

## *The Cyprus Crisis: Examining the Role of the British and American Governments during 1974*

ANDREAS CONSTANDINOS

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The events of summer 1974 in Cyprus triggered the publication of dozens of books which all have one thing in common: they believe in conspiracies. According to them Henry Kissinger was the 'villain of the story' who was not only behind the coup d'état against Makarios but also behind the Turkish intervention/invasion. In 2009 Andreas Constandinos published the following book:

ANDREAS CONSTANDINOS *America, Britain and the Cyprus Crisis of 1974: Calculated Conspiracy or Foreign Policy Failure?* (Central Milton Keynes: AuthorHouse, 2009), 426 pp.

In it he examined these conspiratorial myths and rightly refuted them. In 2012 he republished this book under the title shown in the heading of this review. The new title and subtitle create the impression that the 2012 edition is a fresh book, but except for the two different titles, a foreword by Zenon Stavrinides and the use of endnotes instead of footnotes as in the first edition, the two books are identical. I had reviewed that book in 2010 in German in the journal THETIS, and I have translated some of those points, which are still valid, in this review.

The author clearly carves out the differences in American foreign policy towards Cyprus in the 1960s and 1970s. In the 1960s the USA aspired towards a partition of the island in order to dispose of a Communist menace once and for all. So, the picture of Makarios as a Castro in a cassock of the Mediterranean belongs to the Johnson years. Kissinger did not consider Makarios as a threat to American interests. Why the author calls Kissinger a product of the Weimar Republic is a mystery, because Kissinger was born in 1923.

The first conspiratorial myth which the author disproves is that Washington was behind the coup against Makarios. He describes quite rightly how Kissinger cast Boyatt's warnings to the wind because he considered the facts mentioned by Boyatt as insignificant. Kissinger was preoccupied with world politics and was not interested in Cyprus as long as Cyprus did not disturb his activities on this level. He wanted to keep his options open until the very last moment. Besides that, Kissinger did not have the slightest idea about the conditions in Cyprus. The author believes that the failure of the American secret services and Kissinger's totally incorrect assessment of Ioannidis were the main reason for the coup. Without any doubt this is also right but the decisive point for the interpretation is in this case the 'foreign factors' in Greek politics. Ioanidis,

too, like all Greek politicians before him, abided by the maxim *τι θέλει ο ξένος παράγοντας*; [what does the foreign factor want?]. Since Kissinger did not make clear the wishes of the American 'factor' Ioannidis interpreted this silence as a kind of affirmation, as the green light for his course. The same complies with Turkish politics. Kissinger's neglect of the warnings and his non-interference in early summer 1974 led to the catastrophe. A clear intervention in time would most probably have stopped Ioannidis.

Constandinos refutes the second myth, too, that the Americans colluded with the Turks during the intervention/invasion. But he also shows that Kissinger, out of geo-political reasons, considered Turkey more important than Greece. In order not to disturb the good understanding with Ecevit he did not counter him as Johnson had done in 1964. Indeed he sent Sisco with empty hands on a mission impossible to prevent the intervention. This inevitably led to the catastrophe.

Constandinos put an end to the two main myths connected with the events in 1974 which deserves applause. But he is not immune to hawk others, for instance, that the CIA was behind the coup of 21 April 1967 and that the so-called Akritas plan was a real plan. The book, which is primarily based on American and British sources, is the policy of these two states. The Turkish and Greek sides appear only when they are reflected by these sources. Such an interpretation is almost a tradition in the historiography dealing with this topic. The motives of the protagonists on the Greek and Turkish political scene are covered only indirectly in what often leads to misinterpretations.

An account reconstructing events almost totally out of the sources is desirable and courageous but it is always in danger of drowning in the flood. Therefore it makes sense to include secondary literature in the language that one knows. The greater context is better understood and lines of interpretations become more visible.

Both volumes contain a huge identical bibliography exclusively with English titles. There are no Greek or German titles despite the fact that the author has full command of both languages. This is especially regrettable because the author did not consult the memoirs of former protagonists such as those of Prime Minister Adamantios Androutsopoulos, Admiral Petros Arapakis, the leading diplomat Dimitrios Bitsios, the Chief of the Greek General Staff Grigorios Bonanos and the Ambassadors Nikos Kranidiotis and Konstantinos Panagiotakos. Even English language memoirs escaped the author's attention, namely, the reminiscences of Ambassadors Carl Barkman and Zeki Kunalp. A bit bewildering is the fact that the memoirs of Margaret and Andreas Papandreou are not mentioned either.

All of the above was stated when I reviewed the first book. At that time I expressed surprise that the author did not take into consideration the numerous articles on the 1974 events published in THETIS, some of which are in English. But now that the second book is an expanded edition – as we are told by Zenon Stavrinides – one could expect that new literature would be included, for example, my *A Concise History of Modern Cyprus 1878–2009* or my *Geschichte der Insel Zypern* [History of the Island of Cyprus], Band IV, 1 and 2: 1965–1977. But apparently the author

follows the principle: Quod non est in lingua britannica/americana non est in mundo [If it is not found in the British/American tongue it is not in the world].

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