

# You Lose Some, You Win Some

By George Kun

My 2nd "Number Two Story" is also crap related, and it was another divine intervention in my life to substantiate the universal principle of:

"You lose some, you win some"

This second story, being entirely non-fiction, same as the previous one, requires some historical, cultural and psychological background. It never stops amazing me how deep and lasting impressions and perceptions we form in the early stages of our life and how they find a quiet and undisturbed corner in our minds... and just stay there, forever.

I, like many other people my age, have acquired a very substantial and relevant life experience, knowledge, wisdom and the maturity that goes with it. If we add to these natural processes the social engineering and conditioning we are all subject to in the form of lectures, courses and media influencing in political correctness, cultural sensitivity, and historical revisionism, we get a full picture of:

a) who we really are;

b) who we are often expected to be

and

c) who we choose to appear to be like.

My mother, who had only limited formal education, was an extraordinarily wise and intelligent woman, who enriched our souls and accelerated our awareness with many witty sayings of her own, or quoted. The one that stayed vividly in my mind is:

**"One cannot force a stupid idea into a smart man's head, and equally one cannot remove a stupid idea from a stupid man's head"**

Essentially, there is no effective substitute to our own experience, whatever it is. The difference is that a modern, democratic, multicultural society gives and uses on us the tool that enables us to maintain social harmony and peace, minimize offending the people that we depend on or have to live with, keep our jobs and get promotions, and sometimes even stay more reliably alive. Most of the people who do and say the appropriate things in the appropriate circumstances, just

learned a very useful skill, but their thinking and feelings have not changed much in time.

Years ago, my Polish boss faced a forcibly induced challenge to publicly disclose an example of his early life prejudices during a "Cultural Sensitivity" course. With an embarrassed grin he mumbled that his parents when returning from the market complained that they had to "Jew down" the cheese farmer, to get a better price. Then he quickly added; "I did not really know exactly what they meant. I was too young". Then, the course moderator asked something that I too, was itching to ask: "So how do you feel about it now?" As expected, my intelligent, politically correct and cowardly boss replied: "Well, it's clearly inappropriate and offensive and wrong to say things like that". I did not take my eyes off his face and enjoyed every moment of his very transparent effort to lie.

Now, back to me. As a school boy, I liked history and the colorful stories that went with that subject. Only much later I found out that the best valued historian in a totalitarian regime was the one who was able to "**predict the past**" and re-write history to the pleasing of the "Dictateur de Jour".



One thing did not change though, and that was the Turkish Ottoman rule of Romanian principalities of Wallachia, Moldavia, and other neighboring territories, for over four centuries. With that comes the image of the savage, ruthless, oppressive Turks, barging in immense numbers with huge armies over tiny, peaceful but resilient and heroic Christian nations. The cruelty inflicted on anyone resisting militarily or for not paying heavy tributes, was unimaginable. The Romanian folklore reacted to this hatred against the Turkish invaders with a number of clichés, that outlived the centuries of oppression. "Are you a Turk?" still means today: "Are you stupid? Don't you understand?" A particularly unsavoury lore was about the presumed Turkish historical and cultural conditioning for homosexual preferences among men and for anal intercourse with women. Interestingly enough, the Romanian Black Seaside resorts were swarming with Turkish tourists who were looking openly for that specific preference with the local prostitutes. At that time, Romania was still a fairly rigid, conservative society, which ridiculed and legally prosecuted sexual diversity.

On a wider political spectrum, Europe managed to stave off the Turkish invasion of Europe by defeating them in Vienna in 1683, and are still opposing Turkey's joining the European Union, even today.

Our hostility or prejudice against individuals or even groups of people is often a reflection of political or cultural manipulation by those in power and the media.



I remember a temporary but strong anti-Turkish sentiment was stirred simply by a very popular and successful 1978 American movie called "Midnight Express" where the Turkish judicial system and its executors, were portrayed in a very negative light.

A young American tourist tried to smuggle some drugs out of Turkey, and was caught and jailed. Nothing too exciting or unusual about this, but what rubbed the viewers the wrong way, was the cruelty and brutality of the prison guards, as portrayed in the movie. At its most dramatic point, the chief Turkish prison guard savagely beat the young imprisoned offender and tried to brutally sodomize him, but the desperate young man managed not

only to defend himself, but also kill the attacker and hang him on a hook, like a piece of meat and escape both the prison and the country in the guard's uniform. While the movie was controversial, the face of the sadistic Turkish guard Hamidou, played superbly by the American actor Paul Smith, a veteran in unsavoury roles, remained hauntingly unforgettable in my memory.

Not long after I saw this old movie, I was traveling through Europe, returning to Canada from Vienna.

My stopover in Schwechat, the small and cosy airport of the Austrian capital, was supposed to be a pleasant break for some excellent coffee and pastries and the usual stroll through the vast and colorful Duty Free Shopping mall. On my way towards the Food Court, I stopped for a Number One call of nature and entered the first facility with the "Gentlemen" sign on it. To my annoyance, all urinals were faced by men holding a brief case in their left hand and justifying their presence with the right hand. I wished I could have taken a picture of this grotesque line-up and I took it with my eyes, not a camera, of course. I had my own urges too, and the first door of the Number Two stalls was half open, so I entered quickly, sat down and made myself comfortable in that miniature but very private place. I rested my elbows on my thighs and my chin on my fists, and was staring blankly on the floor. Not for very long though, because I saw right at my feet a thick black leather wallet. First I moved it gently with the tip of my shoe, as if trying to see if it was real, or just painted on the floor or some other form of a hoax. Well, very clearly, it was real and then I dignified it with bending over enough to pick-it up by hand.

Again, I looked around in the small toilet cubicle, as if someone could see me or watch me or attack me...But no, it looked and felt safe, so I opened the wallet and saw in the first transparent plastic pocket the black and white picture of



Hamidou! Yes, the ferocious, sadistic Turkish prison guard, who tried to sodomize the young American drug smuggler, and ended-up dead, hanging on a meat hook. Same bulging dark eyes, wild menacing bone-chilling look, that ugly thick moustache, that wide mouth with smoked yellow crooked teeth. For sure it was him. With disgust and some curiosity I flipped the plastic pocket and on the other side I saw an identity card, with the same but much smaller picture of Hamidou in the top right corner and the rest of the card had all the credentials of a Turkish Police Officer from the Police Headquarters in Istanbul.

As I opened the wallet wider, a large wad of strange looking bills fell on the floor. I quickly stepped on them so they would not start flying away from the draft, then I picked them up. In total disbelief and shock, I counted € 3,325, an enormous amount of cash to be carried around loosely and negligently .

Then I realized that this must have been the bribe the young American paid to Hamidou, to let him escape from prison. But Hamidou was dead (at least in the movie), and the real guy who looked like him was the American actor Paul Smith... So I said to myself: "George, stop this crazy hallucination and mixing fantasy with reality... just do something useful and practical.

I made a quick summary of the situation: Hamidou was not Hamidou, and the Ottoman rule of my country of birth should not influence at all any decision I might take. And maybe the poor bastard who is dropping on toilet floors his identity card and his ill gotten money, deserves a second chance. I was still wondering on how long can such a stash of money stay unnoticed on the floor of the most frequented toilet stall, the first and closest to the men's washroom entrance. Probably not very long, so the man could still be in the Airport building.

I walked out of the washroom and headed straight to the Airport Guest Service. I was greeted by a polite, short, plump, round faced woman with very heavy

make-up, that was not helping her beautiful green eyes. When I looked at her name badge, I could read a long, tongue twisting name, ending in "oglu". Clearly a Turkish name. Well, not everybody returned back to Turkey in 1683.

I quickly handed over to her the "Hamidou" Police ID Card, explained that I found it on the toilet floor. The woman thanked me and I left. I still had about 45 minutes of free time before I had to board my plane. I walked to a nearby coffee shop, where I ordered a superb cappuccino and some fancy Viennese pastry. I had a perfect vantage point from where I could see the Guest Service Desk, without being seen. For the next half hour, the lady was paging my "Hamidou" every 5 minutes, both in perfect German and I assume in perfect Turkish too, but nobody showed-up. Then, I saw the lady handing over the document to a uniformed official and that was the end of it for me. I had mixed feelings, because I really wanted to see the face of this air head or rather loose pocket ass, and I was even toying with the idea of completing a high end "mitzvah" with returning the document and the cash.

Fortunately, God remembered what happened to me years before in the some lovely country of Austria, and returned to me that loss, the "hefty fine on crap" with extremely high interest.

**This concludes my long version of documenting how in life "You lose some, you win some"**