The evolution of inter-communal conflict and the dynamics of current stalemate in Cyprus

By

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Abstract

Many adults in Cyprus, regardless of their ethno-cultural background are at the same age or even younger than the conflict in Cyprus. Thus, the long history and numerous unsuccessful attempts towards finding a lasting settlement in Cyprus made the conflict laden with various lessons for the scholars of ethnic conflict, nationalism and conflict resolution. Shaped under colonialism, the Cyprus conflict has evolved over the years into a sophisticated issue as a result of insertions of new elements into its conventional conflict structure. Among many others, we should mention such factors as the demand for national self-determination, struggle for territorial control, communal autonomy, the cold war, constitutional crisis, intercommunal violence, territorial division and fruitless intercommunal talks. Each of the above factors has contributed to the evolution of the conflict in Cyprus. Nonetheless, the latest one is the EU membership that seems to transform the conflict dramatically.

Introduction: The Ottoman Legacy

Cultural-ethnic fabric of Cyprus has been a product of various effects that gave rise to the emergence of diverse identities in the island throughout her history. The two crucial events, namely, Mycenaean migration that started out in the fourteenth century B.C and the mass settlement of Moslem inhabitants just after the Ottoman conquest of the island in 1571 should be underlined as major historical influences on the island’s cultural identity. The first led to the creation of a ‘Greek speaking’, ‘Orthodox Christian’ community while the second resulted in the construction of a ‘Turkish speaking’, ‘Moslem’ community in the island.

‘Armenians’ and ‘Maronites’ who had migrated into the island in the sixth and twelfth centuries AD respectively and ‘Latins’ have been the minor cultural groups in the island. Nurtured by Greek language and culture, Orthodox Christianity flourished especially during the Byzantine era. Orthodox Christian and Moslem inhabitants of the island lived together, side by side, mostly in mixed settlements in peace, as distinct religious communities for centuries. In the

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course of Ottoman rule (1571-1878), religion and religious institutions were the crucial actors whose mission was to maintain the distinct identities of their communities.

Along with the effects of religious organisations, the development of a dual system in education was another factor that helped sustain religion-based separate cultural identities. In addition, religious leaders in both communities used to hold political status to act as community leaders. In fact, as soon as Cyprus came under his control, the Ottoman Sultan, entitled the Orthodox Church to represent local Christians. Throughout the Byzantine era, the Archbishop of Cyprus became the ethnarch serving as the ‘community leader’ of Christian population. The Ottoman state recognized this status of the Archbishop in the second half of the seventeenth century. In fact, the policy of Ottoman state was based on the millet system, by which different religious groups were granted certain local autonomy in particular community affairs.

The Orthodox Church was also empowered with certain powers in such issues as marriage, commerce, inheritance, and ownership. Despite intense interaction between the communities of Cyprus, the ‘millet system’ served to keep them separate because it gave each community opportunity to exist in the political system not only as a cultural group but also as an institutional entity. The millet system also served to provide a distinct identity for Moslem population, since Moslem inhabitants shared the same religious faith with the Ottoman ruling elite.

The existence of diverse identities in the island and the ‘Islamic’ character of the Ottoman ruling elite, however, did not result in any ethnic conflict between the Christian and Moslem inhabitants of Cyprus. Historical records point to the fact that the communities of Cyprus did not experience any kind of conflict even during the outstanding events such as the outbreak of local riots against the Ottoman administration. Furthermore, the opposite was the case. The riots against heavy taxes imposed by the Sultan on Cypriots were usually multi-religious consisting of members from all Cypriot communities.4

3 Millet system was a kind of classification of Ottoman subjects based on religious beliefs. For further details see R.C. Jennings (1993) Christians and Muslims in Ottoman Cyprus and the Mediterranean World, 1571-1640, New York: New York University Press. It is argued that the most important implication of the millet system in the case of Cyprus was the emergence of an influential role of the local orthodox church on the administration of the island. See Cobham, C. D. (1908) Excerpta Cypria: materials for a history of Cyprus, Cambridge: Cambridge university Press, p. 354.

Historical Background of the conflict in Cyprus

The Greek War of Independence was the turning point in the political expectations of the Orthodox Christian political elite. While being loyal to the Ottoman Sultan, the Orthodox Church of Cyprus served as a local partner of the Sultan utilizing a kind of local autonomy and having important institutional immunity especially in managing its property. The declining power of the Ottoman Empire and the powerful trends towards enshrining the ‘nation-state’ as an ideal model of political organization throughout Europe were among the major reasons that fostered nationalist feelings among the political elite led by the Orthodox Church. In addition, the execution of Archbishop Kyprianos and some leading figures of the Orthodox Christian community in 1821 by the Ottoman governor of Cyprus to foreclose any possibility of uprising was a dramatic event which eventually encouraged nationalist ideals among Orthodox Christians of the island.

Based on the treaty between Ottoman Empire and Britain known as ‘Cyprus Convention’, Ottoman Empire temporarily transferred the administration of the island to Britain in 1878 in exchange for protection against Russian expansionist actions. Britain maintained her political grip on Cyprus from 1878 to 1960. The British, however, annexed the island in 1914 as response to the Ottomans’ involvement in the WWI in alliance with Germany. As the ‘successor state’ to the Ottoman Empire, Turkey recognized the British rule in Cyprus under the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923. Since Greece was a signatory of the treaty, it also accepted British sovereignty over the island. The transformation of the island’s administration to a new foreign power did not generate any radical reaction among the ordinary members of Cypriot communities. While remaining loyal to the British colonial rule the political elites in both communities, however, began to air conflicting views on particular areas on the domestic politics. The ‘legal status’ of the island was the most important issue electrifying political atmosphere. Influenced by Greek war of independence, Orthodox Church of Cyprus and Greek speaking political elite began to articulate their sympathy to the idea of enosis. Moslem political elite used to express its sympathy towards the restoration of Ottoman supremacy on the island in response to the unionist claims. Such expectations, however, did not create any massive political mobilization in both communities.

Until 1940s, intellectuals from both communities tended to share similar political values.

5 Enosis means unification of Cyprus with mainland Greece.
about the relations between the two communities. This is quite evident for conflicts that took place rarely and that created tension including the use of violence. When faced with a local intercommunal violence that erupted in 1912, the leaders from both communities acted quite sensitively to maintain peace and good relations between their communities.

**Institutionalization of Differences under British Rule**

During the years of the British rule, the Orthodox Church, as well as Moslem leaders, began to insist on maintaining certain traditional rights to which they were entitled during Ottoman era. Among others, the most important claim included the exemption of properties of religious institutions from taxation. The Orthodox Church also claimed natural political representation of the Christian population of the island through bishops.

Between 1878 and 1930, the colonial administration did not face with any serious challenge against its sovereignty in Cyprus. This situation, however, cannot be regarded as unconditional acceptance of colonial administration or the lack of political attachments to local political actors. When the colonial administration launched certain policies to reshape the traditional social structures established by Ottomans, elites of the two communities began to insist on what they already had.

The British reactions to the conflicting claims of political elites in both communities were generally deviating, if not ambivalent. When the Orthodox Church appeal to British early in colonial era to get support for the *enosis* cause, the colonial administration declared precisely that Cyprus belonged to the Ottoman Empire. In 1907, however, a British spokesperson, Winston Churchill, justified the pro-enosis aspirations of Orthodox Church of Cyprus by stating that:

…the Cypriot people, who are of Greek descent should regard their incorporation with what may be called their mother-country as an ideal to be earnestly, devoutly, and fervently cherished. Such a feeling is an example of the patriotic devotion which so nobly characterizes the Greek nation (…).  

Although Churchill stressed that Britain was also bound to regard the opinion of the Moslem population of the island that ‘British occupation of Cyprus should not lead to dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire’, the Greek Cypriot political elite was satisfied that their demand for *enosis* was not out of agenda. Moreover, the unification of Cyprus with Greece was

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6 Correspondence relating to the Affairs of Cyprus – C. 3396 (1908). Quoted by Captain C.W.J. ORR 1972, Cyprus Under British Rule, Zeno Publisher: London, p. 163
offered by Britain in 1915 on the condition that Greece supported Britain against Germany in WW1.

British colonial rule challenged the role of traditional institutions which had once served to maintain distinct cultural identities. This challenge, however, did not create any obstacle to institutionalise cultural differences between the two major communities through initiating modern political institutions based on ethno-religious identities. British colonial administration introduced legal regulations that aimed to maintain separate education and set up modern institutions of election and representation based on religious group membership.

Under British colonial rule, the first Cyprus Constitution came into effect in 1879 which provided equal representation for Christian and Moslem communities in the newly established legislative assembly. This assembly functioned as an advisory organ until it was suspended in 1931. Equal representation in the assembly received frenetic acclamation of Moslem political elite because it was consistent with Ottoman legacy, while it led to opposition of Archbishop who demanded proportional representation. In 1882, however, British administration amended some provisions of the constitution and established proportional representation. Thus, it was the time for the Moslem leaders to express their dissatisfaction, while the Archbishop was gratified by this amendment. The new regulation did not stamp out the demand of Orthodox Church, whose members were usually in majority among Christian representatives in the legislative assembly, towards more local autonomy, national self-determination (enosis or independence of the island). Such demands that were closely associated with the idea of terminating colonial rule used to be protested by Mufti (the Moslem leader) who claimed that they threaten peace and tranquillity in the island. Being identified itself culturally with the Ottoman ruling elite, the Moslem leadership was reactionary to any change in the existing legal status of the island.

The Post WWI Era

During the early 1920s, intellectuals and political elites in both communities were apt to renounce religious identification and began to use ethnic-national vocabulary to define community boundaries and cultural identity. Thus, through a process of identity transformation, Moslem and Christian communities became ‘Turks’ and ‘Greeks’ of Cyprus, respectively7.

The conflicting perspectives pronounced by intellectuals from both communities were

about the political status of the island. While maintaining their allegiance to the idea of *enosis*, the Orthodox Church and its representatives, both in the Legislative Assembly and in the local media, increased their opposition to the colonial administration. The essence of this opposition was that the colonial administration should provide people with more rights, especially more political participation in the affairs of the island. This, however, did not erode the legitimacy of the colonial rule. Contrary to the criticisms and political reactions of political speakers of both communities, many Cypriots from both communities were recruited into various posts at the different levels of administration including security forces and worked in harmony towards supporting political stability.

However, *enosis* was used by the Orthodox Church as a symbol of its resistance against the modernising policies of the colonial government. The basic motives behind the political opposition of the Church had lied in the demands to maintain its traditional privileges. In 1924, the Church boycotted by-elections, but some independent candidates challenged this decision and run for membership in the legislative assembly. In the same year, pro-Church members of the legislative assembly proposed a draft decision appealing to the British governor of the island to include a statement into his opening speech in support of *enosis*. A temporary coalition between Moslem, English and four Christian members of the legislative assembly rejected this proposal.

Despite the opposition of the Orthodox Church, a new legislation on primary school education was enacted in 1929 and the powers held by community councils were transformed to the Governor. Moslem members, English members (official members appointed by the Colonial administration) and three Christian members supported this legislation. This transformation of community powers to the colonial administration created intracommunal cleavages in both communities and mobilised a group of oppositional intellectuals in Moslem community whose basic arguments about the issue were largely identical to those that were contented by the Orthodox Church.

Opposition to the centralization policies of the colonial administration that eroded community autonomy became the common denominator that united Christian and Moslem opposition to the colonial administration. A leading Turkish Cypriot weekly newspaper, *Söz*, for example, published an article of a Greek Cypriot lawyer, Dr. A. Emilyanidi, in which he was articulating the idea that the policies of the colonial administration relating to the secondary education were a clear violation of ‘minority’ rights of Turkish Cypriot community which would
have been under the protection of the League of Nations.

The first most important uprising of the Orthodox Church against British colonial administration that erupted in 1931 brought the tacit conflict between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot political elites. Despite intracommunal divisions, the Greek Cypriot elite was largely loyal to the idea of enosis or self-government while the Turkish Cypriot elite concentrated on the maintenance of the status quo.

**Politicization of Intercommunal Relations**

During the early years of WWII political scene in Cyprus began to witness massive mobilization of various segments from both communities. Almost every group of society such as workers, teachers, peasants and intellectuals began to take part in their professional organizations and demand both socio-economic and political improvements from the colonial government. Although the degree of mobilization was clearly the highest in the G/C community, almost all organizations bore a bi-communal character. A new political party, AKEL was established as the successor of the communist party that was banned by the colonial administration in 1931. Although AKEL considered enosis as the aspiration of people of Cyprus and declared its support to it in 1942, the party’s approaches towards an alternative regime to colonial rule in Cyprus vacillated between self-government, independence and enosis. The political direction of the Orthodox Church and Greek Cypriot nationalist groups, however, was precisely shaped by the demand for enosis and only enosis.

Conflict motives leading to open disputes between the two communities intensified in the Post-WW2 era as a result of ethnic politicization and nationalism. The international popularity of the principle of ‘national self-determination’ provided justification for anti-colonialist struggle which made Greek Cypriot political elites demand ‘national restoration’ which might have meant enosis, independence or autonomy (self-government). Any of the above possibilities, however, was regarded unacceptable by the political groups in the Turkish Cypriot community whose perceptions about the political regime in Cyprus were largely shaped by a fear that as a ‘minority’ they might lose their rights in a post-colonial regime. Thus, politicization in the Greek Cypriot community against the colonial rule created political sensitivity in the Turkish Cypriot leadership and fostered a counter-politicization against the Greek Cypriot demands and expectations. Opposition to such changes predisposed the Turkish Cypriot political groups and organizations to
demand a preservation of the existing colonial rule as the only preferable international status for Cyprus. While the Greek Cypriot political mobilization was a manifestation of dissatisfaction of people with the colonial socio-economic policies, Turkish Cypriot political mobilization was basically a reaction to the Greek Cypriot majority and its political objectives. A community organization (KATAK\textsuperscript{8}) was established by the Turkish Cypriots with a specific political goal. As described in its constitution, KATAK mentioned the ‘minority status’ of the Turkish Cypriot community and aimed to protect its rights.

**Massive Mobilization and Nationalisms**

Political mobilizations in both communities began to transform into nationalist demands and actions in the late 1940s. A new Turkish Cypriot political party, MilliParti\textsuperscript{9} was established in 1949 as a result of a merger of KATAK and Cyprus National Turkish Peoples Party (KMTHP-Ki\textperiodcenteredbris Milli T\textperiodcenteredrk Halk Partisi\textsuperscript{10}). The name of this party was changed into ‘Cyprus is Turkish Party-Ki\textperiodcenteredbris T\textperiodcenteredrk\phantom{.}Partisi’ in 1955. As its name suggested, ‘Cyprus is Turkish Party’ represented a nationalistic political orientation and a reaction to the enosis struggle which began to dominate Cypriot politics after the plebiscite held by the Orthodox Church on 15 January 1950. It was announced by the bishops that there was 96 per cent vote in favor of enosis. Plebiscite results solidified the political leadership of the Orthodox Church in the Greek Cypriot community. Citing the principle of national self-determination the Greek Cypriot nationalist leadership began to organize massive demonstrations to force the colonial administration to accept enosis voluntarily.

In the middle of 1950s, Greek Cypriot nationalists gained political control in the Greek Cypriot community and a newly formed illegal organization, EOKA\textsuperscript{11}, undertook violent acts against British targets. Prior to the armed violence, EMAK *elaborate which then became EOKA announced that colonialism was the common enemy of the communities in Cyprus and that they were not against Turkish Cypriots. Communists, however, were regarded as traitors and they were excluded from the national struggle against the colonial rule. Although Turkish Cypriot

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\textsuperscript{8} KATAK stands for ‘Ki\textperiodcenteredbris Adasi Turk Azinli\textperiodcentered Kurumu’- Association of the Turkish Minority of the Island of Cyprus.  
\textsuperscript{9} Its full name was Cyprus National Turkish Union Party.  
\textsuperscript{10} KMTHP was established in 1944 and led by Dr Küçük. Küçük was a leading member of KATAK but left this organization in1944.  
\textsuperscript{11} In Greek ‘Ethniki Organosis Kyprion Agoniston’ (National Organisation of Cypriot Fighters).
leadership condemned the use of violence, a counter armed struggle was initiated by TMT\textsuperscript{12} as response to pro-enosis activities. As a result of the armed struggle of EOKA, colonial government leaned largely on Turkish Cypriot activism to balance Greek Cypriot nationalist uprising. Many young Turkish Cypriots were recruited into the police force to counter EOKA armed attacks. This policy of colonial government initiated tension and then led to intercommunal fighting which terrorized all communities of Cyprus.

Intercommunal fighting in the late 1950s not only created polarization between the two communities but also changed the nature of the conflict. Until the mid 1950s Cyprus problem remained to represent a conflict between the colonial administration and the majority community whose political leadership aimed to gain political autonomy or independence of Cypriots from the colonial rule. The political actors of Greek Cypriot community have never perceived Turkish Cypriot community as their major adversary until the late part of 1950s. British-Turkish Cypriot alliance against enosis and EOKA struggle and the insularity of Greek Cypriot leadership towards excluding Turkish Cypriots from a possible intercommunal solidarity resulted in intercommunal fighting of 1957-59 which transformed the British-Greek Cypriot conflict into a Greek Cypriot-Turkish Cypriot conflict.

Aided by the motherlands, nationalist leaderships solidified their ascendancy in both communities on the eve of independence. Their major goals and perspectives on the future political status of the island were in profound conflict. Greek Cypriot leadership began to consider Turkish Cypriot community as the British’s closest ally whose basic objective was to prevent majority community from demanding its democratic rights including the right to self-determination. Turkish Cypriot political activism which clearly manifested its resistance to enosis, the increasing diplomatic initiatives of the Turkish government against enosis and Turkish political support for a model of solution encouraging separation of the two communities predisposed Greek Cypriot leadership to believe that not only the colonial rule but also Turkish Cypriot leadership and Turkish government were standing out against rightful cause of national liberation. For Greek Cypriot leadership, the rights of Turkish Cypriot ‘minority’ could not be more important than the rights of majority community.

**Deepening the Conflict: Intercommunal Strife**

\textsuperscript{12} Established and directed by a special unit in Turkish Army, TMT recruited many young members of Turkish Cypriot community.
When EOKA initiated violence against British targets in 1955 both *Cyprus is Turkish Party* and the newly established Turkish Cypriot secret organization *Volkan* declared their anxiety about the political intentions of the Greek Cypriot leadership. Intercommunal fighting was shaped and formed in the initial Turkish Cypriot protests against EOKA activities. EOKA’s activities included military sabotage, shooting at police officers, armed attacks on telecommunication infrastructure, planting bombs near the government buildings and bombing military barracks and police stations. As a result of the armed attacks on police forces, Turkish Cypriot policemen began to sustain serious injuries.

In early 1957 Turkish Cypriot groups in Nicosia began to organize counter attacks on Greek Cypriot properties in revenge for such injuries. Turkish Cypriot leadership managed to show its reaction by organizing mass rallies protesting the death of Turkish Cypriot police officers. In June 1957 Turkish Cypriot members of municipal councils in big towns resigned from their positions. Turkish Cypriot councillors used to protest “the increased tendency of Greek mayors to undertake political activities unconnected with normal municipal administration (…)”\textsuperscript{13}. The idea that the peaceful coexistence of the two communities was almost impossible gained ascendancy in the Turkish Cypriot leadership.

This intercommunal confrontation transformed the relationship between the two communities into a communal strife in mid 1958. Nicosia, the capital city, became the centre of conflict where people from both communities were injured or killed. Violent confrontations between the two communities tended to spread to other regions of the island leading to killings, injuries, destruction of buildings and forced migration. Some villages lost their bi-communal character and big towns experienced physical divisions on ethno-cultural lines. Intercommunal conflict caused a rift in the economic and social relations between the members from the two communities.

Nationalist organizations in both communities were not only in conflict with each other but also with the intra-community groups who resisted the use of violence and rejected to share the nationalist goals. The nationalists attempted to suppress the intra-community opposition who advocated peaceful relationship between the two communities. The nationalists used violence against intra-community opposition during which a Turkish Cypriot leftist group was almost

\textsuperscript{13} Diana Weston Markides, 2001, *Cyprus 1957-1963: From Colonial Conflict to Constitutional Crisis*, A Modern Greek Studies Yearbook Supplement, no. 8, Minnesota: University of Minnesota, pp. 16-17
exterminated in 1958.

The intercommunal violence intensified in June and July 1958 and was suddenly stopped in August in the same year as a result of a joint diplomatic initiative engineered by the British, Turkish and Greek Prime Ministers. TMT and EOKA voluntarily followed this initiative and declared cease-fire against each other. There have been convincing traces that the three NATO allies, namely, Britain, Greece and Turkey had agreed on a plan at the NATO conference held on 18 December 1959 in Paris to change the status quo while maintaining and guaranteeing the NATO interest both on the island and in the wider Eastern Mediterranean. The NATO’s involvement in the issue can be traced back to the ‘Tripartite Conference on the Eastern Mediterranean and Cyprus’ between Britain, Greece and Turkey, held on 29 August 1955, just after violent actions of EOKA broke out. During the conference, the British Foreign Secretary Macmillan underlined the ‘vital and far-reaching obligations’ of Britain, Greece and Turkey as members of NATO and stated that ‘each of the three countries was responsible for a naval sub-area in the Eastern Mediterranean’ and that ‘all forces were under the Supreme Allied Commander’.

Unsuccessful Resettlement: Republic of Cyprus

The compromise reached by Greece and Turkey at the NATO Conference in Paris paved the way for an agreement in Zurich on 11 February 1959 for the establishment of an independent republic of Cyprus. The Zurich agreement included a framework (twenty-seven basic articles) for the constitutional system of the Republic. Britain, Greece, Turkey and representatives of Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities met at the London Conference to finalise the agreement to settle the Cyprus problem. The settlement was signed on 19 February 1959. A Treaty of Guarantee was also signed, under which Great Britain, Greece, and Turkey guaranteed the constitutional order, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the Republic of Cyprus. The Republic of Cyprus was established on 16 August 1960.

The new constitution of the independent Republic of Cyprus created both central organs and community organs without introducing a territorial division of powers. For this reason, the political system established in 1960 came to be called ‘functional federalism’ in which central

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15 Crawshaw, 1978, p130.
organs were entitled to have the conventional powers of the central government in a decentralised system while community affairs were assigned to community authorities. Form of government was a presidential system consisting of extreme consociational elements, which gave executive powers of the central government to the Greek Cypriot President and the Turkish Cypriot Vice President.\footnote{Constitution of Cyprus Republic, article 46.} There would be a Council of Ministers made up of seven Greek Cypriot and three Turkish Cypriot ministers, whose members were to be appointed separately by the President and Vice President from their respective communities. Both the President and Vice-President had the power of veto over decisions of the Council of Ministers relating to such issues as external relations, security, defence, finance and budget.

The House of Representatives was vested with central legislative power in areas that were not vested in the Community authorities (Community Chambers) for each community. The ratio of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot representation in the legislative organ was 70 and 30 per cent respectively. Legislative decisions relating to electoral laws, municipality issues and taxation required simple but separate majority of members from each community. The sovereignty of ‘independent’ Cyprus was a limited one in the sense that the power of the House of Representatives to change particular constitutional principles was restricted. The constitution strictly classified citizens of Cyprus into two groups\footnote{According to the article 2 of the constitution the Greek Community comprises all citizens of the Republic who are of Greek origin and whose mother tongue is Greek or who share the Greek cultural traditions or who are members of the Greek-Orthodox Church: and the Turkish Community comprises all citizens of the Republic who are of Turkish origin and whose mother tongue is Turkish or who share the Turkish cultural traditions or who are Moslems.} and gave them political rights based on ethnic-cultural group membership. A Constitutional Court was established consisting of three judges (one Greek Cypriot, one Turkish Cypriot and one neutral judge).\footnote{According to article 133 of the Constitution ‘The neutral judge shall not be a subject or a citizen of the Republic or of the Kingdom of Greece or of the Republic of Turkey or of the United Kingdom and the Colonies’}. The composition of the public administration including police force and army was also subject to 70/30 ratios.

One of the most important newly emerged issues stimulating conflict was about the establishment of separate municipal administrations in the five largest towns.\footnote{These included Nicosia, Famagusta, Limassol, Larnaca and Paphos.} The Constitution prescribed a division of municipal areas in each town into two territorial parts and established separate Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot municipalities whose organs were to be elected by Turkish and Greek Cypriot electorate separately. Any regulation, however, was not made...
showing municipal boundaries and this issue was left to the joint decision of the President and Vice-President.

Constitutional Crises and Intercommunal Conflict

The new Cypriot state was a ‘reluctant republic’ because it did not fully satisfy any political actor in both communities. It was a reality that the most crucial political and administrative positions at the state and community levels were held by Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalist militants whose perspectives towards the other community were shaped either by the policy of ‘enosis and only enosis’ or ‘partition or death’. Among the incidences leading to disagreements between the representatives of the two communities it is possible to mention the lack of confidence that the other side was ready to follow its national cause, Turkish refusal to vote for the budget in December 1961, Greek Cypriot hesitations towards accepting separate municipalities and privileges given to the Turkish Cypriot community in public administration. The Greek Cypriot incessant demands for a revision in the constitution met a strong resistance by the Turkish Cypriot leadership.

Three years after establishment, the intercommunal violent conflicts arouse again as a result of disagreements between the two leaderships about the constitutional system. It was obvious that nationalist circles were not satisfied with the agreements which in their perception were blocking enosis and taksim. During the first three years of independence the nationalist groups in Greek Cypriot community pressured on President Makarios to abandon the constitution and the Treaty of Guarantee in favour of enosis, while secret organizations in the Turkish Cypriot community terrorized Turkish Cypriot leftist intellectuals who used to advocate political loyalty to the republican regime and support the intercommunal friendship and solidarity. While the Turkish Cypriot leadership insisted on rapid implementation of the constitution, the Greek Cypriot leadership began to claim that the constitution was unworkable due to excessive powers it provided to the Turkish Cypriots.

In December 1963 armed groups from the two communities intensified tensions which led to a civil war between Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots. Intercommunal fighting started in Nicosia and spread throughout the island. Greek Cypriot forces and paramilitary groups attacked Turkish Cypriot villages and enclaves aiming to gain absolute territorial control in the island.

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Turkish Cypriots suffered from intercommunal violence and experienced a lot of difficulties much more than Greek Cypriots. More than 500 people were either killed or were injured. About 25 000 Turkish Cypriots in the mixed or smaller villages and hamlets abandoned their original homes and gathered in the biggest ghettos Turkish Cypriot formed. Turkey and Greece actively involved in the conflict by sending either military personnel or trainers or providing weapons for the fighting groups. Greece launched about 10000 troops, and Turkey’s planes bombed Kokkina Mansoura region to provide military support for Turkish Cypriot fighters resisting Greek Cypriot forces. Intercommunal violence and killings terrorised especially members of the Turkish Cypriot community and generated profound hatred and collective mistrust between the two communities. There had been an abating trend in the Intercommunal tensions between 1964 and 1967. With the total withdrawal of Greek armed forces from the island normalisation gained momentum after 1967. The representatives of the two communities started intercommunal talks in 1968 under the auspices of the special representative of the UN aiming at resolving the problem by revising the 1960 constitutional system. Intercommunal talks continued until 1974 without culminating into any fruitful result.

Reproducing the Conflict: De Facto Division

As a result of continual intracommunal conflicts and political schism in the Greek Cypriot community, the National Guard, staged a coup d’état against the Cyprus government on 15 July 1974 which paved the way for Turkish intervention on 20 July 1974. The Greek coup d’état and Turkish military intervention culminated in the de-facto division of the island. Turkish troops extended its control to the northern part of Cyprus which is roughly one-third of the island’s territory. Thousands of Cypriots from both communities were evacuated from their original homes in order to escape from danger. They were resettled in the houses which originally belonged to the members of the other community. Authorities of the Turkish Cypriot administration issued a kind of deed and distributed the land and houses to the Turkish Cypriots in exchange for their property they left in the south. Since 1974 there has been a Turkish Cypriot separate state in the North recognized by Turkey only. The UN and international community recognize a single Cypriot political entity called the Republic of Cyprus which has effective control in the south (Greek-Cypriot controlled area). Despite the fact that the leaders of the two
communities agreed in 1977 and 1979\textsuperscript{22} that Cyprus dispute would be resolved on the grounds of a bi-communal and bi-zonal federal system, the political situation has worsened with the newly arisen conflicts relating to such issues as property, security, constitutional system and demographic changes.

**Property issue:** Greek Cypriot side asserts that people who left their property either in the North or South should have the right to return to their original homes and property, while Turkish Cypriot side stresses the need to put a kind of limitation on property rights by an arrangement that allow global exchange of property. Greek Cypriots who left property in the northern Cyprus have brought cases before the European Court of Human Rights against Turkey where they claimed that Turkey violated the European Convention of Human Rights. In the case of Loizidou\textsuperscript{23}, the ECHR ruled that Turkey had violated the relevant articles of the Convention; Loizidou is still the legal owner of the property and ordered Turkey to pay about one million euros in compensation.

**Security/guarantee issue:** The stance of the two sides on the issue of security has been a persistent source of conflict. Greek Cypriot side approaches the issue within the logic of total demilitarization of the island and demands a system of multilateral guarantee (guarantee by the Security Council) and rejects the existing guarantee system. Turkish side, on the other hand, aims to preserve the existing system of guarantee which grants Turkey the right of unilateral intervention in any activity which is contrary to the constitutional order of Cyprus.

**Constitutional system:** Although the two sides state that solution should be based on a federal system, there is little overlaps between their perspectives relating to the basic characteristics of the federal system. The opinions in both communities relating to a possible constitutional system range from a unitary system to a confederal system. The Greek Cypriot official positions focus on a centralized federation while Turkish Cypriot official positions border on a confederation. Contrary to the expectations of the Turkish Cypriot side that a ‘consociational decision making’ is an appropriate instrument guaranteeing and securing Turkish Cypriots’ communal rights and

\textsuperscript{21} The Greek Cypriot Army that was established in 1964.
\textsuperscript{22} High level agreements between the two leaders.
participation in the political system, Greek Cypriot side has insisted on the notions of ‘effective decision making’ and ‘majoritarian rule’. These two approaches have usually included contradictory elements.

**Issues relating to demographic structure of Northern Cyprus:**

After 1974 thousands of citizens of Turkey were settled in the north and provided with local Turkish Cypriot citizenship by the Turkish government and Turkish Cypriot authorities. They were also given houses and land which were left by Greek Cypriots. Raising the argument that the presence of Turkish settlers menaces the cultural identity of Northern Cyprus and political balance in the whole island, Greek Cypriot side demands total withdrawal of Turkish settlers from the island. The response of the Turkish Cypriot side, however, has been a determined rejection of this.

**Current Situation: The Annan Plan**

On 12 December 2002, the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, produced a comprehensive plan (known as the Annan Plan) under the aegis of Western powers. Aiming to break the ongoing stalemate in Cyprus, the Secretary-General urged the leaderships of the two Cypriot communities to discuss and finalize political and constitutional issues on the basis of his plan. Both sides expressed widespread discontents on particular aspects of the Annan Plan except the frenetic support by Turkish Cypriot leftist opposition and many civil society organizations. People in both sides were asked to express their opinion about the Plan in referenda on 24 April 2004. While 65 per cent of Turkish Cypriot electorate gave support to the Plan, 75 per cent of Greek Cypriot electorate rejected it. Since it was not approved by the two sides at separate simultaneous referenda, the Plan did not enter into force and Greek Cypriot-led ‘Republic of Cyprus’ joined the EU on 1 May 2004.

The plan clearly proposes a bi-communal and bi-zonal federation which shall have single...

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23 ECHR decision in the case of Loizidou v. Turkey, 28 July 1998

international personality and parallel to its basic premise divides political powers between the two layers of authority, namely the central-federal government and the constituent units.

Property issue: The plan is based on a comprehensive logic accommodating legalist (Greek Cypriot) and political-pragmatist (Turkish Cypriot) perspectives in terms of its approaches relating to property issue. Property rights are recognized but also restricted so as to foster the bizonal character of the new federal republic. The plan proposes territorial adjustment by which about 26 per cent of the island’s territory is given under the control of Turkish Cypriot constituent state. In addition, the plan offers compensation and limited reinstatement for dispossessed property owners. Despite territorial adjustment, property issue remains extremely problematic because many Greek Cypriots demand full reinstatement.

Security/guarantee issue: The plan maintains the existing guarantee system stressing that the Treaty of Guarantee shall be applied mutatis mutandis to the new state of affairs. The guarantor powers (Britain, Greece and Turkey) shall provide guarantee both for United Cyprus Republic and constituent states (and for their constitutional order). Based on a method of gradual demilitarization, the plan also suggests the removal of Turkish and Greek contingents from the island and dissolution of local Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot military and paramilitary forces, including reserve units. The plan prohibits military or paramilitary training of citizens.

Constitutional system: The essence of the constitutional system of Cyprus suggested by the Annan Plan is based on the principle of bi-zonal, bi-communal ‘federalism’. The new Cypriot state consists of a central authority (federal government) and two sub-national authorities (Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot constituent states). Among others, the central/federal authority is vested with powers to have control on external relations, monetary and financial issues (such as issuance of currency, monetary policy and banking regulations, budget and all indirect taxation, 

26 It is stated in the plan (Foundation Agreement, art. 10) that some dispossessed owners ‘who opt for compensation, as well as institutions, shall receive full and effective compensation for their property’ while other ‘dispossessed owners have the right to reinstatement of one-third’ of their total property ownership.

27 According to article 10 of the Foundation agreement, ‘The Treaty of Guarantee, in applying mutatis mutandis to the new state of affairs established in this Agreement and the Constitution, shall cover, in addition to the independence, territorial integrity, security and constitutional order of the United Cyprus Republic, the territorial integrity, security and constitutional order of the constituent states.’
and federal economic and trade policy), natural resources, communications, federal citizenship and immigration and intellectual property and weights and measures. The two constituent states are entitled to control all other powers not vested in the federal authority. The plan also states that competences of the constituent entities shall include security, law and order and the administration of justice within their territorial boundaries.

The federal legislature shall be bicameral, with a Senate consisting of equal number of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriot elected by Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots separately and a Chamber of Deputies consisting of deputies from constituent states. Number of deputies from each constituent state shall be proportional to the number of Cypriot citizens holding internal citizenship status of each constituent state. While election for Senate is based on community membership aiming at providing equal representation for communities, election for the Chamber of Deputies is based on territorial group membership that allows representation and political action beyond ethnic/cultural boundaries. In addition, the small Armenian, Maronite and Latin minority communities are given separate representation (at least one membership to each minority) in the Chamber of Deputies.

The Plan suggests a series of consociational arrangements both at elite and mass levels. Decision making in Senate especially on particular issues requires the support of at least two-fifths of senators from each constituent state. In contrast to above issues, a simple majority ‘including one quarter of senators present and voting from each constituent state’ is required. The logic of consociationalism can also be seen in executive decision making process in which each constituent state is proportionally represented and decisions shall be held by simple majority comprising at least one member from each constituent state in Presidential Council.

The Present Situation in Cyprus

Since the fierce intercommunal fighting in 1963 Turkish Cypriot community has not been represented in any organ of the Republic of Cyprus. Until 1974 Turkish Cypriot leadership blamed Greek Cypriot leadership for exercising violent pressures to expel Turkish Cypriots from the political and administrative positions in the Republic of Cyprus. After 1974, however, it

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28 Constitution of the United Cyprus Republic article 14.
29 These issues mainly include ‘ratification of international agreements on matters which fall within the legislative competence of the constituent states, adoption of laws and regulations concerning citizenship, immigration, water resources and taxation; approval of the federal budget and election of the Presidential Council.'
began to claim that the Republic of Cyprus did not exist at all and that it was politically undesirable to take a step backwards to restore the Republic of Cyprus. After Turkish military intervention on 20 July 1974 it is declared that an ‘Autonomous Turkish Cypriot Administration’ was established within the territorial boundaries controlled by the Turkish military in the northern Cyprus. On 13 February 1975, Turkish Cypriot leadership announced that ‘Turkish Federated State of Cyprus’ was formed to foster a possible federal solution. The UN Security Council expressed its regrets for this ‘unilateral’ decision that ‘a part of the Republic of Cyprus would become a “Federated Turkish State”’. On 15 November 1983, however, ‘Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus’ (TRNC) was declared. Although, it was stated that the establishment of TRNC did not create any obstacle for a federal solution in Cyprus, Turkish Cypriot leadership claimed international recognition. This attempt led to an immediate reaction by the UN Security Council. The SC stressed that this declaration is ‘legally invalid’ and ‘incompatible with the 1960 Treaty concerning the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus and the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee’.

The international community has been inclined to recognize the fact that there is a de facto autonomous Turkish Cypriot administration representing Turkish Cypriot community. It also insisted on refusing the TRNC’s claims towards being recognized as a sovereign state. Furthermore, most decision of the UN Security Council demanded respect for sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the Republic of Cyprus. The United Nations and other international organizations regard the Greek Cypriot led administration as the ‘legitimate government of the Republic of Cyprus’ whose ability to impose its laws and order in the northern Cyprus is restricted by de facto division. Despite such indirect support to the 1960 constitutional order, the United Nation Security Council developed a model of solution based on the principle of bi-zonal and bi-communal federation which subsequently emerged as parts of the basic framework of the Annan Plan.

Preference Orderings of the Ruling Elites in the Two Communities vis a vis the “Solution”

Given the above analysis, it is quite obvious that the current preference ordering of the Greek Cypriot leadership vis a vis the “solution” to the Cyprus problem is as follows:

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32 ‘Bi-communality’ was first used in the Security Council Resolution no. 649, 12 March 1990 and restated in subsequent decisions while ‘bi-zonality’ was first used in the Security Council Resolution no. 716, 11 October 1991.
1. **Osmosis**: Papadopulous’ first preference is the solution of the Cyprus problem through “osmosis” where the current de facto *Greek Cypriot dominated* Republic of Cyprus would continue to exist and that gradually the Turkish Cypriots would be assimilated in the Republic as mere individual citizens in which they would not enjoy either their political equality or their communal rights as envisaged both in the UN documents and also in the original 1960 constitution of the Republic of Cyprus.

2. **Status Quo**: If the “osmosis” strategy is perceived to be unattainable, then the next preference for Papadopulous (and the wider ruling Greek Cypriot leadership) is the continuation of the current situation (i.e., the status quo) in Cyprus which he finds as a better alternative to a bi-zonal and bi-communal federation based on the political equality of the two communities as described in the relevant UN Security Council documents.

3. **Permanent Division/Divorce**: Since the separate and simultaneous referenda on the Annan Plan in April 2004, there are increased signs from the Greek Cypriot leadership that even the permanent division or a complete divorce of the two communities, provided that the Greek Cypriot side receives a sizeable piece of land from the Turkish Cypriot side – i.e., “land for peace,” is more preferable to a solution which is based on the political equality and the power sharing of the two communities. However, without a huge side-payment (i.e., a sizeable land) the permanent division of the island is the last preference for the majority of the Greek Cypriot political elites.

4. **Federation a la Annan Plan**: It seems like that a federation, based on the power sharing and the explicit political equality of the two communities, which would be bi-zonal with regard to the territorial aspects and bi-zonal with regard to the constitutional aspects, is regarded as the worst case option for the current Greek Cypriot leadership (though many in AKEL disagree with this). However, it should be indicated that there are also a good number of Greek Cypriot political elites who prefer a federal solution to the permanent division of the island.

33 See the full text of Papadopulous’ speech at the UN General Assembly in 2005 at http://www.cyprusemb.se/Dbase/cypemb/archive_352.asp.
Given the analysis in the beginning of the text, the preference ordering of the current Turkish Cypriot leadership, using the above utilized terminology for Greek Cypriot leadership, is as follows:

1. **Federation a la Annan Plan**: The current ruling Turkish Cypriot leadership has been repeatedly indicating since the referenda in 2004 that it is committed to the bi-zonal, bi-communal federation based on the political equality of the two communities – a la Annan Plan. It should be also indicated that there is a sizeable number of the Turkish Cypriot political elites, especially in the opposition, who prefer a “two-states” solution (i.e., permanent division/divorce) to a federation in Cyprus.

2. **Permanent Division/Divorce**: The current ruling Turkish Cypriot elites, in case a federal solution is impossible to attain, would prefer a “two-states” solution in which the Turkish Cypriots would be the masters of their house (state).

3. **Status Quo**: The current situation is only the third preference of the current ruling Turkish Cypriot political elites. Compared to all the actors who are involved in the Cyprus conflict, Turkish Cypriots constitute probably the number one actor who is the least happy with the current situation (status quo) on the ground in Cyprus. Their perception is that through their YES vote in the referenda, they deserved to be emancipated from the isolations and restrictions which still persist. In that regard, they find the current status quo in which the Greek Cypriots being in the EU despite their NO vote and the Turkish Cypriots remaining outside the EU despite their YES vote to unify the island in the referenda unjust that needs to be fixed.

4. **“Osmosis”**: Despite the fact that the Turkish Cypriots despise the current situation (status quo), they still prefer the status quo to the “osmosis” outcome in which they believe they would be reduced to a minority in a Greek Cypriot dominated Republic of Cyprus, in which case they would lose their political equality and the right to the power sharing mechanisms of the central government as described both in the UN documents and also in the original 1960 constitution of the Republic of Cyprus.

**Alternative Scenarios**
Given the above analysis of the preference orderings of the two leaderships in Cyprus, it is quite obvious that a “creeping divergence” is the net result currently on the ground in Cyprus. Based on the analysis above and the terminology used in the workshop in March 2006 at Oxford, today we are more informed to speculate on the future scenarios in Cyprus. The following are the probable scenarios listed starting from the most probable and going towards the least probable one:

1. **Structural Stalemate a la Taiwan**: This is the most realistic scenario given the realities on the ground in Cyprus today. In this scenario, the TRNC continues to be internationally unrecognized while at the same time continuing to perform most of its functions just like the other recognized sovereign states. Gradually, the international community lifts the restrictions and the isolations on the North Cyprus which would eventually Taiwanize the TRNC. In such a case, the international recognition of the TRNC would be a natural evolution – which might first come from some Muslim or Central Asian Turkic speaking countries, provided that there would not be a change in the political positions of the two leaderships (i.e., the Greek Cypriot preference for “osmosis” and the Turkish Cypriot preference for federation).

2. **A Co-operative Status Quo**: This is the second possible scenario given the realities on the ground in Cyprus today. This scenario is possible only if meaningful negotiations between the two sided in Cyprus start. In that sense, the Gambari process\(^{34}\) could be the catalyzing element here. The two sides agreed in July 2006 to: (i) establish technical committees to deal with daily issues; (ii) to form working groups to deal with the substantive issues of the Cyprus problem; and (iii) to implement confidence building measures to improve the atmosphere in Cyprus. If such a process could be started and maintained, then the non-cooperative mode of the relations (status quo) could be transformed to a co-operative one which in return could lead to either a federal solution as described in the UN documents or to an “amicable divorce a la Czechoslovakia” through the free and mutual consent of the two sides.

\(^{34}\) On 8 July 2006, Ibrahim Gambari, Kofi Annan’s political adviser managed to bring the two leaders together to agree on the principles of a future solution, such as political equality; bi-zonal, bi-communal federation in addition to the establishment of technical committees to deal with daily problems. For more information see http://www.unficyp.org/news/Press/2006_08July_%20Gambari%20reads%20statement%20by%20two%20leaders.htm.
3. **Amicable Divorce (or partition) a la Czechoslovakia:** An amicable divorce where the two sides mutually recognize each other and commit themselves to non-confrontational politics is possible when the Greek Cypriot elites perceive that the international recognition of the TRNC would be probable or when in a federal solution the Turkish Cypriots would get “*more than what they deserve*”\(^{35}\) (explicit political equality) in which case the Greek Cypriot elites would want to negotiate the two-states solution probably with a “land for peace” approach in which they would require a sizeable piece of land from the North to be yielded to the South.

4. **Conflictual Divorce a la Yugoslavia:** This is probably the least possible and the most undesired scenario for all the actors involved. Such a scenario presupposes some sort of violence or at least a ‘limited war’ on the island (which would automatically involve Turkey) after which the abyss between the Turkish and Greek Cypriots become somewhat permanent. Such a scenario, though very improbable, would mean the permanent derailing in the Turkey’s EU accession process which neither Turkey nor the EU can ever afford.

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\(^{35}\) This is the Greek Cypriot argument regarding such arrangements in the 1960 constitution of the Republic of Cyprus as the Vice-President being a Turkish Cypriot with veto rights and that decisions on certain issues needed separate majority of the two community members in the House of Representatives.