

Greek Cypriot cultural identity: a question of the “elite” or of the whole people?

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Surveying the history of Cyprus over several millennia one realises that the island has been under the influence of Greek culture from an early period. For the Cypriots their history is continuous. This consciousness of continuity is a psychological factor of great importance. As the Greek poet Kostis Palamas once said: “The island has changed many despots, but its heart has never changed.” This consciousness should not let us forget the tension resulting from the changes between foreign influences and the persisting force of indigenous culture. Franz Georg Maier rightly emphasises this aspect.¹

For different reasons – arising, to a great extent, from the geopolitical situation – the historical development of Cyprus has been marked by the contrast between dependence and the indigenous Cypriot culture – for example during the struggle between Byzantium and Islam or during the rule of the Lusignans or the Venetians. From the point of view of Greek Cypriot identity the conquest of the island by the Ottomans and the period of Turkish rule (from 1571 to 1878) are of particular interest.

The period of Ottoman rule should not be idealised, but neither should it be demonised. The Greek Cypriot Giorgos Georgis points out: “Cyprus was fortunate to have a lighter yoke perhaps than any other region.”² According to Georgis the island did not experience the painful institution of *Yeniçeri* (the Janissaries). On the other hand there was a gap between the Ottoman administrative formula and the reality marked by

¹ F. G. Maier, *Cyprern: Insel am Kreuzweg der Geschichte* (Munich: C. H. Beck 1982).

² G. Georgis, “Από την πρώτη στη δεύτερη αγγλοκρατία 1191-1878”, in: G. Tenekidis and G.N. Kranidiotis (edd.), *Κύπρος: Ιστορία, προβλήματα και αγώνες του λαού της* (Athens: Estia 1981), p.117.

arbitrariness and corruption. There were Greek Cypriot liberation movements. The co-operation between exploited Greek and Turkish labourers gave a supranational character to these liberation movements. In any event the religious and national contrasts were not settled.

The era of Archbishop Chrysanthos (from 1767 to 1810) was characterised by a strengthening of Greek Cypriot autonomy. The increase of Chrysanthos's power embittered the Turkish Cypriots. In 1804 a Turkish Cypriot revolt against the Turkish Governor, who was reproached with being compliant with the Archbishop, was put down by Turkish troops from Anatolia. The island Turks felt humiliated. After the outbreak of the Greek Revolution in 1821 hundreds of Greek Cypriots were slaughtered.

By 1821 a sense of a collective identity was well established among the Greeks, and the Greek Cypriots felt that they too shared that identity. Here the consciousness of the continuity of Greek culture on the island played an important role. The Greek Cypriot cultural identity now had a national dimension. To borrow Anthony D. Smith's maxim: "The process from culture to politics is the path towards nation-building."³ The process from ethnic community (*ethnie*) to nation involves the movement from culture to politics. According to Smith ethnic communities are "human populations with shared ancestry myths, histories and cultures, having an association with a specific territory and a sense of solidarity".⁴ But what is understood by nation? This is an extremely difficult question, the significance of which in the case of Cyprus is crucial. While the literature is extensive, it has not yet produced definitive results.

We can distinguish between: definitions by objective criteria (for instance origin, language, religion); definitions by subjective criteria (for instance consciousness and will); and combined definitions. There is no consensus regarding the decisive criteria. The difficulty of the problem lies in the nature of the thing itself. The nation is an historical phenomenon subject to change. In this sense the so-called historico-political definitions are the most appropriate ones. For the purposes of this paper it seems to

³ A. D. Smith, *The ethnic origins of nations* (Oxford: Blackwell 1986 and reprints), p. 154.

⁴ A. D. Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

me important to state that a dogmatic definition can be dangerous. Here we must mention, for instance, the question much debated in the academic literature as to whether the nation preceded the state or succeeded it.⁵

It has been suggested that the Greek and Greek Cypriot identities were formed long before the creation of the Modern Greek state in 1830. The same holds good for the Modern Greek nation. As mentioned above, the Greek Cypriots felt themselves to be members of this nation. The existence of an already independent "motherland" strengthened the demand for union with Greece (Enosis). During British rule (from 1878 to 1960) this postulate played an important role. The claim for Enosis was compatible with the right to self-determination in view of the will of the Greek Cypriot majority, expressed in the plebiscite held in 1950, and in view of the demographic situation (1960: 77% Greek Cypriots, 18.3% Turkish Cypriots). In many respects the Greek Cypriot struggle against British colonial power was different from that of other liberation movements. The existence of the Greek "motherland" as the centre of Greek Cypriot ethno-centrism gave the struggle an irredentist character.

In order to study British policy on Cyprus it is necessary to examine the socio-economic developments. Cypriot agriculture was characterised by the fragmentation of holdings, the dependence of small farmers on usurers, low productivity, and the precarious situation of many property-less farm-hands. At the same time there were the problems which resulted from the large holdings belonging to private landowners and the Church. The tribute question highlighted the difficulties during the period from 1878 to 1927. The economic development in the period from 1939 to 1955 could not eliminate the weak points of the island's economic structure. In short: London pursued a policy answering the needs of the colonial power.

Under British rule the political and constitutional system was incompatible with liberal and democratic principles. The High Commissioner, who from 1925 onwards was called Governor, enjoyed unrestricted powers. The Legislative Council was in fact merely decorative in character. The British

⁵ For instance, E. Gellner, *Nations and nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell 1983 and reprints).

employed the tactics of *divide et impera* to oppose the liberation movement of the Greek Cypriots. They ignored the important factor of the cultural identity and national feeling of the Greek Cypriots. In 1907 Winston Churchill recognised this factor when he said that he deemed the Greek Cypriot endeavour for unification with their motherland as natural. But Churchill did not infer the political consequences. On the other hand it would not be correct to ignore the errors made by the Cypriot liberation movement, legitimised by the principle of self-determination. Often these errors were connected with those made by Athens.

The leaders of the Greek Cypriots – above all the Church and its nationalistic allies – adopted the method of maximalism. They were adopting the mentality of everything or nothing. In the decade 1950-60 (when the foundations were laid for the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus) the initiatives undertaken by Athens and the Greek Cypriot leadership to achieve a solution for the Cyprus problem wavered between diplomacy and armed struggle. In the literature we encounter the belated realisation that errors were committed: illusions about the role of the United Nations, underestimation of the Turkish factor by Athens and of the Turkish Cypriots by the Greek Cypriot leadership, romantic nationalism, poor knowledge of the self-determination problem, belated realisations concerning the significance of independence, irredentism in the era of liquidation of colonial power, poor co-ordination of the initiatives undertaken by the Greek and the Greek Cypriot leaderships, rivalry between Makarios and Grivas, the discrediting of the heroic EOKA struggle by criminal acts, lack of flexibility during the negotiations with the British, involvement in bloody conflicts with the Turkish Cypriots.

But mentioning all the errors committed by Athens and by the Greek Cypriot leadership does not mean releasing the British government or the Turkish and the Turkish Cypriot nationalists from responsibility. I merely wish to stress that historical truth is not one-dimensional, as I argued in detail in

my book *Geschichte der Republik Zypern*.⁶ The same goes for the evaluation of the role of the external powers in the problem of Cyprus and in the forming of Greek Cypriot cultural and national identity. I have emphasised the tension resulting from the interaction of foreign influences and the persisting force of indigenous culture. This also means that the foreign influences should not be overestimated. According to Jeanette Choisi (and other authors):

we must understand Cyprus and the Cypriots as a historical unity whose non-unified history had not developed from within the society but was set in motion by adoption of foreign influences.⁷

Greek Cypriot ethnocentrism was and is connected with the existence of the Greek "motherland". But Greek Cypriot cultural and national identity has also developed from within the society of Cyprus. The Greek Cypriot Ioannis Karatzas (1767-98) fought for the freedom of the Greeks together with Rigas Velestinlis (Feraios) before the establishment of the Modern Greek state. He was by no means the only Greek Cypriot to engage in such activities. Greek Cypriot cultural and national identity was and is to a great extent an expression of the persisting force of the indigenous culture of the island. Incidentally, the same is also true, *mutatis mutandis*, for the Turkish Cypriots. According to Kudret Akay, Turkish nationalism in Cyprus was not initiated by the rise of Greek Cypriot nationalism.⁸ Turkish nationalism in Cyprus was a sub-case of Turkish nationalism. But the consciousness that made Turkish Cypriot nationalism operational existed within the cultural and social system in

⁶ P. Tzermias, *Geschichte der Republik Zypern, mit Berücksichtigung der historischen Entwicklung der Insel während der Jahrtausende* (3rd ed., Tübingen: Francke 1998).

⁷ J. Choisi, "The Problem of the Cypriot identity: ethnic or elite conflict?", in: Heinz-Jürgen Axt and Hansjörg Brey (edd.), *Cyprus and the European Union: New chances for solving an old conflict?* (Munich 1997) [Südosteuropa Aktuell, 23], pp. 24-35.

⁸ K. Akay, "Past experiences and future prospects", in: I. Ioannou, A. Theophanous and N. Peristianis (edd.), *The Cyprus problem: Its solution and the day after* (Nicosia: Intercollege 1998), pp. 29-42.

Cyprus. The overemphasis on the role played by the influences of the respective motherlands reminds us of the overestimation of other forms of foreign penetration. Tom Nairn remarks on this form of overestimation:

On this point I agree ... with Paschalis Kitromilides; to attribute all developments within a country to outside manipulation without looking at domestic structures would amount not only to oversimplification but also to a mystification of such notions as foreign penetration and imperialism...⁹

I said that the nation is a historical phenomenon subject to changes and that in this sense the so-called historico-political definitions are the most appropriate ones. The role of ancestry myths is relevant here. But this role should not be overestimated. Greek Cypriot cultural and national identity cannot be considered as representing an imagined community in the sense of Benedict Anderson.¹⁰ It is a national myth to think of the Greek Cypriots as racially homogeneous and linearly descended from the ancient Hellenes. But blood is not the right criterion. Jakob Philipp Fallmerayer was wrong. The Greek historian Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos was right when he wrote that spirit is what is important, not blood.¹¹ Later the Greek historian Nikos Svoronos, who cannot be considered an exponent of a nationalistic approach to history, emphasised the Greek consciousness of continuity, although he condemned the "biological" interpretation of this continuity.¹² The nation is a relatively modern notion. But before the coming into being of this phenomenon there was a pre-existent "material", as Hans Kohn correctly maintains. Or, to borrow the words of Eric J. Hobsbawm: "Before nationalism there was a protonationalism."

⁹ T. Nairn, *Small states in the modern world*, quoted by K. Akay, op. cit., p. 34.

¹⁰ B. Anderson, *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (London: Verso 1991).

¹¹ See K. Th. Dimaras, *Κωνσταντίνος Παπαρρηγόπουλος: Η εποχή του - Η ζωή του - Το έργο του* (Athens: Ethniki Trapeza 1986), pp. 145-69.

¹² See P. Tzermias, *Η εικόνα της Ελλάδας στον ξένο κόσμο* (Athens: I. Sideris 1997), p. 152.

An important element of this “material”, in the case of the Greeks or the Greek Cypriots, is the language. For the significance of the continuity of the language I refer the reader to my book *Für eine Hellenistik mit Zukunft*.¹³ The language is a substantial characteristic of Greek Cypriot identity. This element nourishes the subjective criterion of consciousness and will, the factor of a “plébiscite de tous les jours” in the sense of Ernest Renan. To cite the famous phrase by Renan here does not mean that I fail to recognise the shortcomings of a subjectivistic definition. Hermann Heller expressed himself notably in this respect.¹⁴ On the other hand it cannot be denied that Renan’s “principe spirituel”, by stressing the consciousness of solidarity, does underline a liberal democratic element. Volition and the sense of identity often correspond with certain objective factors. So the consciousness of the Greek Cypriots could certainly not be separated from language, religion and other objective factors. The same is true, *mutatis mutandis*, for the national aspirations of the Turkish Cypriots. But under the principle of self-determination the ultimate decision is taken by the will of individuals. And this is an element that ensures freedom and democracy.

From this point of view language has a great importance. In 1916 the Greek politician Alexandros Papanastasiou emphasised the “democratic character” of the language. For Papanastasiou language is an expression of a community of volition. The Greek Cypriot dialect is a good example here. The dialect has a long history and cannot be considered as the preserve of an elite. There are Greek Cypriot words whose origin is Achaean, for example βόρτακος, “frog”.¹⁵ It is significant that the old elements are primarily the heritage of the rural population, the so-called common people. The absorption of non-Greek words was primarily a phenomenon within a section of the so-called elite.

¹³ P. Tzermias, *Für eine Hellenistik mit Zukunft: Plädoyer für die Überwindung der Krise des Humanismus* (Fribourg: Universitätsverlag Freiburg Schweiz 1998).

¹⁴ H. Heller, *Gesammelte Schriften*, III (Leiden: A. W. Sijthoff 1971), pp. 258-67.

¹⁵ See K. Chatziioannou, *Ετυμολογικό λεξικό της ομιλουμένης κυπριακής διαλέκτου* (Nicosia: Tamasos 1996), p. 9.

However, an exception must be made here as regards Turkish words. It may be that a section of the so-called Turkish Cypriot elite, as well as a section of the so-called Greek Cypriot elite, was influenced by the English way of life. Kudret Akay speaks of "Brito-Muslims" among the Turkish Cypriots. Lawrence Durrell wrote that a Greek Cypriot told him, at the time of the EOKA struggle against the British, that even Grivas was very pro-British. According to this Greek Cypriot, Grivas killed the British with regret, even with affection.¹⁶ A paradoxical love-hate relationship. But here we have to avoid generalisations. The Greek Cypriot dialect is an important characteristic of the cultural and national identity of the whole Hellenic people of the island. It is typical that the Greek Cypriots, even those of the upper class, speak their dialect among themselves. This is similar to of the use of the Swiss German dialect.

The perpetuation of the Cyprus question is without doubt an expression of the fact that the history of the island was to a great extent determined by two different ethnic identities, the Greek Cypriot and the Turkish Cypriot. As far as that goes one can speak of the lack of a common Cypriot identity. But this remark should not be exaggerated. Fine differentiations are necessary. It must be emphasised that the Cyprus conflict is not only a conflict of elites. Of course the "elites" determined the historical events to a great extent. The Greek Orthodox Church in Cyprus and its followers were protagonists of the Enosis movement on the Greek Cypriot side. On the Turkish Cypriot side the middle class remained limited in numbers. That is why the Turkish Cypriot ruling class was to a great extent dependent on British colonialism. But here too nationalism played a part. For example, the Cyprus Turkish Lycée in Nicosia was the centre of anti-British and pro-Turkish nationalistic activities in the 1930s.

The Greek Cypriot and the Turkish Cypriot nationalisms were attached to the "motherlands", Greece and Turkey. But this bond was by no means artificial. It was often the expression of the ethnic identity of the Greek Cypriot or Turkish Cypriot community respectively. This feeling of identity was usually deeply held by the local population and was not considered as

¹⁶ L. Durrell, *Bitter Lemons* (London: Faber n.d.), p. 251.

forcibly imposed from outside. Therefore this feeling frequently embraced the masses too, not only the so-called elites. Often the so-called elites acted under the pressure of the masses. In the eyes of many Greek Cypriots, for instance, the Orthodox Church was the symbol of their ethnic and religious identities. Cultural and national identities merged. The word "elite" is ultimately misleading because it includes, etymologically, a positive value judgement that in many cases is incompatible with the reality.

Eric J. Hobsbawm is overstating his case when he writes that the Greeks who fought against the Turks in 1821 battled more for Rome than for Greece.¹⁷ Hobsbawm distinguishes too strongly between the intelligentsia and the common people. Makriyannis was almost illiterate, but he felt himself to be a descendant of the ancient Greeks. Hobsbawm also distinguishes too strongly between καθαρεύουσα and δημοτική. He overlooks the continuity of language. He rightly states that *Romiosyni* includes a relationship to Byzantium. Nevertheless, he confuses things when he says that the Greeks battled more for Rome than for Greece. *Romiosyni* is to be identified with "Greekness". Hobsbawm does not have a good knowledge of Greek sources. For the Greek Cypriots too *Romiosyni* means Greekness.¹⁸ Vasilis Michailidis, the great Greek Cypriot poet (1849?-1917), wrote in the nineteenth century, in his poem on the massacre of hundreds of Greek Cypriots by the Turks after the outbreak of the Greek Revolution:

Η Ρωμιοσύνη εν φυλή συνόττειρη του κόσμου!
Η Ρωμιοσύνη εν να χαθεί όντας ο κόσμος λείπει!

¹⁷ E. J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and nationalism since 1780: Programme, myth, reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1990), pp. 76-7.

¹⁸ Concerning the notion of *Romiosyni* see P. Tzermias, "Das 'hellenisch-romäische Dilemma' der Spätbyzantiner", in: *The 17th International Byzantine Congress 1986. Abstracts of short papers* (Dumbarton Oaks: Georgetown University n.d.), pp. 368-70.

Romiosyni is a race as old as the world.

Romiosyni will be lost only when the world is finished.¹⁹

Kyriakos Chatziioannou calls the poem of Michailidis the best Modern Greek epic. I would say that it is a masterpiece of Greek Cypriot literature. It is an original work, owing nothing to imported influences. The statement of Jacob Grimm is relevant here: "Unsere Sprache ist auch unsere Geschichte." ("Our language is also our history.")

It is true that the Greek Cypriots are Greeks. But they have their own peculiarities, in the same way as, for instance, the inhabitants of Crete have their own distinctive features in comparison with the mainland Greeks. Cyprus is in this respect related to Crete. An expression of this affinity is the dialect. The dialect plays a part in the literature, for instance in *Erotokritos* in Crete or in love poems in the age of Petrarchism in Cyprus. The dialect is in both cases an expression of identity. The same goes for the Turkish Cypriots. They are Turks, but they have their own peculiarities. Many Turkish Cypriots spoke Greek. There were numerous Greek-speaking Muslims. I know from my own experience that the Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash is fluent in Greek. Here we have to lay emphasis on the fact that in the course of the island's history there have been remarkable approaches to a common Cypriot consciousness, a Cypriot identity, in spite of all religious and national antagonisms. Think of the common trade-union activity of Greek and Turkish Cypriots! Think of the "co-existence" in village life and of other inter-communal relationships, which Michalis Attalides rightly stresses in his studies. Although it may seem strange to some, it is a fact: many Turkish words are part of the Greek Cypriot dialect, for instance *meremetin* (Turkish *meremet*), "a small repair". The Greeks say *meremeti*, the Greek Cypriots *meremetin*. This word is a common element of the cultural identity of Greek and Turkish Cypriots.

¹⁹ "Φυλή" (literally "race") in Greek often means merely *έθνος* ("nation"). Concerning these differentiations see P. Tzermias, *Neugriechische Geschichte* (3rd ed., Tübingen: Francke 1999), pp. 13-49.

Although over the years of living together Greek and Turkish Cypriots have developed many common characteristics, the course of events up to the birth of the Republic of Cyprus in 1960 never led to the creation of a Cypriot nation embracing both groups, at least not a nation in the ordinary sense of this word. Incidentally, the notion "Cypriot nation" contradicted the Enosis demand of the Greek Cypriots as well as the watchword *Taksim* (division) of the Turkish Cypriots. In general the leaders of the two communities acted against the background of two different cultural and ethnic identities. In this way a distinction between nation and people was not under discussion. It was precisely this distinction, however, which came to be highly relevant with the creation of the Republic of Cyprus, because the new state was largely based on the idea of a people consisting of two national communities.

The total population of the island thus represented one people in the sense of a politically organised entity – in the sense of the so-called "Romance and Anglo-Saxon" state theory or linguistic regulation: *popolo, peuple, people*. In this definition the ethnic factor (common origin, language etc.) was left out of consideration. In the process of organising the state, however, the existence of the two ethnic groups (Greek and Turkish Cypriots) has been considered from many aspects. In other words the concept of nation in the sense of *Volkstum*, as it is widely understood, especially in the German-speaking lands, has largely been taken into account. It is beyond doubt that the distinction between the two notions must not be absolutised. The differentiation between people and nation serves in the context of my discourse as an ideal type. It abstracts from the confusions which exist in practice.

So the people here is not understood as *ἔθνος*, as a community based on origin, language and culture, but as *δῆμος*, that is the sum of citizens in a liberal democracy. Nation on the other hand is not conceived as a state nation, but as a notion indicating the ethnic unity. Therefore the people here is not meant to be the nation as conceived by Johann Gottfried Herder or Johann Gottlieb Fichte, but a community by will in the sense of the *volonté générale* propounded by Jean-Jacques Rousseau. The fact that the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot national movements did not affect the differentiation between nation and people was

no accident. It was an expression of Greek and Turkish Cypriot nationalisms respectively. From the angle of both nationalisms, nation and people had to be coterminous. This was manifested in the ideology of committed nationalists on both sides of the Aegean Sea, for instance in the ideology of Ion Dragoumis on the one hand and of Ziya Gökalp on the other hand. But both nationalisms were not only a matter of the so-called elites. The ideology was often the expression of the cultural and nationalistic feeling of the masses. Of course, there were various ideological trends. Eleftherios Venizelos, to give just one example, pleaded for the French conception of nation. Fine differentiations are necessary in the literature too, for instance between Kostis Palamas and Konstantinos Kavafis or, in Cyprus, between Tefkros Anthias and Kostas Montis.

The Greek Cypriot national movement, not distinguishing between nation and people, was taken by surprise. So it was not prepared and actually not willing to tackle the Cyprus problem from the aspect of a "political nation" or "consensus nation" that would comprise – perhaps "on the Swiss pattern" – the Greek as well as the Turkish Cypriots. With regard to the "political nation" the Turkish Cypriot minority assumed the same attitude. The power situation (disadvantageous for the Greek Cypriots) led to the agreements of Zurich and London in 1959. In August 1960 the Republic of Cyprus was proclaimed, Britain, Greece and Turkey guaranteeing by treaty its existence and structure. The creation of the Republic brought about the liquidation of Enosis as well as the rejection of the *Taksim* demand of the Turkish nationalists. This rejection, however, was paid for by heavy privileges of the Turkish Cypriots (in relation to the majority population, but also to the smaller minority groups).²⁰ The main weakness of the Cyprus arrangements of 1959-60 was not, as the Enosis nationalists thought, the abandonment of the unification plans, but the fact that the eliminated Cyprus irredentism was not replaced by some common ideal of freedom for both parts of the people.

Pellegrino Rossi, a naturalised citizen of Geneva, said in 1833 of the national identity of the Swiss: "The name of

²⁰ See F. Crouzet, *Le Conflit de Chypre, 1946-1959*, Vol. 2 (Brussels 1973), p. 1145.

Switzerland alone announces a great national fact... It is more powerful, this name, than our differences of language, religion, customs, trades." A national consciousness of this kind did not underlie the constitution imposed upon Cyprus. For the architects of the Cyprus arrangements there were no Cypriots on the island, but Greeks and Turks. As an establishment of the facts this was not really wrong. But the terminology of the constitution ignored things held in common which formed, and still form, a bond between the two communities beyond all differences and contrasts. The constitution was not an expression of the will of the Cypriot people, not even an expression of the will of the so-called elites of the two communities. The constitution was imposed from outside. If the creators of the constitution had really cared about stimulating the development of a common Cypriot identity, they would not have used those basically disuniting terms Greeks and Turks.

This communal dualism was therefore problematic. It represented a division which was irreconcilable with the notion of a political (or "civic") nation, of the people in the above-mentioned sense. The dualism of authority within the institutions of the Republic was somehow based *a priori* upon the affirmation of both Greek and Turkish nationalism. In the duel of the two nations the turbulent life of the Republic was almost foreordained. Towards the end of 1963 the bloody conflict between Greek and Turkish Cypriots broke out. In 1964 a United Nations Peace Keeping Force was sent to Cyprus. The treaty of guarantee provided the so-called protecting powers (Great Britain, Greece and Turkey) with the possibility of interfering in the internal affairs of the Republic. In the case of Ankara this meant the subordination of the Turkish Cypriot nationalists to its dictate. The existence of a Cypriot state brought about the bipolarity of Athens and Nicosia and consequently a change in the national ideology of Hellenism. Athens saw itself as the leading centre of Hellenism, while Nicosia, in practice and sometimes also in declared doctrine, claimed the right to decide on the fate of Cypriot Hellenism. Both sides made use of a patriotic style of argumentation. It was, in somewhat exaggerated terms, the clash of two national ideologies, of two identities, within the "lap" of Hellenism. The cultural aspects of this clash were and still are significant.

During the period 1967-74 the doctrine of the "national centre" went through a very dangerous intensification because of the military regime in Athens. The criminal coup of Dimitrios Ioannidis against Makarios in 1974 was a perversion of the Enosis ideology. Ioannidis's coup illustrates that it is grotesque to claim, without any qualification, that the Cyprus conflict is only a conflict of elites. Ioannidis was not the exponent of the ideas of a Greek Cypriot elite, not even of those of a Greek elite. He was a conspirator. Ioannidis gave Turkey the welcome opportunity to occupy almost 40% of the territory of Cyprus, on the pretext of applying the treaty of guarantee. As a result of Turkey's action, which was contrary to international law, about 200,000 Greek Cypriots lost their homes. Then came the settlement of the occupied areas by mainland Turks to change the demographic character of the island. Turkey carried out "ethnic cleansing". As a consequence of the Turkish invasion the Hellenic cultural heritage was destroyed. The invasion was a blow to Greek Cypriot cultural identity, but also to Turkish Cypriot cultural identity. As early as 1979, Vamik D. Volkan, a Turkish Cypriot working in the United States, drew attention to frictions between the settlers and the Turkish Cypriots, and between the settlers and the Turkish soldiers.²¹ The Turkish invasion was a blow to the whole Cypriot people.

Turkey's action gave an impetus to an ideological propensity in favour of partition. Turkish Cypriot secessionism was intensified to an alarming degree. But the theory of the existence of two peoples, as held by Rauf Denktash, contradicts the concept of an all-Cyprus identity, of a culture of the whole Cypriot people – a culture with different, as well as common, elements. Only a united Cyprus, a Cyprus of the whole people, can be a factor for stability in the Eastern Mediterranean. "Ethnic pride and arrogance must be forsaken for Cypriotism," as Halil Ibrahim Salih correctly writes.²² Cypriotism signifies a rapprochement between the two communities through the

²¹ V. D. Volkan, *Cyprus – war and adaptation: A psychoanalytic history of two ethnic groups in conflict* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia 1979), p. 142.

²² H. I. Salih, *Cyprus: The impact of diverse nationalism on a state* (Alabama: University of Alabama Press 1978), p. 118.

realisation that only as the common home of all its inhabitants can the island have a humane and peaceful future. In this way it is possible to create and nurture a common self-consciousness that stresses the uniting elements and rejects any physical and psychological division. Here I have to lay emphasis on the fact that Cypriotism does not mean a negation of Greek Cypriot or Turkish Cypriot cultural identity. Greek Cypriot culture is not without a measure of cosmopolitanism. We must distinguish between nationalism and a patriotism which respects the cultural identities of other ethnic groups. Indeed, real patriotism assumes such respect. The Swiss author Gottfried Keller has put it incisively: "A nation can only be really happy and free, if and when it has consideration for the welfare, the freedom and the glory of other nations."

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