

GREECE AND TURKEY AFTER THE END OF THE COLD WAR

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Strategy of Crisis Management and the Greek-Turkish Rivalry: The Case of the Imia Islets

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INTRODUCTION

The Problem

The Imia islets incident in January 1996 constitutes the most serious occurrence of low-intensity confrontation in post-Cold War Greek-Turkish relations.¹ The collapse of the bipolar system yielded no significant effect on the enduring rivalry between Greece and Turkey in terms of their strategic aspirations. The Imia incident, however, marked, primarily, a change in the way Turkey pursued coercion.² Using military force for the first time, Ankara explicitly challenged Greek territorial integrity. The bloodless occupation of the western part of the Imia islets coupled with the military, diplomatic, and political management of the ensuing escalation lead to the conclusion that the Turkish leadership had adopted new policies in order to serve its objectives.³

These policies seem to reflect the philosophy of the crisis management strategy, against which Greece proved unable to protect its interests. The aim of this paper is to explain the weaknesses of the Greek strategy by examining the determining factors of the confrontation. It sets out to address two questions: how the Imia incident evolved; and why it eventually ended without resort to war-like confrontation but with an uneven distribution of gains.

The Central Argument and Associated Hypotheses

The central argument of this paper concerns the nature of the Greek-Turkish rivalry and the different strategic cultures of the two states. Greek-Turkish antagonism constitutes a *sui generis*, ongoing crisis in the form of a protracted conflict. The pace of the conflict increases through acute escalations, which usually lead Greece and Turkey to the brink of war. The Imia incident was

therefore not, strictly speaking, an example of a crisis. Rather, it represented cumulative levels of escalation of the underlying longstanding Greek-Turkish crisis. Basic to this argument is the idea that not only have both states gone through numerous levels of escalation, like the *Sismik* incident in the summer of 1976, the March incident of 1978, and the regular violations of the Greek ten-mile air space, without being involved in direct military confrontation; but they have also failed to lay the groundwork for conflict resolution.

In the course of the Imia incident, the conceptual clash between the Greek and the Turkish strategy revealed the difference between them. The rationale behind the Greek action was to 'win' either peace or war, whereas the Turkish reasoning sidestepped any dogmatic adherence to the dilemma of 'war' or 'peace' and aimed to 'win' the confrontation at hand by using the strategy of crisis management:

- The Greek strategy of deterrence conflated not only the ends with the means but also the threat of the use of force with the actual use of force. It was based on the direct threat of an all-out engagement in an effort to force Turkey into the dilemma of having to choose between war and peace. The Turkish government, however, proved able to transform this dilemma into a Greek problem, by forcing Greece to choose peace with concessions.
- The Turkish strategy was a combination of offensive crisis management strategies expressed as coercion and limited war. Besides the threat of a large-scale war, it was based on the initiation of a limited, but reversible probe, keeping the escalation of violence at a low level and thus avoiding giving Greece the justification for using overwhelming firepower.

The above assessment fails, however, to account for the U.S. intervention into the crisis. To remedy this deficiency, three theoretical propositions are set forth:

1. If an intra-coalition conflict results in a *sui generis*, long-running crisis, the opposing parties are likely to seek the intervention of a great power, with a view to maximize gains through crisis management.
2. If the intervention of a great power produces advantages, the degree of exploitation of same, while being affected by the balance of power, largely depends on the strategy adopted by the opposing parties.
3. If the intervention of a great power is neutral, the intervention will favor the party that put into play the more effective strategy.

Research Method

The approach to the subject matter is strategic in the sense that it examines the use or the threat of the use of force in Greek-Turkish relations.⁴ That duly acknowledged, it is not meant to imply that we reduce power only to its strategic dimension. Military power is far more useful when not used.⁵ The question is how military power produces and orders conflict; and how, in turn, it is reproduced and ordered by conflict.⁶

The research method is that of a structured, focused study of a single case.⁷ The disciplined-configurative mode of analysis combined with the heuristic case study, produces a type of controlled case study which aims to suggest new scenarios based on empirical knowledge. Drawing on the dialectic approach, we assume that the different levels of the international system and the state can be assembled into an integrated whole that can be qualified as a single level of analysis.⁸ The theoretical tools used in order to substantiate the levels of analysis as a dialectic relationship between the international system and the state are those of the rational unitary actor model and neo-realism, as referred to by Graham Allison and Kenneth Waltz respectively.⁹

A structured, focused study employs concepts, categories and theoretical propositions as a means of describing and explaining the case at hand. In the multi-faceted case of Imia, analysis cannot rely on a single theory. A selection of theories and the incorporation of the insights gained from them into a coherent theoretical framework of analysis are necessary. These theories are drawn from the realist school of thought. The case of the Imia islets incident is re-constructed theoretically using categories and propositions (deterrence, coercive diplomacy, limited war, strategic surprise, and crisis management strategy), whose common features are the concepts of conflict,¹⁰ strategy,¹¹ and security.¹²

THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF ANALYSIS

Crisis and Escalation in World Politics

The following elucidation of the concepts of crisis and escalation paves the way for the argument that the Imia incident represents, in fact, cumulative levels of escalation of the underlying Greek-Turkish long running crisis.

A crisis is an instance of intense conflict, resulting from the acute deterioration of relations between two or more states. A crisis is characterized by the sudden and rapid unfolding of a chain of events: direct threat against vital national

interests, the possibility of war, the pressure of limited time for reaction and the destabilization of the structure of the system to which rivals belong.¹³

The crisis phenomenon covers a range of cases from the attempt at reversal of or questioning of established borders to the unanticipated deterioration of a dispute. It is manifested by violent or non-violent actions for a short or long period either within or beyond the context of protracted conflicts. The crisis precedes war without necessarily escalating into war. War is the continuation of a crisis by other means and a crisis is one way a protracted conflict may manifest itself along a continuum, at one end of which stands war and at the other negotiable disputes.¹⁴

Escalation links the crisis to war and involves three distinct phases of crisis development:

- the transformation from a suppressed into an openly erupting crisis
- the transformation from a non-violent into a violent crisis, and
- the transformation from low-level to high-level violence.¹⁵

Crisis escalation may take the form of a separate strategy in order to persuade the opponent to compromise without resorting to war. The strategy of crisis escalation is based on the combination of or alternate use of two policies. The first aims to take advantage of skirmishes on the battlefield with a view to securing gains. The second policy, known as 'brinkmanship', attempts to use the threat of escalation to force the adversary to withdraw.¹⁶

This analysis of escalation adds yet another dimension to the term crisis. This particular form of crisis might be a specific long-running crisis in which the aggravation of the conflict reflects cumulative levels of escalation. The crisis may be a product of accumulated historical differences, deliberate choice of rivals, or both. Crisis management often coincides with the process of conflict resolution. Crisis management as a separate strategy is usually ignored. In a crisis the involved parties use means of coercive diplomacy, escalation, and war risk management, to change the behavior of an adversary. The manipulation of these methods is an integral part of the bargaining process throughout crisis management.¹⁷ Consequently, the crisis has to do not only with classic policies of the strategy of conflict but also with the strategy of crisis management.

Classic Policies of the Strategy of Conflict

Deterrence

Deterrence is a strategy, which aims to convince an adversary not to act because the cost is likely to outweigh the potential benefit. It is the strategy of manipulating force with the threat of its use being a bargaining chip. This bears no relation to the actual use of force.¹⁸

The strategy of deterrence has no inherent political or military elements. On numerous occasions, it coincides only with military elements, because its focal point lies in the fear of the military consequences of action.¹⁹ It is the strategy of preventing an attack before it is delivered, with the declaration of a military threat. When an attack does occur, the defending party is no longer deterring, but rather has to defend.²⁰ Consequently, deterrence is applicable both in conditions of war and of peace, although it can not be used to guide its own 'deterrent' means. Deterrence is a strategy of prevention, not of open confrontation. Its usefulness is primarily psychological so long as attacks are withheld.²¹ In other words, deterrence is not in itself an independent military strategy.²²

The success of deterrence usually depends on the credibility of the threats and the defender's will, as well as on the motivation and capability of the attacker to undertake military action.²³ The declaration of commitment must be constant and consistent because the reputation of conduct plays an important role.²⁴ The motives of the potential attacker should continually be re-evaluated, as deterrence does not collapse suddenly, but gradually.²⁵ The motive and capacity of the attacker are often evaluated in terms of force. Deterrence is undoubtedly related to the strength of the adversary. Experience, however, shows that deterrence may collapse in spite of balance of power between rivals. Mearsheimer points out that deterrence is not so much a product of military balance as it is a product of the military strategy adopted by the attacker. When a defender is confronted with *blitzkrieg* or a strategy of limited war based on strategic and tactical surprise, deterrence is likely to collapse.²⁶ Consequently, the defender's military policy influences political relations and the long-term objectives of the potential attacker.²⁷

Furthermore, the cost of deterrence might be non-military.²⁸ The cost for the attacker might not simply stem from the use of force, but may also take the form of political pressure by allies and international organizations caused by the use of force. The threat of political cost might affect the conduct of an attack-

er.²⁹ Consequently, when deterrence is reduced to the credibility of threats, political will and the balance of power, without taking into account the strategy of the adversary and its political context, it is a-historical, un-strategic, and a-political. It is a-historical because it overlooks evidence proving that deterrence can collapse even with a strong political will to resist and an equal balance of power. It is un-strategic because it ignores the advantage of initiative on the part of an attacker. Last, but not least, it is a-political because it confines itself to military elements and neglects the impact of bargaining developed within a particular political context.

In sum, deterrence is a strategy of exploiting force with rhetoric. It has no means at its disposal that could be qualified as deterrent. Its means are defensive, which are perceived as precautions. Even though it embodies military logic, it cannot be implemented in practice by military means. On the contrary, deterrence is shaped by the conduct of the adversary and within the context of conflict. Paradoxically, however, the reciprocal relationship between defender and attacker is often, in the literature, reduced to the balance of power with two implications:

1. the capacity of the adversary is evaluated only in terms of the size of aggregates without paying attention to the strategies adopted, and
2. deterrence is regarded as an integrated grand strategy structured and ordered only by military power.

It is for that reason that deterrence is not a strategy for all circumstances. It is one of the strategies that a defender can use in order to achieve security. In the best case scenario, deterrence is a strategy of buying time, which must be complemented by other military and political strategies.³⁰ In other words, it is not a substitute for grand strategy.

Coercive Diplomacy

The strategy of coercive diplomacy is a political rather than a purely military strategy.³¹ It is a defensive strategy, which aims to convince an attacker to call off threats or the use of limited force. The primary objective is to demonstrate the defender's will to protect its interests. At the same time, it aims to show signs of intentions for compromise through negotiations on the condition that the attacker has recognized the defender's interests.³² By implementing this strategy, the defender offers the attacker the opportunity to stop its aggressive

actions and denounce its revisionist aspirations before the use or escalation of force occurs.

The success of coercive diplomacy is not necessarily determined by the size of force. Much depends on the kind of force, the capacity of the defender to make decisions, the way in which the defender's messages are conveyed and understood by the attacker, and the existence of communication channels. In a sense, coercive diplomacy is a flexible, stick and carrot strategy.

A defender frequently succumbs to the error of depending solely on the threat of punishment without simultaneously providing an incentive for the attacker to withdraw. Its demands might be so unyielding that they increase rather than eliminate the attacker's intransigence.³³ The crux of coercive diplomacy is to motivate the attacker to give up in the view of impending punishment. Escalation may cause the attacker's compliance.³⁴ However, if the threat is less credible than the attacker's fear of escalation, coercive diplomacy fails.

It is necessary to emphasize that coercive diplomacy is a defensive strategy that differs from strategic coercion, which is an offensive strategy, aiming to change the status quo. The strategy of coercion is a persistent use of threats and force by an attacker with a view to oblige the defender to comply with its demands.³⁵ Moreover, coercive diplomacy differs from deterrence. The latter uses threats to discourage an attacker from actions, which it would otherwise undertake. Coercive diplomacy aims to convince the attacker to cancel the revisionist action it has already undertaken.³⁶ It is a defensive strategy, which aims to maintain status quo or restore status quo ante. It is a direct response to the collapse of deterrence.

Coercive diplomacy is a defensive strategy, which can be employed either as a strategy of crisis management or as a component of a grand strategy.³⁷ Compared to conventional strategies of defense, it is more attractive because it offers the defender the opportunity to secure itself at a low cost and with a limited likelihood of escalation.³⁸

Limited War

Limited war is defined as a military operation, which has predetermined targets to be hit, independent of the broader political goals and means it uses.³⁹ It does not aim at the destruction of the opponent.⁴⁰ It is an alternative to all-out engagement.⁴¹ But it differs from strategies aiming to avoid war or achieve deci-

sive victory on the battlefield. It strives to make the conduct of war work as a method of pressure on the adversary to accept compromise and peace conditions. It is a part of political bargaining, with the use of force as its focal point.⁴² Limited war is not necessarily an aggressive strategy.⁴³ Of course, limited war entails the risk of escalation. The principal problem is the control of reactions; military action by one side might be interpreted by the other as a surprise attack.⁴⁴ The greater the escalation of limited war is the more the possibility of all-out war increases.⁴⁵ Escalation, nevertheless, might be essential in order to end an armed clash. In many cases, the parties involved continue hostilities because they can afford the military and political cost. One of the conditions for the termination of an armed conflict might be the sudden, sharp escalation to a level that is unacceptable to one of the involved parties, thus forcing a compromise.⁴⁶

In short, the strategy of limited war can be used both for the aggressive purpose of changing the status quo and for the purpose of enforcing deterrence. In fact, limited war is an integral part of a successful strategy of deterrence.

Strategic Surprise

Strategic surprise is most often perceived of as an offensive strategy. It might, however, take on a defensive character and thus it relates to preventive attack and preemptive attack. The capability of confronting a surprise attack may be based on the strategy of 'defensive surprise'.⁴⁷ The latter is a military strategy that takes on a broader character when it encompasses both coercive diplomacy and limited war. From this standpoint, it is useful for the practical enforcement of deterrence and the effective handling of a crisis.

Strategic surprise is defined in terms of the defender's erroneous assessment of how and when an attacker is likely to attack.⁴⁸ It is interrelated with deterrence, since a successful surprise entails the collapse of deterrence. Surprise results from:

- technical surprise attack linked with new weapon systems and intelligence information,
- the surprise of the military doctrine linked with the exploitation of innovations on the field, which the defender has failed to predict and been unprepared to deal with. There are two reasons why military leadership fails to detect changes in the adversary's doctrine. First, the established

perceptions inhibit the application of innovations. Secondly, new doctrines may be a surprise for the attacker himself. Leadership is in the habit of adopting, in emergency situations, new ideas suggested by middle ranks.⁴⁹

Deterrence may either dissuade surprise attack or increase the possibility of its occurrence, depending on how effective it is. Deterrence becomes more effective, when the opponent has been convinced that its goals can not be achieved even with a surprise attack. However, a high level of deterrence is capable of provoking a surprise attack from the opponent. The same could occur at a lower stage, when the defender adopts preventive measures for the reinforcement of deterrence.⁵⁰

The interrelationship of deterrence and surprise creates problems in defense, which emerge quite intensely during crisis periods. It develops with the dilemma of deterrence or appeasement, and the inherent fear of mutual surprise.⁵¹ When the attacker is preparing for a surprise attack, it fears that the defender might react earlier with preventive war. At the same time, the reinforcement of deterrence, on the part of the attacker with partial or complete mobilization of armed forces, as a counter-measure against the adversary's mobilization is a means of discouraging a preventive war. However, if the defender proceeds during the crisis to strengthen its deterrence, it may become the victim of preemptive attack. On the contrary, if circumstances are underestimated and the reaction is not dynamic enough the defender is likely to suffer the consequences of surprise. Simultaneously, if the defender is convinced that an advantage of surprise for the potential attacker is created, it has an increased motive to proceed with 'defensive surprise', that is to say preemptive attack.

All in all, surprise may take on a defensive character. The capability of preemptive attack strengthens the defender's deterrence in the long run, even though it entails the risk of preventive war in the short term. That is why a defensive strategy should not be reduced to deterrence alone. The strategy of crisis management could be qualified as an alternative grand strategy ordered by the classic strategies of conflict.

The Strategy of Crisis Management

Crisis management, like deterrence, is neither purely a political nor a military strategy. However, it differs from deterrence to the extent that it can be considered a grand strategy in itself and bring together a number of constituent strate-

gies. It represents, on the one hand, a process of crisis control aiming at the reduction of the risk of war and, on the other hand, a process, through which the involved parties try to obtain concessions, while maintaining their relative positions intact.⁵² Therefore, the strategy of crisis management gives rise to a policy dilemma.⁵³ While a political decision is needed for a conflict of interests to develop into a crisis, the latter does not come about if the adversary decides to withdraw. The policy dilemma is that each party to the dispute is obliged to act in the service of its interests without triggering an unwanted escalation.

The main problem is that the military rationale, focused on the use of force, may clash with the dictates of diplomacy, the objective of which is to force the adversary to make compromises through persuasion, mutual concessions, and the threat or the use of limited force.⁵⁴ The key to success lies precisely in the synthesis of military requirements with the imperatives of diplomacy.

This synthesis is further complicated by the heightening of the security dilemma that occurs when the defensive measures of one side are perceived as hostile by the other. In addition, a crisis may produce difficulties in communication, information assessment, decision-making, management of public opinion, and the coordination of military and diplomatic actions.⁵⁵ Furthermore, new technologies may have a negative impact as they increase the pace of events, increase the time pressure, and present crisis management with a number of problems:

- the form of conventional war has changed. Modern weapon systems favor preemptive attacks and strategic surprise over direct engagement on the battlefield. War-like confrontation is unlikely to be determined by a decisive victory since it is likely to develop into a war of attrition.⁵⁶ War is effective even at a low level when it is used for limited aims and the offensive relies on surprise⁵⁷
- if the military doctrine envisages a large-scale war, the political leadership is deprived of the ability to manage crises and adjust flexibly to the shifting situational conditions of low intensity conflict. In addition, the complexity of advanced weaponry makes prediction of the opponent's moves difficult. It is unclear what type of military build-up indicates that a large-scale military operation is about to launch.⁵⁸

Depending on whether the strategy of crisis management aims to change or to preserve the status quo, the constituent strategies are qualified as offensive or defensive.⁵⁹ In order to succeed, offensive strategies should

have limited aims and should include accommodation measures with a view to securing compliance and reducing the risk of escalation. Of these, the most important are:

- the strategy of blackmail, which relies on the threat of punishment. Its drawback is that if the threat is not credible or the defender refuses to compromise, the attacker may be forced to carry out the threat, thereby causing an unwanted escalation of crisis,
- the strategy of a limited, reversible probe, which aims to detect intentions or oblige the defender to clarify its commitment. If the defender responds by opposing the probe, the attacker can either back off or not intensify its revisionist efforts. The risk of unwanted escalation is controllable to the extent that the probing action is limited and reversible. Unless the defender acts to oppose the probe, the attacker is likely to pursue the campaign to change the status quo,
- the strategy of controlled pressure, which is based on piecemeal 'salami tactics'. The attacker uses pressure, as it believes that the defender is either unable or reluctant to resist,
- the strategy of *fait accompli* in which the attacker proceeds to quick, decisive action, when it believes that the defender is not committed to defend the status quo. The advantage is that this strategy may result in the overturn of the status quo without causing escalation.

Defensive strategies, in order to lead to success, should convince a potential attacker that the defender is not only able, but also determined, to protect its interests. Of these, the most important are as follows:

- the strategy of coercive diplomacy, which may result in failure if the defender sets forth demands that are likely to increase the attacker's intransigence,⁶⁰
- the strategy of limited escalation coupled with deterrence of counter-escalation in which the defender tries to change the 'rules of the game' and lay the groundwork for a more favorable settlement of the crisis,
- the strategy of tit-for-tat, using matching reprisals in response to challenges coupled with deterrence of escalation by the attacker. It aims to convince the attacker to discuss its demands.
- the strategy of the test of capabilities coupled with deterrence of escala-

tion by the attacker. The objective is, through mobilization and threats, to pass the dilemma of escalation to the attacker. In fact, however, the defender does not pursue escalation but deters the attacker from doing so,

- the strategy of 'drawing a line', in which the defender identifies what provocation is likely to trigger the strongest response. Its disadvantage is that it paves the way for the attacker to control the escalation,
- the strategy of conveying commitment and resolve, which aims to avoid miscalculation and reinforce deterrence if the attacker is not convinced that the defender is fully committed to preserving the status quo. To the extent that it requires mobilization, escalation is a risk, caused by the attacker's measures to match the mobilization. It is also likely to inflate the ideological dimensions of the crisis, limiting the defender's options for flexibility and the possibility of a diplomatic solution,
- the strategy of buying time in which the defender tries to obtain conditions for a negotiated settlement. It indicated when the defender feels certain that:
 - a. it is not well prepared to resist;
 - b. it is unable to employ the strategies that have already been discussed;
 - c. it is presented with the risk of all-out war;
 - d. there is an asymmetry of interests and motives in favor of the attacker;
 - e. this strategy may prove effective in improving relations with the attacker.

It is obvious that the strategy of crisis management can incorporate the strategy of coercive diplomacy. It coincides with deterrence in that both strategies pursue the preservation of the status quo without violence. Furthermore, it shares elements with limited war to the extent that both aim to secure national interests and prevent the crisis from escalating to all-out engagement.

To sum up:

- the crisis is not simply a phenomenon of high-intensity conflict. It may take on the form of an enduring rivalry in which high-intensity conflict in relations between two or more states is nothing less than cumulative levels of escalation.
- deterrence cannot be implemented in practice by military means. It is a strategy of exploiting force with rhetoric intended to prevent unwelcome

action by an attacker. Its means are purely defensive and are perceived as precautions. It is for this reason that deterrence cannot be qualified as a separate grand strategy.

- the strategies of coercive diplomacy, limited war, and surprise enforce deterrence in practice,
- the strategy of crisis management incorporates elements of all the strategies that have been discussed, by combining them into a grand strategy.

ANALYSIS AND EXPLANATION OF THE IMIA INCIDENT

Analysis of the Events⁶¹

The beginning of the incident dates back to December 26, 1995, when a Turkish freighter ran aground on a pair of uninhabited rocky islets, known as Imia, just off the eastern coast of the Dodecanese Island of Kalymnos. The freighter captain's refusal of Greek assistance coupled with the position of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs that the Imia Islets are in Turkish territorial waters constituted an indirect challenge to Greek territorial integrity. The *note verbale* submitted to the Greek embassy in Ankara, on December 29, was a direct challenge. The Greek protest regarding the incompatibility of the Turkish claim with international law did not come until ten days later. The Greek *note verbale* dated January 9, 1996, was a moderate diplomatic response, stating that the Imia Islets by law belonged to Greece, which allowed Turkey to test Greece's commitment to the status quo and its ability to react.

On January 16, although the Turks had not yet replied, Greece suddenly increased surveillance measures in the area of the islets, an unanticipated action given the political language in the Greek *note verbale*. This partial mobilization was not explicitly linked to the dispute over the salvage, in the sense that the Greeks had failed to give prior warning to Turkey of the military implications of its stance. The mobilization could be taken as an unreliable indication of deterrence. In fact, the military warning of deterrence seemed to be inconsistent with the political warning of deterrence.

Meanwhile, Costas Simitis, having formed a new government on the January 22, tried to reshape the Greek strategy of deterrence. The main feature of his approach was to keep a low profile and convey a clear indication of deterrence through diplomatic channels. The Greek minister of foreign affairs openly voiced the opinion that the entire issue was not worthy of debate, a statement

that clearly demonstrated Greece's will to avoid escalation of the dispute, while the new Greek *note verbale*, which was communicated to Ankara on January 26, aimed to place emphasis on the seriousness of the issue for Greek interests.⁶² On January 27, the Turkish newspaper *Hurriyet* sent a boatload of journalists to Imia, where they took down the Greek flag, recently placed there by the mayor of Kalymnos, and hoisted a Turkish one. This forced the Greek government to expand the military measures of deterrence in tandem with the intensification of its diplomatic efforts. On January 28, a naval vessel was ordered to restore the Greek flag and a contingent of commandos landed on the islets giving a clear military warning of deterrence. Compared to the mobilization during the first phase, this move was at least timely and was linked to the ongoing incident. The Greek minister of foreign affairs briefed the ambassadors of the European Union's member-states and the United States of America on the incident, presented a new *note verbale* to Ankara, on January 28, and made it clear that the Greek government was determined to re-examine its position on the issue of Turkey's customs union with the EU.⁶³ As an integrated whole, all these moves set in motion the entire spectrum of deterrence. The political warning of deterrence went hand in hand with the military build-up of deterrence. The threat of revising the Greek position on the issue of customs union was a rigorous sign of deterrence intended to convince Turkey that its effort to change the status quo was likely to injure its political and economic interests.

The Greek actions, however, had no effect on Turkey's behavior. On January 29, Ankara issued another *note verbale* to Athens challenging Greek sovereignty over not only Imia, but numerous other Aegean islets as well, and demanding the removal of the Greek commandos and flag. The Greek response came the same day in the Greek parliament by the prime minister himself, who declared that: "to any aggressive nationalism we respond that the reaction of Greece will be powerful, direct and effective. We have the means and we are about to use them without hesitation. We absolutely accept no violation of our sovereign rights."⁶⁴ The political and military warning of deterrence was clear-cut. The objective was to clarify that the Turkish claim concerned a vital question of territorial sovereignty which was beyond doubt; and to demonstrate Greece's will to resist these unwelcome demands even if it meant resorting to all-out war. After these statements, backing down would represent heavy political costs for Greece.

The determination of the Greek government to proceed with the use of force, if necessary, was clearly proclaimed and was equally evident in specific military

measures. Greek forces embarked on a process of rapid mobilization and deployment and, on January 30, the Greek Navy was placed on alert and sent to sea. Moreover, establishing Greek positions as based on international law and treaties was a move designed to diplomatically isolate Turkey, thereby increasing the political cost of its revisionist actions. The Greek effort to legitimize its positions in the eyes of international public opinion reinforced deterrence. At the same time, all these moves signified Greece's will to compromise and decrease the pace of the crisis on the condition that Turkey be prepared to withdraw its warships from the area. Nonetheless, the Greek moves failed to prevent the Turkish National Security Council from adopting a hard stance and reiterating the Turkish position. A Turkish newspaper happened to report on an operational plan, which envisaged the seizure of one or all of the rocky islets of Imia, a plan not categorically denied by the Turkish government.⁶⁵ The latter, however, was determined not to give up.

The U.S., which was discretely watching developments, decided to get involved in the crisis. Adopting a neutral stance, Washington suggested a plan of disengagement (no naval vessels, no flags, no troops). But this clearly favored Turkish claims. The Greek persistence and the Turkish intransigence over the issue of the flag accelerated the pace of the crisis. The Turkish prime minister via the U.S. President demanded the settlement of the dispute in a span of two hours without announcing what the Turkish reaction would be if demands were not met.⁶⁶ This move aimed to force Greece to conform to Turkish claims by political means. It represented an escalation since it transformed the low-intensity crisis into an all-out crisis. It was a political ultimatum, which substantiated a strategy of the escalation of crisis with brinkmanship diplomacy. With the threat of escalation, it sought not simply to facilitate the on-going bargaining on the diplomatic level in favor of Turkey; but also to force Greece to capitulate without resorting to violence.

The Turkish ultimatum increased the likelihood of war in the event that Greece refused a compromise. The U.S. warned that whoever first used force would be held responsible and provoke a severe reaction from the U.S.⁶⁷ But after the expiration of the deadline, Turkey proceeded to establish a foothold on one ungarded rocky islet. It simultaneously suggested the removal of the Greek forces and flag, and the initiation of negotiations regarding the territorial status of the area.

The occupation of one of the three rocky islets of Imia early in the morning of

January 31, signified the collapse of the Greek strategy of deterrence. Greece was taken by surprise and appeared hesitant to use force in order to realize its officially proclaimed threat. A proposal for the seizure of the rocky islet was declined after the military leadership proved unable to guarantee the completion of the operation within forty-five minutes, a time limit set by the Greek government. This raised a dilemma between war and negotiation, and eventually it was decided not to resort to violence. Greece was obliged to accept the American plan of disengagement. It withdrew from its own possessions in exchange for a Turkish withdrawal from the rocky islet. An all-out war was averted, but Turkey proved able to trade at no cost the *fait accompli* of the occupation for the challenging of the Greek territorial sovereignty in the area.

Explanation of the Events

The question to emerge from the foregoing analysis is why the escalation of the crisis took this particular form and resulted in this particular outcome. How are the events interrelated? Why did Turkey come out of the crisis with greater gains?

One answer is that Turkey's will and determination were stronger than those of Greece. The argument, however, ignores several aspects of the events and has two deficiencies. The first, being empirical, has two dimensions:

- a. there is no sound evidence proving a lack of will to enforce deterrence on the part of the Greek government; on the contrary, there were clear signs given of will and determination,
- b. it overlooks the 'rules of the game' set out by the U.S. concerning the 'non-use of force'.

The second weakness being theoretical has three dimensions:

- a. it disregards the significance of strategy; state behavior is determined not only by leadership will but also by its capacity to design and put into play alternative strategies,
- b. it presupposes that international politics are determined by domestic forces, and
- c. it assumes that a state's pattern of conduct is a direct product of its will. Kenneth Waltz points out that a state's behavior rarely keeps pace with its intentions when the international system mediates between them.⁶⁸ This implies that throughout the Imia islets incident, the American

intervention was so influential that Greece's behavior failed to realize its strong will to deter the Turkish challenge.

This line of reasoning, however, moves to the opposite extreme. It takes the Greek determination as a given without drawing attention to how this was substantiated. It places emphasis on the influence of the American intervention without throwing light on the puzzle of how Turkey, being equally subject to the systemic pressure, was able to seize an islet. Our approach views the outcome as a synthesis of the 'thesis' of the Greek position (will and strategy) with the 'antithesis' of the Turkish position (will and strategy) and the U.S. and NATO intervention ('systemic context').

Addressing three intertwined questions is liable to establish our central argument. It is to prove the dialectic relationship between systemic forces and local factors, as well as between the defender's strategy, the attacker's strategy, and systemic pressures.

The Collapse of Greek Deterrence

How can the Turkish occupation of the islet be explained? How can Turkey's military action be explained? Three reasons can be set forth pointing to the Greek and Turkish positions, as well as to the role of the U.S.

The Greek Position

The process of realizing deterrence suffered from inconsistency and incoherence between military and political action. It had two phases, which differed in the level of compatibility between the political and military message of deterrence. During the course of the second phase, which coincided with the acceleration of the pace of the incident, the political and military messages of deterrence went hand in hand. In sharp contrast, during the first phase, starting with the freighter captain's salvage denial, the proclamation of commitment to deterrence was not credible. Greece's diplomatic response contained no clear political warning of deterrence and was tardy, given the seriousness of the issue. The Greek leadership did not convey a clear-cut message to Turkey that its activism was unwelcome. Without making any military threat, a strong political warning was essential for two reasons: first, it was the first time that Turkey explicitly challenged the territorial integrity of Greece; and secondly, experience has shown that Turkey is a revisionist power.

What is more, without having received a response from Turkey, Athens suddenly increased military supervision of the activities in the area. This action as a sign of will and determination was problematic precisely because:

- a. it was neither anticipated nor justified on the account of the earlier Greek diplomatic response,
- b. it unfolded with relative delay in comparison to the diplomatic response,
- c. its goals were unclear in that it was not explicitly linked to a political commitment to deterrence, and
- d. no specific threat was conveyed to Turkey in the event that it refused to back off.

The inconsistency between the political and the military mobilization laid no firm groundwork for deterrence. Although this deficiency was remedied in the second phase, as a whole deterrence failed to obtain reliability. During the first phase, the political warning of deterrence could be perceived as invalid or non-existent by Turkey because of the mild and tardy response by Greece on January 9. While the military build-up could be perceived as an impending action of coercion or preventive war.

The most important result of the poor implementation of deterrence during the first phase was to give Turkey the impression that a Greek offensive was about to launch.⁶⁹ This impression was further reinforced by the hoisting of the Greek flag, by the Greek navy, a move of escalation, which presumably signified the start of strategic coercion. By effectively manipulating this impression and making the argument that Greece was preparing to expand its territorial waters from six to twelve miles, Turkey was able to legitimize the occupation of the islet in the eyes of U.S. administration.⁷⁰ It is widely acknowledged that a partial or full mobilization of armed forces increases the opponent's motive for preemptive attack. The Turkish leadership qualified their limited probe as an action of defense against the Greek intention to expand its territorial waters. This argument, which apparently sounded convincing was far from realistic because the Turkish probe intended to confine the effort to achieve two other tasks which do not fit with the justification for the preemptive attack: to set out its own 'rules of the game' and to cast doubt on the territorial status of the area. However, the Greek inconsistency between political and military moves during the first phase gave Turkey the justification for setting forth this argument. In short, there is no denying that the Greek leadership was fully determined to

deter rather than accommodate the Turkish challenge. The crux of the problem is how deterrence was implemented.

The Turkish Position

Turkey relied on several offensive policies of crisis management strategy, which fit the political and military concept of limited war. In particular, the Greek foreign and defense policy makers feel convinced that Turkey aims to change the status quo with the strategy of coercion. Turkey employs the threat of use or the actual use of force to oblige Greece to comply with its demands. Athens usually perceives this position as Ankara's intention to engage in all-out war. Athens deems the success or failure of coercion to be dependent on the balance of military power. However, our analysis of the Turkish pattern of behavior in the Imia incident shows that in practice coercion was successful in spite of a stable balance of power and without resorting to all-out engagement.

On the first level of analysis, the occupation of the islet represented an action of strategic coercion. It was based on the military strategy of a limited goal, the implementation of which usually causes the collapse of deterrence. This explanation, however, cannot fully account for the Turkish behavior. Throughout the incident, Turkey tried to manipulate events rather than escalate the dispute to the level of an all-out engagement. Opting for choices that drove the incident to cumulative levels of intensity and escalation, it proved able to control the course of events and thus secure its goals. This conduct is a classic manifestation of crisis management strategy. Precisely because the aim of Turkey was to change the status quo it combined a number of offensive policies of crisis management strategy. The Turkish strategy was broader than coercion; it was a strategy of crisis management centered by coercion.

From this standpoint, Turkish successive *notes verbales* implemented the strategy of controlled pressure intended, in conjunction with political moves, to undermine the Greek commitment to deterrence and to establish the incident on a level of low-intensity conflict. The publication of a plan of occupation by the Turkish newspaper *Hurriyet*, the decisions of the National Security Council and the deadline ultimatum were elements of a strategy of blackmail designed to force Greece to capitulate in view of an unpredictable threat and lead the conflict to a level of high-intensity. The occupation of the islet was a combined implementation of the strategies of limited, reversible probe and of *fait accompli*, which resulted in moving the conflict up from diplomatic to military engagement.

Because the probe was so limited and readily reversible that the ensuing military action was kept at a level of low-intensity, the risk of unwanted war was minimized, and restoration was feasible. It can be argued that the military operation, albeit risky, was a deliberate choice carried out within the concept of limited war, because it pursued to hit specified targets and avoid direct, decisive engagement with Greek forces. The probe was intended to create a *fait accompli*. Once achieved, the *fait accompli* was skillfully exploited by Turkey not only as an instrument of bargaining but also as a means of forcing Greece to accept the American plan of disengagement. In essence, the strategy was to trade the *fait accompli* for the Greek recognition of Turkish claims.

The Role of the U.S.

The position of the U.S., expressed in the establishment of the principle of 'non-use of force,' acutely increased the cost for Greece and limited its range of options. The American warning against the use of force set out limitations, the ignoring of which was likely to entail a high cost for the parties to the dispute. This systemic context of the non-use of force becomes a factor in the strategy of coercive diplomacy. It reflected the strong will of the U.S. to avert escalation and direct engagement. It created a context in which the parties, under the threat of punishment, would be motivated to bargain and make mutual concessions. In other words, Washington tried to convince Greece and Turkey not to accelerate the pace of the conflict to such a degree that the only way out of the deadlock would be an all-out war.

However, the dexterous neutrality of the U.S. favored Turkey over Greece. The plan of disengagement reflected Turkish demands for concurrent removal of warships and forces, as well as for the lowering of the Greek flag. It undermined the political and military basis for Greek deterrence. From a political point of view, it forced Greece to accept a disengagement that established doubt about its territorial integrity. A national flag symbolizes state sovereignty. When it is lowered, national sovereignty is questioned. The U.S. intervention incapacitated Greek deterrence by portraying Greece as unyielding and uncompromising and Turkey as co-operative and defensive. Furthermore, it legitimized Turkish demands, since the U.S. made no effort to convince Turkey to abandon them. The U.S. warning against the use of force could be taken to mean that unless a move resulted in the outburst of violence, it would be tolerated. The Turkish strategy of crisis management was carried out in line with the spirit of

this warning. The military probe was limited and reversible, and although it was an act of aggression it involved no direct engagement.

In theory, the U.S. intervention increased the cost of using strategies like coercive diplomacy, limited war, and preemptive attack; that is, strategies which underpin deterrence in practice. The question one must ask is why Greece failed to respond to the Turkish provocation in a way that would incorporate the 'systemic' constraints and thereby secure its interests.

Why Did Greece not Proceed to Re-occupy the Islet?

How can the ultimate avoidance of military action by Greece be explained? An answer can be drawn from the foregoing explanation, which point to the Greek strategy of deterrence, the Turkish strategy of crisis management, and the U.S. intervention. These are necessary but not sufficient determining factors. Throwing more light on the factor of deterrence is likely to yield important insights.

In the first place, disagreement broke out between government and military leadership regarding the way to respond. State decision-makers had no shared perception of how deterrence was to be carried out in practice. The General Staff suggested that the Turkish commandos who had occupied the islet should be bombarded. The government rejected this proposal on the grounds that it presented too great a risk of escalation. This argument was based on two assumptions: the high cost, both political and military that this move should entail; and the 'systemic' constraint imposed by the U.S. intervention. If the first assumption is valid, the question is why prior to the collapse of deterrence, the Greek government took measures which gave the impression that Greece was prepared to engage in war-like confrontation. Were there alternatives to the option of the use of force with the risk of casualties. If the second assumption is equally valid, the question is why Athens did not proceed with strategies designed not only to 'assimilate' the 'systemic' constraint but also to secure Greek interests?

The government's counter-proposal, which was to reoccupy the islet within forty-five minutes and without harming the Turkish commandos, could not be carried out by the General Staff. Instead, the General Staff asked for a deadline of at least three hours. If the demand of the political leadership was excessive, the request of the military leadership was out of the question. In conditions of

crisis, the military and political response has to be swift and effective. During the Imia incident, this was especially imperative, given the U.S. demand for immediate decrease of the pace of the conflict and the risk of Turkey annexing the occupied islet.

Secondly, the dilemma of war or peace with concessions dominated the decision-making process. Athens eventually opted for peace with concessions. An examination of why this was the case should uncover the real strategic dilemma facing Greece at that time. One reason was the U.S. intervention and the high cost of war due to technological progress. An all-out engagement is most likely to develop into a war of attrition. Resorting to force is effective and of low cost only when it is based on surprise attack and limited war. The second reason concerns the Greek choice of compromise. The Greek strategy of deterrence relied on the threat of a large-scale war. Greece gave the impression that it was prepared to confront the Turkish challenge by direct, decisive engagement. When deterrence collapsed, Athens should logically have proceeded to realize its threat. Why then did it ultimately opt for compromise?

An answer should begin with the Turkish strategy and ends with the Greek strategy. Turkey used a strategy of crisis management. The seizure of the islet came about through the implementation of the strategies of *fait accompli* and of limited, reversible probe; these were driven by the concept of limited war. Greece relied on a strategy of deterrence backed with the threat of all-out engagement. When deterrence collapsed with a limited, reversible probe at low intensity, Athens was presented with the following strategic dilemma: given the U.S. pressures, was it feasible for Greece to respond by resorting to the use of overwhelming force and high-intensity engagement? In other words, when someone has just given you a bloodless scratch, is it rational to react by severely wounding or even killing him? Objectively speaking, it was not. Compared to the real military cost of the Turkish probe, the political risk of escalation and the military cost of an all-out war would be extremely high. At that time, alternative strategies to a full military engagement, were urgently needed. The fact that no alternatives came into play indicates that the Greek strategy of deterrence is not well-designed and suffers implementation deficiencies.

Purely from a military point of view, the problem is that the Greek forces are not prepared to deal with low-intensity conflict and limited war. The Imia incident demonstrates not lack of resources, but lack of sufficient strategies and operational arrangements. Forces that are prepared only for all-out war have difficulties in confronting small-scale war-like confrontations.⁷¹

Greek Deterrence

The main deficiency of Greek deterrence is that it has taken on the nature of grand strategy. What is not well understood is that the manipulation of the threat of force, with which deterrence is closely related, is quite different from the manipulation of the actual use of force, which has nothing to do with deterrence. How the Greek deterrence was carried out throughout the Imia incident illustrates that this point was not taken into account. Particularly, the build-up of deterrence gave the impression that Athens pursued implementation of force rather than manipulation of the threat of force. The Greek diplomatic and military moves failed to coordinate to present Turkey with a dilemma of further escalation or withdrawal. The political and military warnings of deterrence were based only on the prevention of a Turkish all-out attack; they did not take into account the possibility of a limited, reversible probe. Athens missed the fact that an all-out engagement is the last and upper level of crisis escalation; and that escalation embeds several, cumulative levels of intensity and violence. Deterrence was eventually reduced to its military dimensions. As a result, the need to deal with the pressures stemming from the particular Turkish pattern of conduct and the U.S. intervention was disregarded. Notwithstanding the full mobilization of forces, the Greek government proved unable to predict that Turkey would take the initiative on the battlefield without provoking an all-out engagement. The element of surprise was to the advantage of Turkey.

The Turkish probe was so limited that the dilemma between peace and war, which the Greek strategy tried to present to Ankara, collapsed. In fact, the dilemma became a Greek dilemma of war with excessive cost or peace with concessions. Turkey clearly showed signs of unwillingness to escalate the crisis to the level of all-out war, passing the responsibility of this decision to Greece. The latter could have been relieved of this overwhelming burden, had it quickly put into play strategies intended to force Turkey to back down. The conceptualization of Greek deterrence, however, allowed no room for such a course of action.

It can be argued that the Greek strategy itself was the root of the surprise caused Greece by the Turkish move. This confirms a proposition of deterrence theory that the defender's strategy shapes the attacker's strategic ends in the long run. In the case of Imia, it could be assumed that instead of averting its manifestation, the Greek strategy of deterrence laid the foundations for the success of the Turkish offensive. This issue is critical in many respects. Of them, the most important relates to the fact that Turkey was able not simply to chal-

lenge Greece's territorial integrity but also to test its real capacity to deal with limited probes without resorting to all-out engagement.

The Turkish probe could not be qualified as a tactical surprise. It did not take place on the battlefield in the course of hostilities. Neither could it be qualified as a strategic surprise. Expecting a Turkish attack, Greek forces were on alert in the area where the probe was delivered. Nonetheless, we can argue that the Turkish probe contained attributes of a strategic surprise in that the method used demonstrated a change in Turkish military doctrine. Turkey implemented offensive policies of crisis management strategy. These proved more flexible and effective than the strategy of coercion and significantly increased the range of options for the Turkish grand strategy. But it was not necessarily the first time that these policies came into play. What is interesting is that during the course of the Imia incident, the offensive policies of crisis management strategy were fully realized. It is for that reason that the Imia incident signified a change in the Turkish pattern of conduct. From this standpoint, the Turkish limited, reversible probe could be regarded as quasi-strategic surprise. If this point is valid, the Greek foreign and defense policy makers should embark on a process of revising the country's whole defense planning. What the Imia incident uncovers is that the existing design of Greek deterrence allowed no room for dealing successfully with the Turkish challenge.

Lack of Crisis Management Strategy

"Lack" in this context does not necessarily mean that such a strategy has not been designed, it simply means that at a critical juncture it was not put into play. Athens overlooked the instrumentality of crisis management strategy both as a means of conflict resolution and as a freestanding grand strategy. The lack of a crisis management strategy became evident not simply in the inability to cope quickly and effectively with the effects of the Turkish probe but also in the implementation of the strategy of deterrence.

Particularly, war and diplomacy, including deterrence, are not the only methods of conflict resolution. The Greek strategy of deterrence seemed to ignore this fact. The principal dilemma facing Greek strategy was by no means between war and peace. In fact, that dilemma emerged as a result of Greek deterrence. The dilemma was what defensive policies the Greek government should employ to manage the crisis in order to prevent the outbreak of war and pave the way for conflict resolution from a position of power. Athens missed the fact

that deterrence is not a strategy for all conditions and that crisis management can be used both as a separate strategy and as a method of conflict resolution.

Therefore, the lack of a crisis management strategy is caused by the war or peace concept underlying the Greek strategy of deterrence. Applying the principle 'if you want peace, prepare for war' is conceived of as a substitute for the strategies of coercive diplomacy, limited war, and crisis management. It is not understood that deterrence can not put into play these strategies because it has nothing to do with the actual use of force; rather, these strategies underpin deterrence in practice. It was for that reason that Greek deterrence was caught in a deadlock during the Imia incident. Here was proved the utility of the defensive policies of the strategy of crisis management. After the occupation of the islet, the dilemma of war or peace with concessions might not have arisen, had the Greek strategy of deterrence been based on the concept of crisis management strategy, which incorporates deterrence, coercive diplomacy, limited war, and surprise. The case of Imia unveiled for the first time that the real dilemma facing Greek strategy is the lack of a crisis management strategy. This lack accounts for the Greek pattern of conduct during the Imia incident.

The "Systemic" Context

The "systemic" context relates to the role of the U.S., which took the form of dexterous neutrality. The question remains, however, why this "systemic" context, which put pressure on both rivals, let Turkey come out of the crisis with the greater gains? The theoretical tools already used cannot offer an explanation. Four points can be considered:

- first, in a multi-polar international system great powers are reluctant to undertake additional commitments and intervene as mediators in regional crises. They most often assign the role of local policeman to a loyal small state of the region concerned, on the condition that the latter is able to advance the great power's interests and preserve the status quo;⁷²
- second, "weak" Greece and 'strong' Turkey are member-states of NATO and their enduring rivalry is shaped by the dynamics of this alliance. Their rivalry in effect is an 'intra-coalition' conflict. It is subject to 'coalition' limitations concerning both the interests of the dominant great power, namely the U.S., and the mission of the alliance to deal with external rather than internal, "intra-coalition" security challenges;

- third, if in a loosening bipolar system the degree of cooperation or confrontation was likely to exert trivial influence on the settlement of 'intra-coalition' conflicts, in a multi-polar system an alliance is unlikely to help a 'weak' member-state against a strong one;⁷³
- fourth, in a bilateral 'intra-coalition' conflict, the intervention of a single or group of dominant powers most often sets out the 'rules of the game', frame the context of the conflict, and supply rivals with more or less opportunities to obtain more or less comparative advantages in the course of conflict resolution. This process determines the allocation of gains between the rivals, and the relative weight that great powers attach to each one of them.

Based on these points, we suggest the following hypotheses:

- first, if the 'intra-coalition' conflict takes on the form of a *sui generis*, long-running crisis, the parties involved will compete to ensure that the intervention of a single or group of great powers will provide them opportunities to obtain more comparative advantages in the management of a confrontation,
- second, if the intervention of a great power produces advantages, the degree of exploitation of same, while being affected by the balance of power, largely depends on the strategy adopted by the opposing parties,
- third, if the intervention of a single or group of great powers takes the form of dexterous neutrality, this opportunity is turned into an asset only for the rival that put into play the most effective strategy of crisis management.

These propositions are consistent with the assumptions and theses of the realist school of thought. They adequately explain why the U.S. intervention did not favor Greece. They further support our argument regarding the collapse of deterrence, the Turkish strategy, and the Greek pattern of conduct. Our central arguments and associated hypotheses confirm that Turkey came out of the Imia islets' crisis with more gains precisely because its grand strategy is more effective; while the Greek strategy suffers a number of weaknesses.

The overall conclusion to emerge from this analysis is that the Greek and Turkish strategies express two diametrically different strategic cultures.⁷⁴ The Greek strategic culture distinguishes between war and peace. As long as peace lasts, a conflict of interest might be settled through diplomacy and law. When the con-

lict of interests develops into violence, which means that deterrence collapses, only two strategic options are open:

- a. preparation for all-out engagement, which aims to present the adversary with a dilemma between unwanted, uncontrollable escalation and surrender;
- b. political and diplomatic moves intended to pave the way for a peaceful decrease of the pace of the crisis. The dominant idea is to 'win' either peace or war. In sharp contrast, the Turkish strategic culture perceives of war and peace as an integrated whole; it recognizes that there exist several levels of aggression and intensity in between the two extremes. When a conflict of interests scales up to a level of crisis, the dominant idea is to 'win' the crisis with a strategy of crisis management.

Finally, yet another thesis to be drawn is that the Imia crisis reflects cumulative levels of escalation of the enduring Greek-Turkish rivalry. In other words, the Greek-Turkish confrontation can be qualified as an *sui generis*, long-running crisis in the form of a protracted conflict; in which the acceleration of the pace of conflict is manifested through recurrent escalations of intensity that involve the possibility of direct engagement. We reason that the Imia crisis, along with the crises of 1987 and 1976, are nothing less than short-term escalations of the long-running Greek-Turkish crisis. In the first place, even though Greece and Turkey have never crossed the threshold of war during the course of these crises, they have proved unable to embark on a process of conflict resolution. In the second place, these recurring escalations do not only harbor a high risk of war; they are mutually related in the sense that they aim to force Greece to consent to a change of the status quo in the Aegean Sea. Broadly speaking, the enduring Greek-Turkish rivalry is marked by:

- Long duration: the crisis has not yet been settled, notwithstanding that almost twenty-one years separate the Turkish occupation of the northern part of Cyprus and Imia.
- Continuous tension: political and military incidents of low-intensity and small-scale escalation are daily on the agenda.
- High risk: the threat of the use of force is persistent, a fact that increases the possibility of a sudden acceleration of the pace of conflict.
- Importance of interests: the interests at stake are not only vital but also not open to compromise.

CONCLUSION

This work made an effort to examine the determining factors of the Imia incident and explain why Greek deterrence proved unable to deal successfully with the Turkish challenge. Three factors combined in a dialectic relationship can account for the Imia incident and the failure of Greek strategy. The first is the Greek strategy of deterrence, which did not correlate with the defensive policies of crisis management strategy. The second is the Turkish offensive strategy, which can be qualified as a strategy of crisis management structured and ordered by the strategy of coercion and the concept of limited war. The third factor is the U.S. intervention, which laid down the 'systemic' context of 'non-use' of violence.

Strictly speaking, the case of Imia is not exactly an original example of crisis. In fact, it was a short-term escalation of the long running Greek-Turkish crisis, which has become an enduring rivalry. Yet, the overall conclusion is that Greece and Turkey have different strategic cultures. On the one hand, the logic motivating the Greek strategy is to 'win' either peace or war. On the other hand, the logic of the Turkish strategy is to 'win' the crisis without it being caught up in a dilemma of war or peace. In essence, the Greek strategy of deterrence still relies on the threat of annihilation. In contrast, the Turkish strategy is based on the offensive policies of the strategy of crisis management, placing greater emphasis on coercion and limited war. From this standpoint, the real dilemma facing the Greek strategy is not one between war and peace. It is a dilemma of crisis management, it being both a separate grand strategy and a method of conflict resolution.

NOTES

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12.

Thirty-Five Year Course of the Cyprus Issue at United Nations

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INTRODUCTION

Throughout the life of the Republic of Cyprus, the Cyprus issue has been one of an international, extremely multi-faceted and complex nature and, as a result, hard to resolve. A number of different and opposing views and theories have been debated regarding the expediency of the internationalization of the Cyprus issue (enough to support a relevant literature);¹ nevertheless, in examining the facts of the case, it is clear that the Cyprus issue has always been an essentially international issue. One simple reason alone being that, since its initial manifestation, this issue has constituted a continuous concern for the United Nations and an area of multi-faceted action and reference, following Cyprus's own petition.

Despite being addressed by an international Organization of such universal and highly valid status as the UN for more than a quarter of a century, the Cyprus issue still remains unresolved. As this indisputable fact cannot be ignored, it is obvious that United Nations' action on this issue can be judged (based on the poor, if not minimal, results) as insufficient, ineffective and consequently unsuccessful. This does not mean, of course, that the United Nations is the sole, or even, the main actor responsible for the misfortune of the Cyprus issue. On the other hand, it can not be exempted from all responsibility. The failure in this case must still be charged to the Organization itself. Whether it was caused by innate weakness or whether the result of other factors, it continues to raise strong reservations about the credibility and future will of the UN. The Republic of Cyprus at least, which since 1964 has placed all hope in this Organization,² now has every reason to doubt the wisdom and efficiency of its first choice. This is underscored by the fact that the Republic of Cyprus still is pay-