

***The Impact of National Animosity on Consumer Purchases:  
The Modifying Factor of Personal Characteristics***

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## ***The Impact of National Animosity on Consumer Purchases: The Modifying Factor of Personal Characteristics***

### **Abstract**

*This study examines the validity of the animosity construct in a new social context. Moreover, this study breaks new ground by examining the impact of personal characteristics on the animosity towards products originating in a specific country. For example, what impact such attributes as the educational background of the respondent, his or her age, gender, and knowledge of foreign languages have in moderating this animosity? The findings of the study show strong support for the animosity construct and the modifying power of personal characteristics.*

**Keywords: Consumer Animosity, Consumer Ethnocentrism, Country of Origin, Product Quality**

## **Executive Summary**

**Scope of the Study:** This study breaks new ground by examining the impact of personal characteristics on the animosity towards products originating in a specific country. For example, what impact such attributes as the educational background of the respondent, his or her age, gender, and knowledge of foreign languages have in moderating this animosity? Therefore, this study is trying to fill a gap in the literature by empirically testing the validity of the consumer animosity construct in a new national setting and for the first time to directly measure the antecedents that may influence the extent of the consumer animosity that a consumer may feel.

**Methodology:** The data for this study were collected through “mall intercepts” in three different locations in Greece in order to investigate the feelings of a cross section of the Greek public. Approximately 430 completed questionnaires were included in the data analysis of the study. The data were collected by randomly approaching Greek adult consumers in three Greek cities. The questionnaire was originally composed in English and then translated into Greek. Another independent translator then back translated the Greek version of the questionnaire into English to ensure its validity. The final Greek version of the questionnaire was shown to a small number of Greek consumers to ensure that it was easily understood by the average Greek consumer.

**Results:** As it was expected, a negative relationship was discovered between ethnocentrism and willingness to purchase Turkish products. Consumer animosity was also significant in influencing the actions of Greek consumers, while economic animosity was not significant. From the personal characteristics gender and residence of the respondent did not significantly influence consumer purchases, while education, knowledge of foreign languages, and age surprisingly influenced purchases in a positive way.

## **Introduction**

International trade has exploded in recent years as more and more countries have abandoned high tariff walls and disastrous import-substitution economic policies. Consumers that in the past were limited in the choices of products available to them, now have a wide variety of domestic and imported products to choose from. As the choices available to consumers become more numerous, the consumer selection process is becoming more complex and the final product choice is influenced by a variety of reasons. Issues like, brand equity (Myers, 2003), brand loyalty (Knox and Walker, 2001), and perceptions of quality (Conlon et al., 2001) are some examples of the variables that an international consumer will take into account before it makes a final decision.

Two of the most important constructs in international marketing research have been the concepts of ethnocentrism (Sharma et al., 1995; Shimp and Sharma, 1987) and the country of origin concept (LeClerc and Schmitt, 1994). These two constructs examine why consumers either prefer products produced domestically or they show a bias towards products produced abroad (Bilkey and Nes, 1982; Netemyer et al., 1991; Shimp and Sharma, 1987; Sharma et al., 1995). Shimp and Sharma (1987) developed the CETSCALE to measure the concept of ethnocentrism. This concept states that consumers possessing this tendency will show a bias towards products that were produced in their home country and avoid, if possible, products originating abroad. The country of origin concept deals with a consumer's preconceived notions, either favorable or unfavorable, about the quality of products originating in a specific foreign country (LeClerc and Schmitt, 1994; Bilkey and Nes, 1982).

While it is undoubtedly true that ethnocentrism and the country of origin concepts play an important role in influencing the purchasing behavior of consumers, another important construct that has not been studied extensively is the concept of ethnic animosity. Klein et al. (1998) work on the animosity feelings of Chinese consumers in the city of Nanjing towards

Japanese products and Klein's (2002) later work about the feelings of US consumers towards products originating in Japan, were the pioneering studies examining the issue. However, as Klein and Ettensson (1999) stated, there is a need to discover whether ethnic animosity as a marketing construct has validity in other parts of the world.

In an era of global production and global branding, multinational companies have a choice of where to produce their products and what type of branding to adopt. If consumer animosity is to be found in many parts of the world, a company has to make some serious decisions when it decides to supply a new market. For example, a US based company that wants to sell its products to Poland has to not only examine the country of origin image that Polish consumers have of German and Russian products, but also whether the old historical enmities between Poland, Russia and Germany still exert an influence on the purchasing behavior of Polish consumers. If consumer animosity towards Russian and German-made products is widespread, the multinational might decide to supply its Polish consumers from a factory in Italy instead of its Russian or German locations. Recent anecdotal evidence from the popular business press show strong support for the construct of ethnic animosity and its impact on consumer behavior. In fact, ethnic animosity is not something that only originates in ancient conflicts, but it can be created when new adversarial relationships emerge due to new political developments.

For example, a widespread boycott of American products in Arab countries due to perception of anti-Islamic policies by the US government has been reported in recent years and boycotts against French products in Australia due to the opposition to nuclear tests in the Pacific undertaken by France (World Trade, Jan 2001; Ettenson and Klein, 2005). In some extreme cases a company may see a decline in the popularity of its products because consumers make the wrong association of its brand name. Procter & Gamble faced a decline of its popular detergent brand Ariel because Arab consumers perceived it as being named

after the Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon (Postlewaite, 2001). Of course, the Ariel brand has been around for a very long time, but that “mistaken identity” cost Procter & Gamble sales. Moreover, this animosity has not been contained in developing nations, but recent events show how it can influence even sophisticated western consumers. Recent calls in the US for boycotts of French and German-made products because of perceived French and German opposition to US foreign policies only illustrate the point (Financial Times, March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2003).

This study explores the attitudes of Greek consumers towards Turkish products. Commercial ties between Greece and Turkey have greatly improved in recent years following recent positive political developments. For example, from 1994 to 2004 Greek exports to Turkey increased by almost 657% and Turkish exports to Greece rose by 726% (National Statistical Service of Greece, 2005). Based on 2004 data, Turkey is Greece’s 7<sup>th</sup> largest trade partner, while Greece is Turkey’s 13<sup>th</sup> largest trade partner. However, while this increase in trade has been very positive for the future relations between the two countries, it has mainly concentrated on industrial products and raw materials. Trade in products targetting the final consumer has been minimal. For example, Turkish textile exports to Greece, an area that Turkish companies are very strong, have been less than 2 percent of total exports and most of them are low-cost items. In addition, branded Turkish food products have not made any inroads in the Greek market (National Statistical Service of Greece, 2005). This is very surprising considering the similarity of the two national cuisines and the high reputation that Turkish food has in Greece. Considering the increase in total trade between the two countries, but the negligible increase in trade in consumer products one surmises that ethnic animosity may play an important role in influencing consumer purchasing decisions.

The ethnic animosity between Greeks and Turks is widely known. The adversarial relationship between the two peoples began close to one thousand years ago when Turkish

tribes originating in Central Asia came into contact with Byzantine Greeks. In the centuries that followed a powerful Ottoman Turkish empire was able to gradually conquer the various Greek lands. While the modern independent Greek state came into existence in 1830, following a long revolutionary war, numerous wars and upheavals in the years that followed have not allowed the two nations to forget the past and build a peaceful future. Moreover, present day disputes in the island of Cyprus and the rights over the Aegean seabed, are continuously inflaming the ancient hatreds (Loizides, 2002). Therefore, for various reasons, the Greek-Turkish animosity and distrust remains very much part of the every-day lives of the respective nations and may be influencing the purchasing decisions that the consumers of the two countries make.

In addition to testing the validity of the animosity construct in a new social context, this study breaks new ground by examining the impact of personal characteristics on the animosity towards products originating in a specific country. For example, what impact such attributes as the educational background of the respondent, his or her age, gender, and knowledge of foreign languages have in moderating this animosity? Only one study in the past, to the authors' best knowledge, has looked into the antecedents of consumer animosity (Klein and Ettenson, 1999). Klein and Ettenson (1999), themselves refer to the use of proxy measurements as one of the limitations of their study and they recommend that future research should use full measures of the constructs as independent variables. Therefore, this study is trying to fill a gap in the literature by empirically testing the validity of the consumer animosity construct in a new national setting and for the first time to directly measure the antecedents that may influence the extent of the consumer animosity that a consumer may feel.

## **Literature Review**



The likelihood that a consumer will purchase a foreign product has been shown in marketing literature to be related to the consumer's quality perceptions of that specific product. The formation of the perception of quality does not only originate in the real, measurable attributes of the product, but in international purchase situations, to a great extent, quality perception is influenced by the concepts of ethnocentrism and country of origin. Marketing theory suggests that if a consumer has ethnocentric tendencies he or she will be more likely to purchase locally produced products and to even further perceive these products as possessing higher quality (Sharma et al., 1995; Shimp and Sharma, 1987). The second variable that may influence a consumer's quality perception is the country of origin concept (LeClerc and Schmitt, 1994; Papadopoulos and Heslop, 1993). If a product is produced in a country that has a good reputation for producing similar products, a consumer will tend to ascribe a high quality to a particular product regardless of its actual performance characteristics. Of course, both ethnocentrism and country of origin forces may influence a consumer's perception of a particular product in opposite directions.

While ethnocentrism and country of origin influence the perceptions of quality that a consumer holds, recent research (Klein, 2002; Klein et al., 1998) has shown that a third issue may be active in independently influencing the consumer's final choice, the concept of animosity. Animosity refers to a consumer's negative feelings towards the products of a particular country. These negative feelings are shaped by historical events, recent or ancient, that influence the choices that a consumer will make. Due to strong animosity feelings a consumer may decide not to buy a product produced in a particular country even when he or she believes that the product has higher quality and it is offered at a better price than a similar domestic product (Klein, 2002). The animosity construct does not influence the quality perceptions that a consumer may have about products originating in a specific foreign country as the country of origin construct does, but directly influences his or her willingness to buy

certain foreign products (Ettenson and Klein, 2005). As a result a consumer may decline to purchase a foreign product despite the high quality perceptions that it may have of that product.

Past research has shown that while consumer ethnocentrism influences both product judgments and willingness to buy imported products generally, regardless of the country from where they are imported, consumer animosity influences the willingness to buy products imported from a specific country independent of quality perceptions (Klein, 2002). In this research we posit that while consumer animosity is a construct present in many parts of the world, animosity feelings may not be universally present among the population of a nation, but certain personal characteristics may act as moderators in modifying the feelings of different individuals. Demographic characteristics like age, income, educational level, region of the country where somebody lives, and knowledge of foreign languages will modify somebody's animosity feelings and will subsequently influence his or her willingness to buy products originating in a specific country.

## **Hypotheses**

If a person holds strong negative views against a foreign nation, it is very likely that these views will influence his or her purchasing behavior. These negative views usually originate in past conflicts or in certain cases may be created by feelings of insecurity due to the perceived economic and political power that a foreign nation has accumulated (Ang et al., 2004; Klein et al., 1998). Previous research by Klein et al. (1998) has shown how memories of Japanese war atrocities influence the purchasing behavior of Chinese consumers towards Japanese products. In a more recent study consumer animosity has been shown to influence consumer purchasing behavior even in smaller national markets where domestic brands for certain products may not be available and consumers have to make a selection among foreign brands (Nijssen and

Douglas, 2004). Research also shows that consumer animosity may exist not only on the international level, but even towards products originating in other regions of the same country (Shimp, Dunn and Klein, (2004). Shimp, Dunn and Klein (2004) investigated how memories of the US Civil War may impact the evaluative judgments and price sensitivity of consumers with a strong regional identity. Thus based on previous research (Klein et al., 1998; Klein, 2002; Shimp et al., 2004; Nijssen and Douglas, 2004) consumer animosity is expected to influence Greek consumers in a significant way independent of their ethnocentric feelings and the product judgments that are making for products manufactured in Turkey. Therefore, the first hypothesis states:

***H1:** -Animosity will have a direct, negative impact on the willingness of Greek consumers to buy Turkish products, if product judgments and consumer ethnocentrism are held constant.*

The concept of ethnocentrism derives its origins in the works of philosophers and sociologists attempting to investigate the origins of patriotism and nationalism and to examine why certain individuals may feel very close to people belonging to the same group with them while at the same time they may express very negative feelings for people belonging to other groups (see for example the work of Sumner (1906) on the rise of nationalism in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the study of Adorno et al. (1950) on hostile attitudes towards specific minority groups). Based on previous research from non-business fields, Shimp and Sharma (1987) created the ethnocentric construct in marketing. They proposed that ethnocentric consumers feel that it is wrong to purchase foreign-made products when equivalent domestic-made products exist. In order to measure consumer ethnocentrism, Shimp and Sharma created the CETSCALE. This scale has been validated in various national contexts (Sharma et al., 1995; Netemeyer et al., 1991). Although the CETSCALE measuring ethnocentrism has been tested in various national

contexts, to the best of the researchers' knowledge, it has never been tested in Greece. Therefore, Hypothesis 2 and 3 are attempting to examine whether the CETSCALE measuring ethnocentrism is valid in the Greek national context. The two hypotheses investigate whether ethnocentrism among Greek consumers will influence their product judgments and their willingness to purchase foreign products.

**H2:** *-Consumer ethnocentrism will be negatively related to product judgments of Greek consumers for foreign-made products*

**H3:** *-Consumer ethnocentrism will be negatively related to the willingness of Greek consumers to buy foreign-made products*

Past studies tend to be contradictory concerning how gender influences the ethnocentric and animosity attitudes that shape consumer views towards foreign products. Sharma et al. (1995) discovered that Korean women were more ethnocentric than men, while Wall and Heslop (1986) found that American and Canadian women tended to have a higher preference for domestic products in comparison to their male counterparts. On the contrary, Klein and Ettenson (1999), the only ones who tested the importance of gender for animosity feelings, did not discover a significant relationship between them. It is plausible that the increase in the educational level of American women and their increased participation in the workforce have made their views on Japanese products to become more similar to their male counterparts. In this study, hypothesis 4 is attempting to examine whether Klein and Ettenson's (1999) findings concerning the effect of gender on animosity feelings are valid for Greek men and women. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis states that:

**H4:** *-Animosity attitudes towards Turkish products will not differ between Greek men and women.*

Several studies in the past have discovered that education plays an important role in the consumer's perception of foreign products. Consumers possessing higher education tend to have a more favorable perception of foreign products (Wall and Heslop, 1986; Anderson and Cunningham, 1972). In addition, educated consumers have been found to be less ethnocentric (Sharma et al., 1995). However, to the best of our knowledge, the negative impact of education on ethnocentrism has not been found to be valid for consumer animosity feelings. Klein and Ettenson (1999), the only ones who tested the importance of education for animosity, did not find a significant difference in the levels of antipathy towards Japanese products that educated and less educated American consumers possess. Based on their results, we expect that Greek educated and less educated consumers will possess animosity feelings of equal strength towards Turkey. Therefore, hypothesis 5 states that:

***H5:** -The educational background of Greek consumers will not influence animosity attitudes towards Turkish products.*

The relationship of age with preference or aversion of foreign products has been mixed in past research. Sharma et al. (1995) did not find a relationship between age and ethnocentric tendencies. However, other studies have discovered that older consumers tend to show a preference for domestic goods and even in certain cases to be willing to pay a premium for domestic products (Wall and Heslop, 1986). On the contrary, research in consumer animosity has discovered a positive relationship. Klein and Ettenson (1999) discovered a positive correlation between age and consumer animosity towards Japanese products among American consumers. It is very likely that older consumers with longer memories would tend to remember better past conflicts and show a stronger aversion to foreign goods from certain "enemy" nations. Based on Klein and Ettenson's (1999) results, we expect that the age of

Greek consumers will be positively related with their animosity feelings toward Turkish products. Therefore, the sixth hypothesis states that:

*H6: -Animosity attitudes of Greek consumers towards Turkish products will be positively influenced by the age of the respondent.*

Consumers that speak foreign languages well tend to interact with foreigners, read foreign books, periodicals and newspapers, travel abroad, and, generally, they express a higher level of certain “cosmopolitan” tendencies and behavior. It is expected that these more “cosmopolitan” Greek consumers will have lower levels of animosity feelings towards Turkish products that the general population perceives in a negative way. Therefore, the seventh hypothesis states that:

*H7: - Greek consumers that speak foreign languages well will exhibit weaker animosity attitudes towards Turkish products.*

Although in most cases in international marketing we think of the nation state as fairly homogeneous, in many countries consumers in different regions of the country may possess totally different consumer behaviors. Many European countries, in particular, have been formed through a complex historical process that may influence the characteristics of their residents. In other cases the residents of the capital city or the principal cities of a nation due to their advanced economic development may have totally different attitudes in comparison to the residents of regions that have achieved a lower level of economic development. For this research we selected respondents representing totally different areas of Greece to see whether their animosity levels vary. However, although the regions from where we collected the data were very different, our expectation was that there would not be a significant variance in the animosity levels. The rise of a mass media culture in recent years with national newspapers,

magazines and television stations, as well as the national elementary and high school education system which uses the same curricula and books across Greece, have probably eliminated the differences among respondents located in various parts of the country.

Therefore, hypothesis 8 states that:

*H8: -The animosity attitudes that Greek consumers exhibit towards Turkish products will not be influenced by the area where they live.*

In most cases, a marketing company that is trying to sell its products is not interested in the feelings that a consumer may have regarding its products, but whether these feelings are influencing the actions that a consumer will take. Past research has shown that older consumers are willing to pay premium for a domestically made product (Wall and Heslop, 1986). However, so far research examining the consumer animosity construct has not tested whether consumers that have high levels of animosity towards products originating in a specific foreign nation, are willing to pay a premium to purchase competitive and domestically made products. Thus, in an effort to fill the research gap concerning this issue, we form hypothesis 9 to state that:

*H9: - Greek consumers that exhibit high levels of consumer animosity will be willing to pay a premium for domestic made products.*

## **Methodology**

The data for this study were collected through “mall intercepts” in three different locations in Greece in order to investigate the feelings of a cross section of the Greek public. Approximately 430 completed questionnaires were included in the data analysis of the study.

The data were collected by randomly approaching Greek adult consumers in three Greek cities, Athens, Thessaloniki, and Corfu. The three different locations provided us with a fairly

accurate representation of a wide spectrum of Greek consumers. Faculty and students of the University of Macedonia were utilized to collect the data in Thessaloniki and the researchers themselves administered the questionnaires in Athens and Corfu. The three locations for the collection of the data were carefully selected based on their diverse history and potential differences in their views of Turks and Turkish products.

Athens, being the capital and the largest city in Greece, is home to the most educated and most cosmopolitan consumers. Thessaloniki, the second largest city in Greece, was selected because it represents Northern Greece and it is a city that was incorporated into modern Greece fairly late, in 1912. Moreover, the ancestors of a large portion of its residents were refugees from Turkey that arrived in Greece in 1923, following the massive exchange of populations between Greece and Turkey. This unique background of its inhabitants may have influenced their views of certain foreign countries. The third location, Corfu, was selected because it is one of the few places in Greece that never experienced Turkish domination. The island was for centuries under Venetian and subsequently British rule, before it was united with Greece in 1864. Therefore, its residents do not have the deep historic memories of the Turkish occupation and may have a very different view of modern Turkey and its products.

The questionnaire utilized to collect data in this study was an adaptation of the one developed by Klein et al. (1998) in order to investigate the influence that the animosity feelings of the Chinese consumers residing in the city of Nanjing may have on their willingness to purchase Japanese products. The questionnaire was originally composed in English and then translated into Greek. Another independent translator then back translated the Greek version of the questionnaire into English to ensure its validity. The final Greek version of the questionnaire was shown to a small number of Greek consumers to ensure that it was easily understood by the average Greek consumer.



## **Variables**

The scales used to measure the main five dependent and independent variables were modified versions of scales used in the past by Klein et al. (1998) and Shimp and Sharma (1987). The scales were modified in order to make them applicable to the Greek context. In order to measure Product Judgments made by consumers we used 6 different questions (Cronbach's  $\alpha=.81$ ). Willingness to Buy Turkish Products was measured by five questions ( $\alpha=.84$ ). Following Klein et al. (1998), we measured Consumer Ethnocentrism by using six statements ( $\alpha=.88$ ), while Consumer Animosity was measured by four questions inquiring of Greek consumers' feelings towards Turkey and Turkish people ( $\alpha=.90$ ). Lastly, Economic Animosity towards Turkey was measured by five statements ( $\alpha=.81$ ). The questions composing the five scales are presented in the appendix.

The moderating variables, which were tested to see whether they act as antecedents of consumer animosity, were measured by a single item. Respondents were asked about their age, sex, place of residence, educational background, and number of foreign languages that they spoke fluently.

## **Results and discussion**

In order to measure whether consumer animosity exerts a significant influence on the Greek consumers' willingness to purchase Turkish products three different multiple regressions were tested. The first regression tested the impact of ethnocentrism and product judgments on the willingness to buy Turkish products. Both independent variables were significant. As it was expected, a negative relationship was discovered between ethnocentrism and willingness to purchase Turkish products. On the other hand consumers that had a positive view of Turkish products were more likely to buy them. The second equation included ethnocentrism and product judgments as independent variables, but it also tested the consumer animosity

construct. The new independent variable was also a significant predictor of the dependent variable willingness to buy Turkish products and it also contributed to a large significant increase in the adjusted R Square from .338 to .409. The increase of .071 is significant at the  $< .001$  level and the results validate the first hypothesis which stated that consumer animosity will have a direct negative impact on willingness to buy beyond the influence exerted by ethnocentric feelings and product judgments. These findings coincide with previous research that had found that consumers in China (Klein et al., 1998) and the US (Klein, 2002) are influenced by animosity when they purchase products from a specific foreign country.

The third equation tested whether economic animosity exerts a significant influence in the willingness of Greek consumers to buy Turkish products. Previous research had shown the importance of economic animosity as a separate construct in influencing the purchasing behavior of consumers (Klein, 2002; Klein et al., 1998). Our data did not support the previous findings. Economic animosity did not influence Greek consumers significantly. The reason may be because Turkey is a lesser-developed nation than Greece and therefore Greeks do not perceive a major economic threat from Turkey. Possibly these feelings may change in the future as the Turkish economy develops, its products become more competitive in world markets and they further penetrate Greek markets.

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The second and third hypotheses examined whether ethnocentrism has a negative impact on consumers product judgments and their willingness to buy foreign products. Both hypotheses were supported. It appears that the ethnocentric feelings of consumers will influence their judgment of foreign products and their willingness to purchase them. These findings coincide with previous research that has shown the importance of ethnocentrism in various national settings (Sharma et al., 1995; Klein et al., 1998).

Hypotheses 4 through 8 examined the moderating influence that certain personal characteristics exert on the level of consumer animosity. These characteristics were

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gender, educational level, age, ability to speak foreign languages, and residence of the respondent. Table 4 shows the multiple regression of personal characteristics and consumer animosity. Our data show support for three of the hypotheses and provide some interesting implications for the other two. Hypotheses 4 and 8 stated that the gender of the respondent and their place of residence will not have a significant influence on their animosity feelings. Both hypotheses were supported. It appears that in a modern nation state where the influence of national media, universal education and mass culture are pervasive, men and women do not hold significantly different views on how they perceive foreign countries. The same seems to be true on regional historical memories. While in the past the historical background in a region may have had significant influence on the views of its inhabitants, the emergence of a modern national state may have eliminated these regional differences. Our data suggest that consumers have become a lot more homogeneous within the border of a nation state and hold similar views regardless of the region in which they reside.

Age also proved to be an important factor influencing consumer animosity. Younger consumers were less likely to hold animosity views. Our findings are similar with past research that also found age to be negatively related to animosity (Klein and Ettenson, 1999).

Contrary to our expectations, hypotheses 5 and 7 were not supported by the data. We were expecting education not to influence animosity feelings and knowledge of foreign languages to negatively impact the level of animosity. Our data show that better educated consumers have stronger animosity feelings in comparison to consumers with less education. This result contradicts past research (Klein and Ettenson, 1999) that did not discover a significant relationship between education and consumer animosity. Our results showing

education to have a positive influence on animosity may originate in the special characteristics of the Greek-Turkish dispute. This is an on-going conflict and not just a memory of ancient hatreds. Educated consumers are more likely to follow everyday political developments and that may strongly influence their animosity levels. If some type of rapprochement emerges in Greek-Turkish relationships it is very likely that the attitudes of educated consumers will change rapidly. The last personal characteristic, knowledge of foreign languages, contrary to our expectations, was not significant. The learning of foreign languages in Greece as in many other European nations, has become widespread. Consumers that speak foreign languages possibly do not possess any special characteristics anymore.

Finally, our data support Hypothesis 9. Table 5 shows the interaction of several personal characteristics and willingness to pay a premium for a domestically produced product instead of purchasing a product made in an “enemy” country. We found that consumers with higher educational backgrounds, higher levels of consumer animosity and consumers with strong ethnocentric feelings were more willing to pay a premium for domestically made products.

### **Conclusion, managerial implications and directions for future research**

This paper attempted to test the consumer animosity construct in a new national setting. The findings of our research show that consumer animosity is a distinct construct that influences the purchasing behavior of consumers independently of their ethnocentric views and perceptions of quality of foreign products. In addition, it appears that certain modifying factors exist, such as age and education that may influence a consumer’s animosity levels.

Our findings provide additional support to the argument that companies from specific countries that try to expand in formerly “enemy” countries need to take into consideration not only the ethnocentric feelings, but, in addition, the level of consumer animosity that may be prevailing toward products originating in countries perceived by local consumers as “enemy”

countries. If such animosity exists, large multinationals could deal with this problem by serving the target market with products originating in a third country, toward which the consumers of the target country have no animosity feelings. In addition, multinational firms could look for brand names that cannot be tied to specific countries toward which the consumers of the target market show animosity feelings. Furthermore, before international marketing managers take any final decisions about the most appropriate country of origin, they should investigate the personal characteristics of the target consumer group in order to verify whether they belong to the group of characteristics that are positively related to consumer animosity.

Of course, if the consumers' characteristics are not positively related to animosity, they could continue supplying the target market from the initial country of origin and, thus, avoid the "hassle" of having to find a new country of origin for their product. Ignoring, though, such animosity conditions is the worst choice for international marketing managers, since it could cost their firm a loss of sales and profits. In addition, since our research shows that previously found relationships between personal characteristics and animosity feelings are not the same with the ones found for Greek consumers, international marketers should not take it for granted that these relationships are the same in all countries.

Finally, our finding that Greek consumers are willing to pay a premium to buy local instead of imported products, should be taken seriously into consideration by international marketers when they take decisions concerning the pricing of products to be exported in an "enemy" country. Our finding implies that, depending on the size of the premium local consumers are willing to pay, a relatively small difference in price between the imported and the local product, the latter being the more expensive, may not be enough to convince the local consumers to buy the imported product.

Furthermore, since firms do not sell to consumers only, future research needs to examine the extent of consumer animosity feelings not only among consumers, but also among industrial buyers. Do buyers for industrial products share the same feelings as the general population or they tend to make decisions solely based on economic criteria and not based on emotions? An interesting question for further research is also to investigate which are the factors, in the underlying conflicts that cause animosity to appear. Why some conflicts tend to create long lasting animosity feelings, while the emotions created by other conflicts tend to evaporate when the conflict terminates? Another area of potential research is to measure the longevity of the animosity feelings. How long does consumer animosity last? If the conflict that has given birth to the animosity feelings does not exist anymore, how long does it take for the consumer animosity feelings to disappear? Finally, a question that needs to be investigated is whether consumers suppress feelings of animosity if the “enemy” country produces high-quality products, while the animosity feelings tend to perpetuate if the “enemy” nation is perceived as producing low-quality products. Undoubtedly, consumer animosity exists in international business and companies need to take it seriously into consideration when they plan their next international expansion venture.

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**TABLE 1**  
**Construct Intercorrelations**

	Product Judgements	Willingness to Buy	Consumer Ethnocentrism	Consumer Animosity
Economic Animosity				
Product Judgments	1.00			
Willingness to Buy	.350	1.00		
Consumer Ethnocentrism	-.164	-.488	1.00	
Consumer Animosity	-.259	-.519	.415	1.00
Economic Animosity	-.221	-.408	.495	.676
1.00				

**TABLE 2**  
**MODEL PARAMETER ESTIMATES AND T-VALUES**  
**REGRESSION ANALYSIS**

Dependent variable: Willingness to Buy						
	Equation 1		Equation 2		Equation 3	
	Par. Est.	T-Value	Par. Est.	T-Value	Par. Est.	T-value
Independent variables						
Consumer Ethnocentrism	-.472	-10.731***	-.358	-7.800***	-.358	-7.662***
Product Judgments	.263	5.975***	.171	3.882***	.187	
Consumer Animosity			-.309	-6.434***	-3.76	-
Economic Animosity					-.073	-1.196
ADUSTED R square		.338		.409		.431
Change in R square				.71***		.22

\*p<.10; \*\*p<.05; \*\*\*p<.01 (two-tailed tests)

**TABLE 3**  
**Intercorrelations of Moderating Factors for Consumer Animosity**

	Age	Education	Languages	Residence	Sex
Animosity					
Age	1.00				
Educational Background	-.046	1.00			
Foreign Languages	.174	.370	1.00		
Residence	-.123	-.017	.027	1.00	
Sex	-.125	-.098	-.113	.042	1.00
Consumer Animosity	.184	-.232	.061	-.017	.086
					1.00

**TABLE 4**  
**MODEL PARAMETER ESTIMATES AND T-VALUES**  
**REGRESSION ANALYSIS**

Dependent Variable: Consumer Animosity		
	Parameter Estimates	T-value
Independent variables		
Age	-.189	-3.852***
Educational Background	-.241	-4.655***
Foreign Languages	-.055	-1.046
Residence	.001	.026
Sex	.078	1.598
ADJUSTED R square	.083	

\*p<.10; \*\*p<.05; \*\*\*p<.01 (two-tailed tests)

**TABLE 5**  
**MODEL PARAMETER ESTIMATES AND T-VALUES**  
**REGRESSION ANALYSIS**

Dependent Variable: Willingness to pay a premium for a domestic product		
	Parameter Estimates	T-value
Independent variables		
Age	-.108	-2.309*
Educational Background	-.241	-4.655***
Foreign Languages	-.006	-.127
Consumer Animosity	.292	4.45***
Consumer Ethnocentrism	.304	5.74***
Economic Animosity	.040	.599
ADJUSTED R square	.278	

\*p<.10; \*\*p<.05; \*\*\*p<.01 (two-tailed tests)

## APPENDIX

The questionnaire was a modified version of Klein et al (1988). All questions were Likert 7 point questions. One denoted strongly agree and seven represented strongly disagree. The following questions were used:

### **Product Judgments**

Products made in Turkey are carefully produced and have fine workmanship  
Products made in Turkey are generally of a lower quality than similar products available from other countries  
Products made in Turkey show a very high degree of technological advancement.  
Products made in Turkey usually show a very clever use of color and design.  
Products made in Turkey are usually quite reliable and seem to last the desired length of time.  
Products made in Turkey are usually a good value for the money.

### **Willingness to Buy**

I would feel guilty if I bought a Turkish product.  
Whenever possible, I avoid buying Turkish products.  
Whenever available, I would prefer to buy products made in Turkey.  
I do not like the idea of owning Turkish products.  
If two products were equal in quality, but one was from Turkey and one was from Greece, I would pay 10% more for the product from Greece.

### **Consumer Ethnocentrism**

Greek products, first, last, and foremost  
Purchasing foreign-made products is un-Greek  
It is not right to purchase foreign products, because it puts Greeks out of jobs.  
We should purchase products manufactured in Greece instead of letting other countries get rich off of us.  
We should buy from foreign countries only those products that we cannot obtain within our own country.  
Greek consumers who purchase products made in other countries are responsible for putting their fellow Greeks out of work.

### **Animosity**

I dislike the Turks.  
I feel angry toward the Turks.  
I will never forgive Turkey for what it has done to Greeks in the past.  
Turkey should pay for what it has done to Greeks in the past.

### **Economic Animosity**

Turkey is not a reliable trading partner.  
Turkey wants to gain economic power over Greece.  
Turkey is taking advantage of Greece.  
Turkey has too much economic influence in Greece  
The Turks are doing business unfairly with Greece.