Κωστόγιαννος, 1998, 198.

²³ Δούκας Στράτης. 46.

²⁴ Ibid. 30.

one's soul. At the first thought, this is the way it should be. There seems nothing special about the fact. But we should bear in mind that the scene proceeds against the background of war, which makes it remarkable. Later in the same episode Nickolas suggested to his friend that they had better surrender. The other fugitive responded that he would never have himself surrendered to Turks.

Level IV. The writer's opinion as presented in the epilogue. The epilogue is basically informative and meagerly expresses the writer's opinion. However, we may discern implied appreciations of the author. In the epilogue, Stratis Doukas gives a brief story of how the literary work was created. He heard of the real story during his first trip to the settlement of refugees near Ekaterini city in September-December 1928. This is the place where Nickolas Kazakoglou lived. He had survived by pretending to be a Turk. Stratis Doukas persuaded Nickolas to tell him the story of his captivity and escape. The writer used his notes to compose a literary version of the story, which he dictated to his cousin Andreas Khadzimitrius and had it thus recorded so as to preserve the style of oral narration. Therefore, it is difficult to discern the author's speech from the character's.

As stated above, it is in the epilogue that the author first gives a physical portrait of the main character. Along with his appearance, he describes his voice as well through comparing it to a tune played by a violin. "A modest resident of the East, who sits in a corner and never speaks. Soon some ouzo and talking warmed him up and he started telling his story. An Eastern narrator, although Turkish-speaking like them all. It seemed to me that a violin was playing solo ...".²⁵ This is the first instance that the author gives a physical portrait of a character in the story.

In the epilogue we also come across the protagonist's real name Nickolas Kazakoglou, which he signed down at the end of the story. However, Doukas altered his last name into "Kozakoglou", which appeared to him more impressive. This illustrates the interrelation between the authentic and imaginative at the level of nomination. While altering the name, the author believes to follow the principle of euphony.

Doukas also states in the epilogue that he asked Nickolas to write a letter to Khadzimemed and appreciates it as "unique, wonderful for its folk courtesy". This is the author's positive appreciation of the narrator's actions and politeness.

After revealing to Khadzimemed his true nationality and his present dwelling in his motherland, Nickolas wrote that he was grateful to his Turkish

²⁵ Ibid. 65-66.

master for all he had done for him. The letter finished as follows: "He who is aware of universal affairs knows that all comes from God"²⁶ – God, who is Christ for Nickolas and Allah for Khadzimemed, but is universal to both. To our mind, here prevails the conception that although different civilizations have different religions, they all lead to God.

The author states that the structure of the story has change in its third edition. Doukas divided the story into four chapters. He also writes that he used in the story the classical principle of controversies and dramatic climax. In the epilogue, he gives a structural appreciation of the book.

At the level of the characters' individuality, the positive and negative are also balanced. The Greek character is by no means a stranger to the Turk and vice versa. There appears to be no gap between their ways of thinking and world vision. On the contrary, the epithet "Eastern" is applied to Greek as well as to Turk characters provided they are positively pictured. This drives us to the conclusion that the balance of unbiased attitude is maintained by means of a very significant point: Greek and Turkish characters may be considered as two opposite arguments; however, neither of them bears a pure positive or negative functions. Both are characterized with positive as well as negative properties.

To sum up, we are giving below an account of characteristics pertaining to above considered levels:

I. The level of characters:

- 1) Ethnicity of the characters (multinational);
- 2) Named and nameless characters (Turks prevail among the named).
- 3) Topographic names (abound in the story);
- 4) Ethical and moral properties of the characters (there is a counterbalance of honesty and deception);
- 5) Emotions (fear prevails);
- 6) Appearance of characters (ignored);
- 7) Characters' attitude to religion (no evidence of religious fanaticism or idolization of one's own religion).

II. Level of events:

- 1) opposition (interchange of negative and positive attitudes);
- 2) Negative attitude (of a Turk to a Greek and vice versa – the balance is maintained).
- 3) Positive attitude (of a Turk to a Greek and vice versa – the balance is maintained).

²⁶ Ibid. 66.

- 4) Respect for elders (implied).

III. Level of appreciations:

- 1) Unbiased appreciation of oneself and one's own religion (implied);
- 2) Representatives of various nations appreciate one another (balance between the positive and negative appreciations maintained);
- 3) Unbiased appreciation of events (implied);
- 4) Appreciation of manslaughter (negative);
- 5) Unawareness of the religious rites of the "opposite" nation (implied).
- 6) Balance at the language level (implied).

We shall not give a detailed account of the level IV, as it is represented only in the epilogue, which is of informative character, and since we have considered it above, we shall not return to it.

Conceptions and details brought forward in the present paper enables us to conclude that *The Story of One Captive* is unbiased at picturing the Asia Minor Disaster. It belongs to the genre of adventures and is among the literary pieces which reveal common features of two opposite sides rather than confrontation. Events described in the story are interesting and commonly acceptable as the author renders them in an unbiased manner and by no means ignores kindness no matter which side it comes from.

Ages-old region of Asia Minor has numerously witnessed wars and confrontations among its resident nations resulting in death and displacement of peaceful population. Despite the strife, the inhabitants of the region have a lot in common – the most significant property of the nations in Asia Minor is a psychological congruence fostered by centuries-old coexistence in the common territorial area. Mutual influence resulted in the development of common cultural characteristics despite the differences in religion, ethnicity and history.

Throughout centuries, common values mentioned above have coined the culture widely known as the culture of peoples of Asia Minor. Along with other peoples, Greeks and Turks participated in the formation of this phenomenon. That is why the dialogue of cultures between these two peoples was and maintains to be such a significant question.

The present paper aimed to reveal the tendencies that underlie *The Story of One Captive* by Stratis Doukas with regard to the Asia Minor Disaster. The story is small in volume by rather honest in presenting the life of a man who undergoes hardships due to adverse historical events. Even in the hardest times, the author and the character regard the "other" primarily as a personality, while ethnical origin and religious creed come second.