

The Cyprus Issue: A Documentary History, 1878-2007

**Edited by Murat Metin Hakki
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A collection of documents on the 'Cyprus Issue' is undoubtedly timely and very worthwhile. The selection in this volume is for the most part interesting. I strongly recommend its purchase because it contains a number of important documents relating to the Cyprus issue, especially post-1960. In this review I will present the positive and negative aspects of this publication so that readers will know what to expect and what not to expect.

The aim of the book is encapsulated in the title: to provide a history of the Cyprus issue through documents covering the period 1878, when the Ottoman Empire ceded to the British Empire the right to occupy and administer Cyprus, until today, or more exactly, until 2007. This aim, however, fails in one significant area: it does not provide nearly enough documents about the period before 1960, when Cyprus became an independent republic, in other words it does not provide enough documents on the period of British rule. In fact, it only has nine documents before the Zurich-London Accords of 1959. The publication, in my view, should not have claimed to cover the period before 1960, because it fails to do so anywhere near as comprehensively as it implies in the title. Moreover, some of these documents are not published in full, such as the Treaty of Sevres, the Treaty of Lausanne and the Radcliffe Proposals, although a substantial part of the latter is included. There are no documents from the National Archives (formerly Public Records Office) in Kew Gardens, London, and other more accessible documents from the period. There should have been more documents covering issues such as the occupation of Cyprus in 1878, the introduction of a liberal constitution in 1882, the place of Cyprus in the wider scheme of the British Empire, the rise of nationalism, the efforts to cede Cyprus to Greece, the decision to retain Cyprus after World War I and to subsequently make it a crown colony in 1925, the disturbances of 1931 and the years of repressive rule, the debates over whether to cede Cyprus to Greece or not after World War II and the decision to retain it and give it a liberal constitution, the policy of 'enosis and only enosis', the decision to move the British Middle East Military Headquarters to Cyprus in 1952 and the 'never' declaration of 1954, and finally the violence of EOKA, TMT and the British¹ and the internationalisation of the Cyprus issue after 1955. In order to cover the period from 1878 until today a

minimum of two volumes would have been needed (one covering 1878-1959 and the other 1960-today), although a truly comprehensive project would have looked to publish four volumes (I: 1878-1925; II: 1926-1959; III: 1960-1974; IV: 1975-today).

Nevertheless, this volume is a valuable source for the post-1960 period, with many documents, some of which are well known but not easily accessible, while others are not so well known and even more inaccessible. In the subsequent paragraphs I wish to analyse the value of some of these documents.

An engaging collection of documents are those around 'the doctrine of necessity and Greek Cypriot justifications for certain departures from the 1960 constitution' (101-106). These highlight how 'states of exception' were legally couched by the Greek Cypriots in the wake of the intercommunal violence that erupted in December 1963.

Another intriguing set of documents are the letters exchanged between Dean Acheson, the special adviser to President Lyndon B. Johnson, and George Papandreou, the Prime Minister of Greece, in 1964 on the substance of Acheson's proposals to solve the Cyprus problem. They are compelling reading because they provide the thinking behind the US proposals and their rejection by Greece.

Also of interest is the exchange between Glafcos Clerides and Rauf Denktash, the two negotiators for the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities respectively from 1967-1974. Hakki titles this exchange 'missed opportunity' and in his 'memoirs' Clerides also makes it clear that he sees it as a missed opportunity.² Hakki, however, provides a great many more documents (139-186).

Through Hakki's inclusion of Makarios' speech at the UN in July 1974 it can be seen that he never invited the three 'Guarantor Powers' to intervene in Cyprus after the coup, a controversial point since many in Cyprus, especially supporters of DISY believe this to be the case.

A truly fascinating inclusion relates to a legal ruling on the Turkish invasion in the Supreme Court of Greece in 1979. The excerpt from decision No. 2658/79 states that the Turkish intervention was legal. Although I cannot claim legal expertise, I agree that the Turkish government had the legal right to intervene and did follow the rules preceding such an intervention, however, it could only intervene for specific purposes, namely of 're-establishing the state of affairs established by the present treaty (Treaty of Guarantee)'.³ The problem, of course, is that the state of affairs had been in a state of exception since 1963. So the Turkish invasion had no intention of re-establishing the state of affairs preceding the coup, or preceding

1963, that is the 1960 Constitution, but to place the Greek Cypriots in a position where they must agree to a new state of affairs. This is why the period between the initial invasion in July and the second operation in mid August are so important. This period, in which the Turkish government hoped to compel the Greek Cypriots to accept a new state of affairs, which would include geographic separation, was a small window, owing to the tactical and logistical requirements of a military operation. So when the Greek Cypriots, represented by Glafcos Clerides at the Geneva talks, wanted more time, the military contingencies outweighed the political.⁴ It is disappointing that there are no documents in this publication on these proposals and talks.

More recently there has been a major controversy over the wording of the High Level Agreement of 2 February 1977 and that of 19 May 1979. Those that rejected the bi-communal, bi-zonal federation that was the so-called Annan Plan, namely members of DIKO, EDEK and EUROKO claim that the word bi-zonal is not mentioned in the High Level Agreements. They claim, therefore, that the Greek Cypriot side has never agreed to a bi-zonal federation. The opposing side, that is, the supporters of the Annan Plan, namely DISY, and those that support it as a basis for a solution, namely AKEL, argue that the word may not be mentioned but the High Level Agreements clearly outline a bi-zonal federation. It is true that the High Level Agreements do not use the word bi-zonal, but it is equally true that Article II of the High Level Agreement of 2 February 1977 clearly makes reference to two constituent states. It states: 'the territory under the administration of each community should be discussed in the light of economic viability or productivity and land ownership'. Since the article makes it clear that the communities will each administer territory and according to the 1960 constitution there are only two communities – the Greek and Turkish – it is therefore talking about the Greek and Turkish Cypriots having their own jurisdiction over territory and thus two constituent states.

Looking at the wider picture, one of the important qualities of this publication is the fact that the reader can compare the various initiatives to reunify Cyprus and the continuities and discontinuities from one plan to another. This is Hakki's aim in the section 'In Search for a Solution', from document 17 through to 34. For those interested in the more recent initiative to reunify the people and the island the documents from No. 27, De Cueller's Ideas to Annan V, are most interesting. There are striking continuities from De Cueller's Ideas (1986), Vasilliou's outline (1989), Boutros Ghali's Set of Ideas (1992), and the Annan Plan (2002-2004), here represented by Annan V. The similarities are in areas such as the nature of the bi-zonal, bi-communal federation, legislature, confidence building measures, constitutional safeguards and deadlock resolving mechanisms. De Cueller's set of ideas refers to the intercommunal discussions of 1982 as if the principle of

'bizonality' was an accepted fact. He also refers to a Turkish Cypriot proposed map of 5 August 1981, which Hakki should have considered including in this publication. Vasilliou's proposals, often forgotten in Cyprus today, call for the removal of all foreign troops from the island (which was foreseen in Annan III upon Turkey's entry into the EU) and for the UN Security Council to guarantee any settlement (which AKEL called for on the eve of the referendum, but which the Papadopoulos government managed to scuttle through the representations of its Foreign Minister to Russia, which voted against in the Security Council). The Ghali Set of Ideas refers to a referendum and a new partnership (state of affairs), both controversial points today given the rejection of Annan V. Again the maps accompanying the Ghali Set of Ideas and Annan V are, unfortunately, not included.

Further interesting documents include: UN Security Council Resolutions; the European Court of Human Rights; the European Court of Justice; the European Council; the European Parliament; and the European Commission. The subjects vary from various legal cases, to recognition of the 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC)' and Cyprus' application to, and eventual entry into, the European Union (EU).

There are two, however, major concerns about the presentation of the documents. The first is that it is not stated where they were originally published or whether the author has obtained the text from the original source. A good example of this is the Akritas Plan, which was first published in Greek in Patris newspaper in 1966. It was subsequently included by Glafcos Clerides in his memoirs (in both Greek and English), although it is not clear if his version is from an original, possible because he was one of the founders, or from Patris (or whether they are identical).⁵ Hakki's version could very well be that from Clerides' memoirs (they are virtually identical) and not a translation of the original or that from Patris.

My second major concern relates to Hakki's commentary. In the 'Preface' Hakki claims that the Cyprus dispute has its roots in 1878, when the ethnic rivalries began to emerge after the Ottomans left and the island became a British colony. Firstly, Cyprus did not become a British colony until 1925. Secondly, the rivalries (I will not call them ethnic) between Orthodox Christian and Muslim did not begin to emerge until after 1910.⁶ The Cyprus issue, Hakki further claims, has been extensively written about by historians, but very few historians have actually examined the period 1878 to 1940.

More problematic and occasionally annoying is the commentary thrown in at various times throughout the text without any consistency and often without any supporting evidence or secondary literature. On page 97, for example, Hakki comments on the crisis of 1964 that culminated in President Lyndon B. Johnson

sending a veiled warning to his Turkish counterpart against launching an invasion of Cyprus. Hakki claims that Inonu was aware that the Turkish army did not have the capabilities to invade Cyprus and that Johnson's letter was 'arrogant'. Hakki does not provide any evidence to support his assertion that Inonu was led to believe that the Turkish army did not have the capabilities to invade Cyprus and his interpretation of Johnson's letter is a matter of interpretation. Having closely read the letter there is no hint of arrogance, but a man deeply concerned at the real and present prospect of war between Greece and Turkey and upset at the Turkish threats of war because there had not been consultation with its NATO partners.

The publication should have been accompanied by a detailed and fully referenced introduction, which would have included a discussion of the historical context of the documents to follow and the aim in selecting them over others. Despite this and other disappointments, the book is without question extremely useful to all those who wish to have the most vital documents on the post-1960 Cyprus issue at hand.

Andrekos Varnava

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1. For example, both Greece and Great Britain lodged proceedings against each other relating to the violence in Cyprus with The European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) in Strasbourg, which was established under the European Convention on Human Rights of 1950. See for discussion A.W. Brian Simpson, *Human Rights and the End of Empire: Britain and the Genesis of the European Convention* (2001) Oxford, pp. 884-1052.
 2. Glafcos Clerides, *Cyprus: My Deposition, II* (1989) Nicosia, pp. 357-360.
 3. Hakki, p. 40.
 4. Makarios Droushiotis, *Cyprus 1974* (2006) Bibliopolis.
 5. Glafcos Clerides, *Cyprus: My Deposition, I* (1989) Nicosia, pp. 207-219.
 6. Andrekos Varnava, *Cyprus in the British Imperial Structure, 1878-1915: The Inconsequential Possession*, Manchester University Press, forthcoming December 2008.