Nationalism and the Political Use of History in Cyprus: Recent Developments

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ABSTRACT. This study analyzes the relationship between nationalism and the political use of history in the two "small nation-states" in Cyprus. It also examines the relevant effects of Cyprus's European Union (EU) membership and the emergence of alternative historiographies. The hostile historiographies of the two sides of Cyprus since 1974 have crystallized because of the de facto emergence of the two political units. It is argued that Greek and Turkish Cypriot historiographies have played a vital role in determining the fate of the Cyprus Problem as seen in the case of the April 2004 referendum. Recent revisionist attempts based on Cypriotism have promoted an exclusionary ideological perspective and are subject to political debate, too. The case of North Cyprus shows that new historiography produces new myths, projecting rightist groups and immigrants from Turkey as the main Others.

KEYWORDS. Cyprus Problem · nationalism · historiography · Greek Cypriot · Turkish Cypriot · Cypriotism

INTRODUCTION

Since 1974, when Turkey intervened, many attempts and proposals have failed to settle the Cyprus Question. The last plan of the United Nations, the Annan Plan, proposed the establishment of a United Republic of Cyprus governed by a federal government that unites the Greek Cypriot and the Turkish Cypriot states. Though widely supported by the international community, it failed when the Greek Cypriots overwhelmingly rejected it in a referendum on April 24, 2004. The majority of the Turkish Cypriots accepted it. How can we explain this development? What are the historical and political reasons behind such attitudes?

This article aims to investigate the dynamic use of history and nationalism in both the Republic of Cyprus (ROC) and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Moreover, it examines the

relevant effects of Cyprus's European Union (EU) membership and the emergence of alternative historiographies. The hostile historiographies of the two sides since 1974 have crystallized as a consequence of the de facto emergence of two "small nation-states." On one hand, the dominant Greek Cypriot self-understanding of history sees the Turks as barbaric invaders of an island that only has a Hellenic heritage. On the other hand, the dominant Turkish Cypriot understanding rejects this Greek Cypriot view and attempts to activate a "collective memory" of Cyprus as a Turkish Cypriot homeland. The Greek Cypriot historiography is mainly based on logic of exclusion that relies on stereotypes and images of conflicting differences, whereas the Turkish view comes to the fore especially as a defensive one adopting that logic as a strategy of survival in the island.

Thus, this study seeks to capture the role of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot historiographies in the formation of their respective collective memories and what kind of changes, if any, has occurred in these histories in recent times. The paper's main argument is that Greek and Turkish Cypriot historiographies have played a vital role in determining the fate of the Cyprus Problem. It is based on the assumption that any analysis of the role of historiography in redrawing the boundaries of two communities can help us understand the political demands of the leaders of the two communities.

THE EMERGENCE OF TWO HISTORIOGRAPHIES IN CYPRUS

Turkey's 1974 intervention divided Cyprus into a Turkish zone in the north and a Greek zone in the south. This was followed by a population exchange between two regions in the following year. However, only the Greek Cypriots continued to receive international recognition (except from Turkey) through their control of the Republic of Cyprus. In the north, the Turkish Cypriots organized their own state mechanisms but in ways that would have allowed them to rejoin a new united state if the Greek Cypriots had allowed the non-central authorities to be territorially as well as ethnically defined. This being rejected by the Greek Cypriots, the Turkish Cypriots declared independence and established the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) in 1983. This state, however, has not been recognized by any country, except Turkey, and has also faced political and economic blockades (Talmon 2001).[1]

The seeds of two politically autonomous communities became apparent before 1960. After the Second World War, the Cyprus British administration faced two major political problems. The first was the rising demand of the Greek Cypriot nationalists for *enosis* (Cyprus's union with Greece), which gradually turned into an armed struggle. The second was the rising reaction of the Turkish Cypriots against the Greek Cypriots's demands, and responding to enosis, they began to call for *taksim* (the partition of the island between the two communities). This produced an anti-Greek Turkish Cypriot nationalism, which was against the enosis. Progressively, it became more difficult for the British to keep the two antagonistic communities in harmony. By the late 1950s, the Turkish Cypriots started to respond to the Greek Cypriot ethnic attacks and thus an armed struggle between the two nationalist groups began.[2] This escalation of violence helped pave the way for the complete separation of the two communities, politically and physically (Mallinson 2005).[3]

This conflict determined the fate of the 1960 Republic of Cyprus as a bicommunal state of the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities. Its consociational structure gave higher priority to sustaining an "ethnocultural" balance rather than to majority rule. Although the constitution defined Cyprus citizenship both legally and politically, there existed many practices of two ethnonational identification processes. The official languages were Greek and Turkish; Greece's and Turkey's flags continued to symbolize two communities, though there was one rarely flown national flag. These practices were exercised via two communal chambers that fulfilled different functions ranging from educational to sports activities, religious to economic organizations (Kyle 1983).[4] These gradually turned into two "small nation-state" before the Republic of Cyprus effectively passed into Greek Cypriot hands after December 1963.

Earlier in 1963, President Makarios insisted on a series of constitutional amendments that removed the bicommunal nature of the regime. These amendments "demoted [the Turkish Cypriots] to the status of a minority" (ibid.). For Makarios, having higher percentage state employment quotas for the Turkish Cypriots than their actual population size was not acceptable. The Turkish Cypriot leaders rejected these amendments, seeing these as initial steps towards enosis. The dispute over the distribution of state resources according to population size was an important reason for the rise of intercommunal conflicts and violence at the end of 1963. Turkish Cypriots in Larnaka

Table 1. Population of Cyprus during the British Period (1881-1960)

Year	Greek Orthodox	Muslim
1881	137,631	45,458
1891	158,585	47,926
1901	182,739	51,309
1911	214,480	56,428
1921	244,887	61,339
1931	276,572	64,238
1946	361,199	80,548
1960	442,138	104,320

Source: St John-Jones 1983.

and Lefkoshe/Nicosia were attacked and some Turkish villages were destroyed (ibid.; Borowiec 2000, 56).[5]

In 1960, 126 villages and towns were mixed communities, but in 1970, only forty-eight of the 602 Cypriot settlements could be classified as mixed (Kliot and Mansfield 1997, 499). The forced migrations that brought about these changes were keys to the effective transformation of the 1960 Republic of Cyprus into a Greek Cypriot unitary state.

By 1974, around 25,000 Turkish Cypriots had been displaced, majority of them were concentrated in the defended enclaves that occupied only three percent of the island. Twenty-five thousand Turkish Cypriots constituted almost one-fourth of total Turkish Cypriot population (table 1). Within and between these enclaves, the Turkish Cypriots established their own separate legal, political, and other institutions.[6] The Republic of Cyprus Government imposed an economic blockade on the enclaves, softened only by the United Nations and Red Cross pressures to let in food supply. These experiences between 1963 and 1974 deepened the tension between the two ethnic groups. Life in the enclaves became hardly bearable. Many Turkish Cypriots left for a better life abroad, migrating to Australia and Britain, some settled in Turkey.

In practice, these enclaves were arms of a fledgling Turkish Cypriot state. They have legislative, executive, and judicial institutions that effectively defended "borders," provided "public services," and enabled some "luxuries like a Football Federation" (Stavrinides 1975, 55).[8] Thus, through the late 1960s, the island had two autonomous and national political bodies with separately controlled territories and identification processes. Effective citizenship in each was determined by the competing ethno-nationalities which were partly based on their two intermittently antagonistic histories intensified by the nationalisms

imported from the "motherlands" in the 1950s. "Nationalist Cypriot Hellenism" idealized Cyprus as a Hellenic homeland that had resisted "barbaric invasion" by the Turks. Turkish Cypriot nationalism defined itself as a movement of "resistance to enosis" by insisting on a new territorially based federal state that would recognize Cyprus as the homeland of the Turks as well as that of the Greeks.

In order to annex Cyprus to Greece in 1974, Athens first supported a faction of Ethniki Organosis Kyprion Agoniston (National Organization of Cypriot Fighters [EOKA]) to overthrow the existing Greek Cypriot government. However, in July 1974, Turkey stopped this by intervening militarily as its obligation under the provisions of the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee. Thus, Cyprus was divided into the Turkish Cypriot zone in the north and the Greek Cypriot zone in the south. The Turkish Cypriots were rescued from their besieged enclaves. Now they could live together in a physically more secure and larger territory. Whereas before the two distinct political bodies were more territorially fragmented, now each controlled its own unified territory. The populations of these two zones became nearly ethnically pure as a result of population exchanges that were arranged the following year.[9]

After the intervention, the Greek Cypriots in the south continued to control the internationally recognized—except by Turkey—Republic of Cyprus. In the north, the Turkish Cypriots called their own de facto state the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus in 1975. The term "federated" left the door open to the possibility of Turkish Cypriots rejoining the institutions of the Republic of Cyprus. But the Greek Cypriots rejected this. The Turkish Cypriots declared independence and established the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) in 1983. Only Turkey recognized this new state. Since then, there has been a word-war between the two states in Cyprus, the Republic of Cyprus in the south and the TRNC in the north.

Both sides had to redefine their own position after the 1974 intervention.[10] Nevertheless, each state continued to elaborate its own historically prevalent nationalist ideology. For the Turkish Cypriot leaders, the 1974 Turkish intervention was not only necessary but legally valid as an attempt to secure the Republic of Cyprus by making it a territorially divided federal state.[11] In contrast, the Greek Cypriots viewed Turkey's intervention as an "invasion" and as the starting point of the Cyprus Problem. In fact, the intervention resulted in an identity crisis for Greek Cypriots who came to give more importance to the Greekness of the island and gradually shifted their focus to establishing

a territorially united Cyprus, instead of enosis.[12] Until today, there has been an embedded war between the Republic of Cyprus in the south and the TRNC in the north. The ethnocentric vision of its own patriotic narratives dominated each side. The following explanations of the relations between history formation, nationalism, and the state will clarify these visions and narratives.

NATIONALISM AND HISTORY

Most political leaders seek to foster a common feeling of politico-cultural membership with the help of a nationalist ideology: a collective memory shared by all citizens. Frequently, new national history is written to instill the desired attitudes, understood as flowing from the nation's past. It was an invented past. This seems to be true for all modern states, including liberal, multicultural, federal, or even socialist states. Such invented histories can make citizenship more problematic in multicultural societies, especially if such histories are inspired by exclusionary or assimilationist nationalism. Clarification of the relationship between statehood and nationalism will help us understand this reality.

State rulers often deploy nationalism to consolidate the state. The national experience is passed on to citizen-subjects as the collective memory of state-formation. A political community, one product of nationalism, is without doubt made up of both civic-liberal and ethno-cultural elements. Civic and ethno-cultural visions of nationalism, though being useful to understand modern nationalist policies in terms of exclusion and integration, do not necessarily depict the illiberal and anti-democratic aspects of nationalist ideology. This implies that the political nature of nationalism, which determines efforts to furnish a common tie, is closely tied to the "status position of those who articulate it, and to the developmental optimism or pessimism, which underlies its construction" (Brown 2000, 2).

The writing of nationalist history and its usage often happen in the forms of chauvinistic and exclusionary indoctrination through a state-sponsored mechanism. In a very selective way, for that goal, leaders use some historical events and figures to promote a sense of citizenship. This political construction of "stories" serves to "constitute institutions of membership and exclusion that structure and distribute power and resources in unequal ways" (Smith 2002, 12). Although it is generally argued that the problem revolves around what and how stories

(ancestral, ethnic, national, religious, and linguistic) are being utilized by state institutions, the politics of people formation itself inescapably includes exclusions of those who are deemed as both internal and external "outsiders" or "others" by those in power. These stories seem necessary to help conceive individuals belonging to a political community. At the same time, sometimes, they pave the way for restrictive and repressive policies for the others.

History, as a discipline, has always been involved in political debates. As Bo Strath argues, history "largely came to be a scholarly exercise that confirmed the emergence of the European nation-states" and so European historians began to just write about "the trajectories of individual nations" by ignoring universal promises of the Enlightenment (2006, 25). Therefore, it is obvious that as being, in the words of Hobsbawm, "the raw material for nationalist or ethnic or fundamentalist ideologies," history is the most vulnerable discipline to all kinds of ideologies and politics (1997, 6).[13] The use of the past remains the ultimate source for the justification of all political movements and authorities. It is clear that a modern state has control over all mechanisms of making history by controlling books and textbooks, media, national education, market mechanisms, and others (Evans 2003, 6). It often comes with the distortion of the past for the present purposes, that is myth building.[14] It is directly related to the fact that all historiographies, as Bo Strath argues, "cannot, as a matter of fact, be easily separated from myths and myth building" (Strath 2006, 29). These are thus nothing without myths, which are being used to distort the past for present political purposes. In all modern societies, myths "can be sustained through the exercise of state power" and can make "historical truth claims" (Abizadeh 2004, 298, 312).

Therefore, any kind of historiography has, as Evans (2003, 7) put it, a "more obvious political relevance. Even democratic governments see in it a means of strengthening national identity, and in the hands of an authoritarian state it can become a tool of political indoctrination." Such usage becomes clearer in cases of conflict. Evans also asserts, "States in conflict with other states over territory have always turned to history for a justification of their claims." This is precisely true for both states in Cyprus.

However, globalization challenges nation-states's nationalist endeavors, history writing, and conventional notion of citizenship. This has been occurring through changes in the existing notion of sovereignty and questioning of homogenizing account of nation-states

by revival of local culture. In the former, it reflects processes of development of new international, regional bodies leading to a cooperation of two or more states. Discussions concerning the latter signify, in dealing with rising diversity, a form of multiculturalism that makes it possible for minorities, or excluded, to be represented "as they are" at the national level. It may be said that the Cyprus histories have been subject to processes embedded in the issue of regional integration. That comes with the effort of some political leaders, especially in North Cyprus, to integrate Turkish Cypriot national history into a broader European history.

FORMATION OF GREEK AND TURKISH CYPRIOT HISTORIOGRAPHIES

Greek Cypriot historiography took its shape after 1974 when there was less emphasis on the idea of enosis, which was effectively used by Greek Cypriot nationalists as a basic force for their movement during the post-independence period (1960-74). Greek Cypriot nationalism gradually shifted its focus to the political independence of the united Cyprus. The Greek Cypriot leadership began to stress the necessity of maintaining close ties with Greece both to gain its protection and to keep alive the "Hellenic culture" of Cyprus. Here, Greek Cypriot culture is depicted as Hellenic and thus a member of the Greek nation. There is an endeavor to define the Greek nation as a cultural, rather than a political entity, or to reformulate enosis as a cultural unification (Mavratsas 1997).[15] Here, the "Greek" aspect can be found in "Greek Cypriots' dependence on Greece and their Greek origins and cultural heritage." The Greek Cypriot rulers' endeavor to merge "Greekness" and "Cypriotness" led to a "symbolic official double-talk reflecting ambivalence" (Papadakis 1998, 153).[16]

In merging "Greekness" and "Cypriotness," the main objective is to show the Greek, Hellenic nature of Cyprus, which works through remembering the Greek Cypriots' "ancient" and "glorious" past and heritage. For instance, being the heirs of the ancient Aegean civilization—a civilization that Western civilization relies on—is accentuated to instill nationalistic pride of being "civilized" and "superior." That position, which is in opposition to the "barbaric" Others, i.e., the Turks, makes Greek Cypriot leaders seeing themselves as part of the West, now symbolized by the EU and the Greek world. It also justified their political ambitions to join the EU. Cyprus's aspiration to

become an EU member was seen as a chance to realize the "cultural, Hellenic reunification" with the mainland.

The Greekness of Cyprus is the basis of Greek Cypriot historiography, which is defined in opposition to the Turks in general and the Turkish Cypriots in particular. In narrating the history of Cyprus, Greek presence in the island started in the ancient times, around 1200 BCE when "Mycenaean-Achaean Greeks" arrived as permanent settlers. These "Ancient Greeks" brought with them their culture and civilization to the island. "The newcomers brought with them their language, their advanced technology and introduced a new outlook for visual arts. Since then, Cyprus has remained predominantly Greek in culture, language and population" (Press and Information Office 2002, 5). Here, the goal in forging the Hellenic heritage of Cyprus is to prove that the "Greekness" of Cyprus is primordial (Bryant 2001, 901).

Today's Greek Cypriot's identity is projected in the past. Such projection and creation of Cyprus as Greek from the ancient times means, "Turkish Cypriots are just the 'remains of the Turkish conquest in 1573' and thus are not really part of the indigenous population" (Papadakis 1996). In Greek Cypriot history, a minor and derogatory place is reserved for the Turks. This is evident in periodizing the rulers of the island in which the rule of the Turks, or the Ottoman Turks (1571-1878) is depicted as "Ottoman Occupation" in a "pejorative" way, although the "Frankish and Venetian Rule" and "British Rule" are also mentioned (Press and Information Office 2002, 5). Greek Cypriot history stresses that the Ottoman Turks always constitute the "Muslim minority" of the island.[17] The population size of the Turkish Cypriots also contributes to their inferior position in Greek Cypriot history. It was not acceptable for Greek Cypriots that, after achieving independence in 1960, the Turkish Cypriots constituting 18 percent of population had 30 percent of the posts in the state bureaucracy (Press and Information Office 2002, 12-13). As the constituting majority of the population, the Greek Cypriots believed that they had the right to rule Cyprus.

In inventing and editing its own past, each nationalist project must remember and forget some events (e.g., violent deaths, resistance, armed struggles, executions) as "our own" (Anderson 1991, 206). In Greek Cypriot historiography, the contemporary history of Cyprus revolves mainly on the 1974 intervention. It is seen as a starting point of the Cyprus Problem, or a source of "horrifying" events in Cyprus. However, at the same time, there emerges a total forgetting of pre-1974

violent ethnic conflict between two communities and enclaves in which Turkish Cypriots had to live. It also emphasizes that the Greek Cypriots achieved a military success in the EOKA's "national liberation" movement against British rule until 1960 and against the Turkish Cypriot Türk Mukavemet Teþkilatý (Turkish Resistance Organization [TMT]), represented as "the Turkish Cypriot terrorist organization" until 1974. But for the period 1963-74, Greek Cypriot history only stresses the "threat of partition" that was launched by Turkish Cypriots with the assistance of the Turkish government (Press and Information Office 2002, 11, 13-14; Mavratsas 1997). In post-1974 Greek Cypriot history, such an attitude is also coupled with the theme of "suffering," suffering from "Turkish occupation" that divided "Greek Cypriot homeland" into two parts. The sufferings of the Turkish Cypriots are ignored.

The Greek Cypriot's history textbooks produce various stereotypes and myths about the Turks. The *History of Cyprus*, a Greek Cypriot history textbook published by the Ministry of Education in Cyprus, is "quite old" since it was written in the early 1980s and republished without any revisions.[18] To create a sense of pride, to see Cyprus as the homeland of the Greeks, and to perceive "we," it mainly teaches the students the images of the Turks as barbarians. The Ottoman period is shown as a despotic rule, which sought to assimilate and even destroy the Greek Cypriots. After "occupying" Cyprus in 1573, the Turks have always "slaughtered" the Greeks. That image of eternal enemy is coupled with the image of the Turks as barbarian. This paves the way for a judgment that sees "Greeks as civilized, Turks as barbarians, Greeks as peaceful, Turks as warmongers, Greeks as courageous, Turks as cowards" (Spyrou 2002, 260).

"Turk" is used totally out of its historical context. Turk is used to refer to the Ottomans, Turkey's Turks, Turkish Cypriots, or all Turks all over the world. Today's Turkey, with its "expansionist" and "barbaric" ambitions, is entirely similar with the Ottoman Empire. So you cannot trust the Turks in any way, not in the past and not in the future. As all Turks are generalized under the name of Turk, the history of Greeks and Greek Cypriots are narrated together as history of the Greek nation. It is obvious that with the help of these state-sponsored stereotypes and myths propagated via regular education and public communication devices, a Greek Cypriot identity has been constructed against the Turks. Through education, the Turks are represented as "cruel," "barbaric," and "invader" to children within and outside

schools in a very complex process of construction (ibid.). That construction occurs in an environment where there is no interaction between Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities. Here, the border between the Greek state and Turkish state in Cyprus has been used by the Greek leaders to depict the Turks as a threat to their own "civilized," "good" life world. State-led "myths" have replaced the facts about the people living in the north.

In general, the use of the past in an antagonistic, rigid nationalist discourse has a negative effect on peace efforts in Cyprus. It is obvious that Greek Cypriots' strong opposition to the Annan Plan seems to be the direct outcome of the ideological indoctrination based on the Greek Cypriot historiography. It is this historiography that "conjures images of eternal enemies and fundamentally irreconcilable differences" (Mavratsas 1997).

Unlike Greek Cypriot historiography, two official Turkish Cypriot historiographies emerged. First, the rightist's historiography based on ethnonational understanding (from 1974 to 2004) and second, the leftist one based on Cypriotism (from 2004 until today). In Greek Cypriot historiography, the 1974 intervention had a central place. For its creators, the intervention was seen as necessary, and even constitutionally valid, to protect the lives of the Turkish Cypriots. It rescued the Turkish Cypriots from their often-besieged enclaves and transferred them to a physically more secure larger territory. It also made it possible for the Turkish Cypriots to have a "state" of their own. Thus, in the view of the founders of TRNC, providing needed physical conditions to the making of a territorially divided federal state was the significant attempt to solve the Cyprus Problem. What is meant by the solution here is the realization of Turkish Cypriot nationalism's cry of *taksim*. For that goal, TRNC was declared unilaterally in 1983 in place of the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus that proclaimed in 1975 in the north, immediately after the 1974 intervention. The Turkish Cypriot leadership emphasized recognition and existence of the two states under a new political structure (*North Cyprus Daily*, August 5, 2003).[19] In that context, Turkish Cypriot history was written to justify the political ambitions of the new regime and to produce a collective memory for TRNC citizens.

Turkish Cypriot historiography merged Turkish Cypriot history with the entire history of the "Great Turkish Nation" as narrated and disseminated by Turkey's Turkish nationalism. Nevertheless, there was a previous attempt to produce a "countervailing identity which was

both Turkish but also distinctively 'of the island'" against pro-enosis view of "Greekness" of Cyprus (Scott 2002, 108). According to the TRNC Constitution, the Turkish Cypriots are organic part of the "Great Turkish Nation." Their history had been narrated mainly as part of the general history of all Turks who have their roots in Central Asia, the motherland of the Turks.

Official narratives of Turkish Cypriot national history placed a strong emphasis on the Ottoman/Turkish nature of the island that makes one a Turkish Cypriot. In these narratives, the Ottoman Turks brought "peace," "justice," and even "civilization" (building bridges, water canals and mosque, opening schools) to the island and its Greek inhabitants, who were saved from "bad Venetian rule." But the Greeks, who were given a lot of rights and lived in a peace under the Ottoman/ Turkish rule, betrayed and rebelled against the Ottoman Turkish administration. These are the main themes in history textbooks used in Turkish Cypriot elementary and secondary schools and lyceés (Serter and Fikretoðlu 2002).[20] The Greek Cypriots are represented as "traitors," "unfaithful," and "unappreciative," while all Turks and Turkish Cypriots are represented as "innocent" and "victimized" (Serter and Fikretoðlu 2002, 8).[21] The position of Turkish Cypriots under the British rule, especially through the end of it, was just to defend themselves against Greek Cypriots' "cruel" assaults.

Contemporary history of Turkish Cypriots has signified their national struggle as a "struggle for survival" against the Greek "oppression" and "cruelty," in which TMT's "heroic resistance" to EOKA had an important role. Here, EOKA is presented as a terrorist organization just like how the Greek Cypriot history calls the TMT. In the Turkish Cypriot's view, the EOKA and its struggle for enosis victimized the Turkish Cypriots. The Turkish Cypriot historiography has used the notion of enosis as a reference point for the resistance and Turkey's gaining protection (Public Relations Department 2002, 10- 11). The Turkish army's arrival (viewed as a "peace operation") and the 1983 "Declaration of Independence" led to the appearance of new and free life for the Turks in the island.[22] The "peace operation" ended oppression and cruelty that the Turkish Cypriots had suffered for years and brought peace and order to the island. In addition to these two events, the Day of Martyrs of National Struggle and the Day of Massacre for Turkish Cypriots, both observed on December 21, are also commemorated. Thus, these commemorations seek to keep the new generation's allegiance to the national goals.

Memories of past atrocities have been narrated by emphasizing Turks' sufferings. There is, therefore, too much emphasis on the sacrifices during interethnic violent conflicts from 1957 to 1960 and especially from 1963 to 1974, portrayed as "the Dark Years of the Turkish Cypriots" (Serter and Fikretoðlu 2002; Education for Peace 2004). This was the period of "fear, fighting, deprivation and involuntary dislocations" (Papadakis 1996, 7).[23] These "assaults on Turkish Cypriots" were presented as parts of the organized "ethnic cleansing campaign of the joint forces of Greece and the Greek Cypriots" (Public Relations Department 2002, 6).

The idea of Cypriotness is totally rejected in Turkish Cypriot historiography and is associated with the Greek Cypriots' violence.[24] For that historiography, there are just two nations in the island, there are no Cypriots. Cypriotness is just Greek propaganda that aims to divide and weaken the Turks in Cyprus. It is obvious that such a politicized view of history has been used to ignore some commonalities between the two communities. The state in the north systematically excludes from memory two things. First, it neglects the southern part of the island to highlight today's part as the real homeland of the Turkish Cypriots and second, it forgets their previous coexistence with the Greek Cypriot community. In opposition to the Greek Cypriot leaders' historical claim that the island has been the Hellenic, Greek land throughout history and hence, they own the island, the Turkish Cypriot leaders were pragmatic in defining territorial boundaries and tried to attach the Turkish Cypriots to TRNC boundaries. As a result of this, there has been a deliberate forgetting of some of Ottoman-Islamic legacies in the south, which were previously used to forge the constituting elements of Turkish Cypriot identity (Papadakis n.d., 110). The only priority of the Turkish Cypriot rulers was to survive in the island in any way. The Turkish Cypriot state's strategy was to reformulate existing Ottoman-Islamic remnants in the north to establish the "Turkishness" of northern Cyprus. In addition to the formation of North Cyprus as a homeland of Turkish Cypriots, there were some attempts to tie them to the mainland, Turkey. That's why the state continues to celebrate Turkey's national holidays as part of TRNC's official nationalism to identify with the Turkish national identity.

One of the themes of Turkish Cypriot history is the refusal of having minority status in the island. The "national struggle" was launched to avoid that status. The Turkish Cypriots achieved their status to be equal partner of the 1960 Republic. Now, their leadership

wanted a settlement of the Cyprus Problem on the basis of a
"federation of two separate Cypriot states" having "international legal
personality" (Public Relations Department 2002, 14-16). Their claim
is that, although the Greeks are a majority in the island, historically
speaking they have been a minority in the region, given Turkey's
geographical closeness. Thus, TRNC nationalist authorities welcomed
and even urged migration from Turkey to the island. But migration to
the north from Turkey and naturalization of the migrants in the north
have been subject to a political debate not only between Greek Cypriot
and Turkish Cypriot authorities, but also among the TRNC
politicians.[25] The connection between the migrants and the Turkish
inhabitants of the island was established in terms of unification of two
peoples of the Turkish nation. In general, the Turkish Cypriot
nationalists have used their own highly politicized view of the past and
the image of eternal enemy, Greek Cypriots, to activate a "collective
memory" and cultivate national self-consciousness among the Turkish
Cypriots in the context of international isolation and embargoes.
TRNC's new left-oriented leaders, who came to power in 2003, have
offered a different outlook with a pro-unification tendency and have
rewritten a history of Turkish Cypriots in Cyprus on the basis of
ideological orientation called Turkish Cypriotism.

EU MEMBERSHIP AND THE HISTORIOGRAPHIES IN CYPRUS

From the beginning, in both sides of Cyprus, there have been
alternative views of history raised by leftist groups. Historiographies
developed by both the Greek Cypriot and the Turkish Cypriot leftist
groups emphasize the idea of a shared homeland, Cyprus. Given their
past experiences and cooperation at grassroot and social level, the two
communities show that they can coexist and live peacefully.[26] These
alternative positions challenged the established national historiographies
of both sides when Cyprus membership to the EU gained more
importance to the life of the two communities, and even to the
settlement of the Cyprus Question during the last ten years.[27] Actually,
that challenge is more evident in North than South Cyprus. At the
beginning, it was EU leaders' intention that EU membership would
play a "catalyst" role in finding a political solution to the division in
the island (Larrabee 1998, 25). After the Greek Cypriot community
achieved the right to join the EU on behalf of the whole island, the
Cyprus Problem entered a new phase.[28] The EU had created some

hopes, or "shared expectations," between the communities, especially in the north.[29]

One important impact of the EU membership on the two communities in Cyprus became clear in the field of history-teaching. The Council of Europe recommended that "history-teaching" should play a decisive role in providing "reconciliation, recognition, understanding, and mutual trust between peoples."[30] The EU adopted that policy for Cyprus by supporting bi-communal activities and civil societal organizations to re-write the history of Cyprus. All these efforts found a political echo and base in North Cyprus, when leftist groups came to power in 2003.

The EU accession process and economic problems led some leftist groups in North Cyprus to expand their criticism to current state of affairs, allowing them to gain more and more support from Turkish Cypriots.[31] As a result, in 2003 and 2005 parliamentary elections, the Turkish Cypriot leftist group Cumhuriyetçi Türk Partisi ve Birleþik Güçler (Republican Turkish Party and Joint Forces [RTP]) received the majority of the votes and became the main party in the coalition governments. In April 2005, the leader of the RTP was elected president with overwhelming majority. Behind that transformation, there were three main reasons: the 2001 economic crisis, hopes to join the EU, and perhaps, most importantly, the support of Turkey's new ruling party, the anti-establishment and pro-EU Justice and Development Party.

At the end, the Turkish Cypriot Left found a suitable atmosphere to launch their view of history as a new official policy. Their view is, to a large extent, shaped by an ideological perspective called Cypriotism. Here, emphasis is placed on the idea of "Cypriotness" rather than on Turkish identity in defining a profile for Turkish Cypriots. According to the Turkish Cypriot Left's vision of history—preaching an alternative form of political community beyond the ethnonational definition—the Turkish and Greek Cypriots can coexist under a federal state structure as the past shows us. This perspective serves as a vehicle for social and political mobilization with the emergence of the Bu Memleket Bizim Platformu (This Country Is Ours Platform) in which leftist political parties and civil societal organizations participated.

One might argue that that perspective played a decisive part in the 2004 referendum held in the two communities to approve or reject the Annan Plan that envisions the establishment of two constituent states (Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot states) to form a federal state of

Cyprus. Sixty-five percent of the Turkish Cypriots voted "Yes" to the plan, although the overwhelming majority of the Greek Cypriots (75 percent) voted "No." It seems obvious that the main reason behind the Greek Cypriots strong disapproval is the political indoctrination which rejects to share the island with another ethnonational group. As mentioned above, in Greek Cypriot historiography, Cyprus has belonged to the Greek Cypriots for centuries and thus they have an exclusive right to rule and control the island.

As the motto of social and political mobilization in North Cyprus, the phrase "This Country Is Ours" implies that it is not "theirs," meaning the Turks of Turkey and Turkey itself. In forming alternative history for Turkish Cypriots, Turkey together with Turkish nationalists is seen as the main Other of Turkish Cypriotism. Leftist groups began to debate publicly official national narratives. They state their identity by separating themselves from the Turks of Turkey and, in turn, to refuse Turkish tutelage over the island. They did not define themselves in ethnonational term, but as distinct selves tied to a special culture of Cyprus.[32] Thus, by highlighting the "geopolitical space of Cyprus" and its natives, the Left is "Cyprio-centric" in contrast to "the Turko-centrism of the Right" (Papadakis 2008, 17).

One might argue that Turkish Cypriotism is a form of territorio-cultural nationalism. For the leftist groups, blood (signifying the native population), "Cypriot" culture, and territory (geographical space of the island) are merged together. Their stories seek to form a self-consciousness based on regionalist and culturalist understanding, but to exclude the outsiders who are not considered part of the native population. It becomes obvious that Turkish Cypriotism flourishes in a context of having a "sovereign" state with a well-described citizenship status, which paved the way to some extent for the Turkish Cypriots to develop an autonomous Turkish Cypriot identity.

The RTP leadership, when they came to power in 2003, in accordance with their view of history, started to work on new history textbooks for secondary and high schools (Turkish Cypriot Lyceés). Under the guidance of Ministry of Education, three textbooks for secondary schools entitled *History of Cyprus (Kıbrıs Tarihi)* were prepared and one for high schools entitled *Turkish History of Cyprus I (Kıbrıs Türk Tarihi I)*, and both were in use in 2005. These new textbooks are based on the claim that "in Cyprus, Turkish Cypriot community has created its own history; so we should write the history we already created and should teach it to new generations" (Cahit 2005). "Turkish Cypriot

history" is portrayed as an organic part of Cyprus, both geographically and culturally, and Cypriotness is one of the most emphasized themes. On the cover page of the book *Turkish History of Cyprus I*, the term *Kýbrýs* (Cyprus) is emphasized, being written at least five times bigger than *Türk Tarihi* (Turkish History). Even the name of the new textbook is different from the previous textbook entitled *History of Turkish Cypriot Struggle* (*Kýbrýs Türk Mücadele Tarihi*). On the cover page of the old textbook, there is the picture of Atatürk's statue (symbol of modern Turkey and Turkish nationalism), but on the new one there is a picture of the old time in Kyrenia harbor. In the new book, the ancient times of Cyprus and its relics and the pre-Ottoman period were given more space. This is very obvious in the textbook prepared for the first grade of secondary schools, which is completely about the history of Cyprus before the Ottoman Empire. It mainly describes Cyprus as a land of ancient Greek civilization and emphasizes its "Hellenic" heritage. For example, in one illustration, Cyprus is represented as part of Aegean civilization—too close to today's Greece with Turkey drawn too small. These show us the new ideological orientation of the new government, which placed a significant weight on Cypriotism rather than on ethnonational view of history.

A recent analysis of these textbooks illustrates this ideological orientation clearly: "The term 'motherland' is never used for Turkey, while the terms 'our island' or 'our country' are often used for Cyprus. The more generic signifiers 'Cypriots' and 'people,' words that can include both Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, are now also used. It is explained that Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots had many similarities and that what divided them were the forces of nationalism and the British divide-and-rule policy. Indeed, various caricatures showing 'a Turkish Cypriot' and 'a Greek Cypriot' often present them as exactly the same" (Papadakis 2008, 18).

For this goal, left-leaning historiography is designed to include a series of forgetting and remembering. This selective attitude can be observed through the textbooks. Less attention is paid to main political and historical developments, interethnic conflict and violence until 1974, which determined the sociopolitical and socioeconomic fate of both communities. Parallel to that, the subjugation of the Turks from 1963 to 1974 is given short shrift. To maintain hostility towards Turkish Cypriots, TMT activities are condemned as violent in contrast to the previous books' emphasis on TMT's heroic resistance. The books present a biased and pejorative categorization of Turkish

nationalism in Cyprus. This is in contrast to the highlight given to previous limited interactions between the leftist groups on both sides. Sociocultural similarities are emphasized in a selective and ahistorical way. Social history, full of cooperation and similarities, is made to appear as free from, and even counter, to the political history of Cyprus. Such a narrative, which is constructed in an opposite vein to the previous one, is given a political task for a political project of "re-identification" of the Turks of Cyprus. Rightist groups, which always constitute more than half of the north's electorate, are now negatively downgraded. In one way, they are presented as "internal enemies."

The leaders of the main opposition party Ulusal Birlik Partisi (National Unity Party [UBP]), a right-wing party, have been criticizing the new history textbooks and the Cypriotism these books is based on. Its leader, Derviş Eroğlu, said that in new history books, Turkish identity is ignored and Turkish nationalism is blamed as responsible for interethnic conflict; it cannot be acceptable for the Turks of Cyprus (*North Cyprus Daily*, November 26, 2004). For such a right-wing politician, Cypriotism is clearly an artificial construction serving the demands of the Greek Cypriot nationalists.

On the Greek Cypriot side, during 2002 and 2003, some left-oriented groups and scholars sought to voice their alternative, anti-ethnonational view of history. But all these attempts have failed to find enough echoes at the state level. In November 2003, former President Papadopoulos, who was the main symbol of Greek Cypriot nationalist position, said that there should not be any worry about the "threat of changing" Greek history textbooks by a committee made up of six people: "Hellenic education system of Cyprus is closely connected with Greece's education system" (*North Cyprus Daily*, November 29, 2003). In 2008, Dimitris Christofias and the Anorthotikó Kómma Ergazómenou Laoú (Progressive Party of the Working People [AKEL]) took power. The (Greek Cypriot) Communist Party, AKEL, is now the main political party in the Greek Cypriot coalition government. The AKEL, rejecting Greek ethnonationalist position, has stressed the idea of "Cypriotism" and "peaceful coalition" (Papadakis 1998, 157). Its leadership has not launched a similar attempt to rewrite the "history of Cyprus" as its counterpart did in North Cyprus. Some attempts led by leftist groups and politicians failed due to the hegemony of the Greek Cypriot establishment over politics and society in South Cyprus.

CONCLUDING REMARKS: A CRITIC OF THE ETHNIC-CIVIC DICHOTOMY

The two recent studies on history textbooks used in North and South Cyprus criticize the ethnonational formulation of previous history textbooks and propose a new model designed on the basis of supranational configuration (Papadakis 2008; Vural and Özuyanýk 2008). Both studies are based on a similar theoretical framework of nationalism, i.e., the ethnic-civic dichotomy. Accordingly, on both sides of Cyprus, historiographies written on the basis of "ethnocultural" perspectives are deemed as "bad," but a new one in the north, based on "civic" understanding, is regarded as "good." Civic nationalism is here portrayed as culture-free, based on a set of civic and political ideas.

Such theoretical perspective, which evolved around ethnic versus civic nationalism seems to work through dual categories: the civic, Western, liberal, individualistic, rational versus the ethnic, Eastern, cultural, collectivistic, emotive.[33] The first category is deemed as good, while the second is bad (Brown 1999). In this distinction, cultural identification led by a process of myth-building has a crucial position in ethnic nationalism. Nevertheless, all aspects of that identification, based on an ethnocultural core, are in fact deep-seated in civic nationalism, as well as in an ethnic one, and so all that is collected under the name of civic is also bound up with a specific conception of culture and identification.[34] Moreover, according to the ethnic-civic dichotomy, ethnocultural markers become the name of exclusion, whereas political markers become the name of inclusion; nevertheless, in reality, both civic and ethnic nationalism can be intolerant and exclusive (Zimmer 2003).[35] Parallel to that, there emerge some practices such as "tolerantly ethnic and aggressively civic" and "violent civic nationalism versus civil ethnic nationalism" (Hajdinjak 2004; Kreuzer 2006). Following the critics of the civic-ethnic dichotomy, it is obvious that this model is inadequate to understand all efforts to write and rewrite histories in Cyprus.

Although the recent studies, published in English, on historiographies of Cyprus classified ethnic nationalism in a prejudiced and derogatory way, it is clear that these are based on "aggressive civic nationalism." It is clearly seen in the case of North Cyprus where new history textbooks are being written on the basis of myth-building in which there are the myths of "social coexistence," "sharing Cypriot culture," "sameness," and "intercommunal cooperation of the left."

For example, regarding "peaceful coexistence" in the past society under the rule of the Ottoman time, it may be argued that it is an ahistorical construction. It is clear that past coexistence happened under the Ottoman multilegal system, which was based on Islamic/imperial pluralism. History of "modern times" in Cyprus under modern ideologies and movements is a history of struggle, conflict and, at the end, violence between the two communities.

Portrayed as good and well-developed by the recent academic studies, the historiographies that emerged reflect the main logic of history-writing centered on constructing identity. New history textbooks in the North were not the outcome of a consensus over common values and ideas among the Turkish Cypriots, but rather a product of internal political conflict. By nature, it is exclusionary in incorporating different groups, especially rightist groups, as well as migrants and Turks of Turkey. New history produces antagonistic values and mistrust among the Turkish Cypriot community. That is why it has inevitably been part of an intense political debate. The main opposition party, the UBP, has been critical about new textbooks by claiming that the identity of the Turks of Cyprus is undervalued in favor of Cypriotism or the goals of the Greek Cypriots. The UBP, wining the elections held in April 2009, came to power with the goal of changing new school textbooks.

In short, this article has looked into the processes of the formation of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot histories and their effects on the endeavors for a political solution to the Cyprus Problem. The two states of Cyprus have launched typical processes of forming national history that is exclusionary and prejudiced, rejecting the Other. That reflects a centrally engineered process of nation-building that is to some extent relies on selected past experiences as well as cognitive categories. The result is the prevalence of enmity and hostility. Each of the histories of Cyprus, indeed, produced its own memory that "remembers what 'they' did to 'us' and forgets what 'we' did to 'them.' It is not only in Cyprus that the most popular slogan in both communities is 'we don't forget,' which begs the question: 'do we really remember?'" (Pavlowitch 2004, 66). "Remembering," writes Sturken, "becomes a process of achieving closer proximity to wholeness, of erasing forgetting... Thus, the positioning of memory as a process through which origins are retrieved means positing forgetting as an act of misrecognition" (1999, 243). Some structural changes in Cyprus seemed to have promised to start a process of remembering.

During the last decade, two hostile historiographies had faced the EU accession process. On both sides, there emerged some new groups criticizing existing official narratives, though developing a common ground on the basis of the idea of Europe. However, the results of April 2004 referendum demonstrate that exclusionary nationalist indoctrination still has a strong and obvious influence, especially on the Greek Cypriots in the island. Here, it becomes obvious that myths and stereotypes created by historians and politicians about the Turkish Cypriots continue to dominate the collective memories of the Greek Cypriots.

Recent political developments in Cyprus have provided an opportunity for Greek and Turkish Cypriots to express their alternative visions of history, their own historiographic formulations. In the north, leftist groups came to power and put it into practice. New political leaders became the initiator of writing new history textbooks that aim to promote a common history with Greek Cypriots and interpret the local past based on a common heritage by defining Cyprus as a shared homeland. However, the Left's attempts—be they the North Cypriot or the Greek Cypriot—to rewrite the history of Cyprus on the basis of Cypriotism can hardly be considered as deconstructionist endeavors. Rather, promoting an exclusionary ideological perspective, both are subject to political debate, too. It is evident in the case of Turkish Cypriotism, which has produced some new stereotypes and myths that projects rightist groups, immigrants, and Turks of Turkey as the main Others.✿

NOTES

1. These blockades have negatively influenced the economic and social life in the north (Talmon 2001).

2. The Greek Cypriots organized an underground, anti-British movement called Ethniki Organosis Kyprion Agoniston (EOKA, National Organization of Cypriot Fighters) with a goal of *enosis*, or the union of Cyprus with Greece, but the Turkish Cypriots also set up their own counter-resistance organization called the Türk Mukavemet Teşkilatı (TMT, Turkish Resistance Organization) with a goal of taksim, or the partition of Cyprus into two sovereign regions or states.

3. For a concise history of Cyprus until 1960, see Mallinson (2005).

4. For the constitutional and cultural aspects of the Republic of Cyprus, see Kyle (1983).

5. For some cases, see Borowiec (2000, 56). "Some around 20,000 refugees fled from them, many of them taking refuge in Kyrenia and Lefkoşa/Nicosia. Food and medical supplies had to be shipped in from Turkey" Kyle (1983).

6. For these enclaves and their social and political results, see Asmussen (n.d.).

7. For the Turkish Cypriot authorities, the Turkish Cypriot population had declined from 104,320 in 1960 to around 78,000 in 1972 (State Planning Organization, Statistics and Research Department 1989).

8. The Turkish Cypriot Football Association was already founded in 1955 following the suspension of the Turkish Cypriot FCs by the Pancyprian FA.

9. In the exchange of population, approximately 140,000 Greek Cypriots went to the south while around 50,000 Turkish Cypriots moved to the north (Gürel and Özersay 2006, 3).

10. Greek Cypriot leaders viewed Turkey's intervention as an occupation and as the starting point of the Cyprus Question by outlawing the constitutional regime. But Turkish Cypriot officials considered the intervention necessary to protect the lives of the Turkish Cypriots and to solve the Cyprus Question.

11. For the changing position of the Turkish Cypriots, see (Scott 2002, 108).

12. For the development of Greek Cypriot nationalism and official narrative after the "partition," see Mavratsas (1997).

13. This is because of the nature of modern history as a discipline that is "basically a simple national and political narrative, with a positivist approach that produces an accumulation of facts, but poses no questions" (Pavlowitch 2004, 64).

14. For "the presentism of myth" and myth's distorted account of the past, see (Collins 2003, 343-44).

15. For the development of Greek Cypriot nationalism, see Mavratsas (1997).

16. The clearest illustration of this on the level of state symbols is found in the simultaneous use of the Cypriot flag and the Greek national anthem. In another example, whereas Greek flags were previously dominant, after 1974 the Cypriot flag began to be used in many schools as well as in the armistice border and the two flags were flown together during national holidays (Papadakis 1998, 153).

17. Even this Muslim minority, in due course, got a Cypriot identity (Press and Information Office, Republic of Cyprus 2001, 21).

18. It is a bi-communal project called "Education for Peace" (June–December 2004). In this project, two research teams from the two sides of the island studied the book *History of Cyprus* which is being used for the last grade of elementary schools.

19. For the views of former TRNC President Rauf Denktaş and TRNC Prime Minister Derviş Eroğlu on this issue, see (*North Cyprus Daily*, August 5, 2003).

20. For the complete report of the project "Education for Peace" on history and literature textbooks taught in elementary schools of TRNC, see POST Research Institute (2004).

21. The Greeks and Greek Cypriots, and even Venetians and British, were "the responsible for the faults, guilt and crimes against Turkish Cypriots and the Turks" (Serter and Fikretoğlu 2002, 8).

22. For the politics of remembrance in Turkish Cypriot nationalism, see (Samani 1999).

23. But for Greek Cypriots, these were "mere 'incidents (episodhia)'" (Papadakis 1996, 7).

24. For an analysis on the place of Cypriotness in both legal and oral historiographies, see (Canefe n.d., 8).

25. For these discussions, see (Çolak 2008).

26. What is being stressed in these alternative visions of history is "social history" rather than "nationalist history" (Papadakis n.d., 6).

27. There were some civil, academic attempts to rewrite a new history of Cyprus. One significant study was *Kıbrısın Turuncusu* (Orange Cyprus), which was initiated by a group of Greek and Turkish Cypriot academics (four Greek Cypriots and four Turkish scholars) and published in 2003. It aimed to challenge nationalist approaches and to be a history book dedicated for a multicultural federal Cyprus (Hasgüler and Inatçı 2003).

28. The EU accepted the whole Cyprus as a member in April 2004, but with the provision that the laws and membership benefits–applied to the Greek Cypriot south–will not be extended to Turkish Cypriot north until after reunification.

29. For "shared levels of expectations in political, economic, social, cultural affairs," see Groom (2000, 79, 81).

30. The Council of Europe launched a series of activities in Cyprus in 2004, including four history teacher training seminars; a meeting of experts on the preparation of a pedagogical set of materials by Cypriot history educators from two communities; and a publication on "multiperspectivity in teaching and learning history" in three languages (English, Greek and Turkish).

31. For the transformation and its effect on cultural and political identification in North Cyprus, see Lacher and Kaymak (2005, 154-55, 159).

32. For a similar analysis, see ibid., 158.

33. This formulation dates back to Meinecke's distinction between the *staatsnation* and the *kultunation*. Later, H. Kohn formulated it as Western and Eastern nationalism. A. Smith, with a minor modification, called it as civic and ethnic nationalism.

34. For the critics, see Kymlicka (1995); Yack (1996); Nieguth (1999); Kuzio (2002); Shulman (2002).

35. As the cases of France, UK, Greece, and Turkey show us, all efforts to "civic inclusion" based on assimilation would lead to exclusion and conflict Hajdinjak (2004, 257). For the Turkish case, see Çolak (2003).

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