

**Το Δημοψήφισμα του 2004:
Το Περιφερειακό και Διεθνές Περιβάλλον, η Πρόσληψη
της Λύσης και η Συγκυρία**

[THE REFERENDUM OF 2004: THE REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT,
THE RECEPTION OF A SOLUTION, AND THE TIME CONJECTURE]

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A Divided Island and the Challenge of the Annan Plan

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“The referendum of 2004” takes a comprehensive look at the history of the Cyprus problem examining the international as well as local processes leading to the 2004 referendum. It is a useful tool for students and researchers of the Cyprus problem as it provides a detailed analytical account of the geo-political context, the diplomatic developments in the long peace process, the Annan Plan and an interpretation of the Greek Cypriot “No”. The analysis is focused on political science perspectives, utilising published texts, books, reports and press articles. Although it is an essentially empirical rather than a theoretical attempt, the book does present theoretical insights through a thorough literature review. And although objectivity in the analysis constitutes a guiding thread throughout the book, the author remains free from presumptions of political neutrality and does not shy away from expressing his own position, namely that the “No” vote has exacerbated the danger of making the current partition of the island a permanent one.

The book starts with a reference to the European paradigm in an attempt to both situate the analysis in the current juncture of Cyprus’ EU membership as well as provide the conceptual framework in which to approach issues of state sovereignty and government. The narrative proceeds with an overview of the revision of Greek foreign policy *vis-a-vis* Turkey from antagonism to rapprochement, followed by a parallel analysis of the revision of US post-Cold-War foreign policy from focusing on short-term and narrow geo-political interests to considering both the interests of the regional powers and ‘international justice’.

Moving on to examine the great changes in Turkey, the author counters the conventional “static” perception of Turkey as untrustworthy and expansionist, adopted by Papadopoulos and in his attempt to justify the rejection of the Annan Plan. He thus proceeds to a historical analysis of

modern Turkey and explains the gradual erosion of Kemalist secularism and statism in terms of the survival of Islam and the creation of an independent business class with separate interests from the Kemalist establishment which he considers instrumental in the on-going modernization and democratization processes. Despite Özal's Turko-Islamic synthesis, it is claimed, the rise of political Islam at the end of his premiership was perceived by the Turkish army as a serious threat to the principles of Kemalism. The repression of political Islam and the promotion of nationalist parties by the army however proved untenable as the new moderate Islamists of the AKP embraced pro-Europeanism and through "a peaceful revolution" won a big electoral victory in 2002. This had significant repercussions on Turkey's policy on Cyprus which was radically revised with Erdoğan stating for the first time that "non-solution is not a solution".

The author then proceeds to an account of the historical developments within Greek Cypriot society charting the growth of irredentist nationalism and the specific role of Makarios in its culmination in the 1950s. The 1960 constitution and Makarios' attempt to revise it is re-evaluated in the light of new historical evidence which challenges the conventional "British trap" theory. Makarios' responsibility for the 1963 political crisis is acknowledged while he is credited for achieving in 1968 with his policy shift away from enosis a "joy break" for the people of Cyprus. The survival though of an underlying absolutist conception of a solution prevented him from compromising. It took the tragic events of 1974 to re-situate Makarios on a compromise path, which became thereafter a "painful" one. Yet again the concept of the post-1974 long term struggle was also his. Makarios' two-fold legacy is still relevant today corresponding to the two schools of thought regarding the Cyprus problem: the realists who are ready to compromise refer to the pragmatist Makarios who accepted the federal model, while the "patriotic" forces who in practice reject the compromise on the federal model refer to the long struggle he proclaimed after 1974. Electoral concerns though have historically influenced the political orientations of the pragmatist forces AKEL and DISI into alliances with the rejectionist forces represented by DIKO and EDEK.

In the Turkish Cypriot community, to which Pericleous turns next, nationalism evolved from the logic of autonomy to the logic of *taksim*. Rauf Denktaş is considered the catalyst in the partition process, in this sense, that led from the enclaves to the Turkish occupation and the proclamation of the TRNC. However the absolute power of Denktaş was eroded in the 1990s as Turkish Cypriots realised that his policy was keeping them in isolation while Greek Cypriots were marching towards the EU. Early in this decade the Turkish Cypriot revolt swept him out of power redefining the content of the community's interests for the first time in modern history converging with the broader Cypriot interest in reunification.

Having described the creation of the problem the book proceeds with an analysis of the long peace process in Cyprus examining the step by step accumulation of the body of work produced leading to the Annan Plan which is described in some detail with an evaluation of its philosophy, its main provisions and its projected impact on Cyprus. From then on the narrative moves to an account of the lead up to the referendum analyzing the international pressures on the Cypriot

communities as well as Turkey that derived from the historical conjuncture of Cyprus' EU entry and Turkey's accession negotiations. The significant role of Papadopoulos and Denktaş in undermining the process and preparing the ground for the rejection of the Plan is firmly asserted although the author argues that only Papadopoulos managed to follow through to the end, as Denktaş was forced to comply with Erdoğan's road map and abstain from the final negotiations in Burgenstock.

The Greek Cypriot "No" was engineered by Papadopoulos from early on in the negotiations and this explains, according to the author, his refusal to negotiate in Burgenstock. AKEL's inability to differentiate its position from Papadopoulos is severely criticized and Christofias' stance seen as indicative of his inability to take the lead and shape history. DISI's rapture with its nationalist past on the other hand was impressive and Anastasiades' refusal to consider the political cost of the "Yes" vote demonstrated, for the author, his boldness as well as his statesmanship. Finally the Church's role alongside that of the biased (pro-"No") media is seen as important because they, in concert with Papadopoulos, were able to direct the electorate overwhelmingly towards a rejectionist position.

In dealing with all these processes at once, the book is ultimately too broad in scope and too analytically ambitious. In his attempt to cover all the themes directly or indirectly relevant to the 2004 referendum, the analysis extends too far back in history and opens up side issues which are inevitably insufficiently addressed. Nationalism, for example, is examined in its political manifestations in different historical periods but its ideological impact through the educational system, which arguably constitutes an important social-historical factor in the production of the Greek Cypriot "No" is barely touched upon. The emphasis is ultimately on the geopolitical context which is seen as over-determining the peace process with the local dynamics having a secondary role. With regards to the Annan Plan the author focuses more on its provisions comparing them with previous plans and projecting on its implication and less on how these provisions were interpreted and evaluated by the Cypriots, political elite and electorate alike. Nevertheless the book succeeds in giving a holistic picture of the 2004 referendum and most importantly the processes which led us there. It is undoubtedly a useful book with a detailed historical account of the Cyprus problem at its most important juncture with a crystal-clear political position that needs to be taken into consideration.

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