

Doç. Dr. Kemal MELEK
 İ.Ü. İktisat Fakültesi
 Uluslararası İlişkiler Bölümü

THE CYPRUS QUESTION: A STUDY IN ETHNIC RELATIONS BETWEEN TURKISH AND GREEK CYPRIOTS, 1955-1967

1. INTRODUCTION

There have been many articles and books published on the recent Cyprus question, but, unfortunately, the Turkish public opinion expressed by the newspapers and various organizations is rarely mentioned by Western researchers. The same could be said about Greek public opinion. It is true that policy analyzers and mediators have dealt mostly with the official points of view of the governments of the United Kingdom, Greece and Turkey. When ever a demonstration or a riot started in one of the concerned parties' capitals, the Western leaders were either surprised or thought that something new had developed concerning the problem.

From the second world war to 1955 the Cyprus problem was thought to be an internal one between the Greek Cypriots and the British government. Then it became more elaborate and confused when the Greek government became involved. When the Turkish government became in interested party in the question in 1955, it was even more surprising to the average person because some westerners had not even the knowledge of the Cypriot Turkish community on the Island.

My main purpose in this paper will be to have a historical approach to the Cyprus problem, starting from the ancient period up to World War II. Once I make clear the various religious, national, ideological, social and economic relationships between the two communities, it will be much easier to grasp the antagonisma of the two.

II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF CYPRUS

Cyprus is the third largest island in the Mediterranean after Sicily and Sardinia. It is situated in the northeastern corner of the Mediterranean Sea and has an area of 3,572 square miles. It is 40 miles south of Turkey, 100 miles west of Syria and more than 600 miles away from the Greek shores (1).

(1) *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. VI, 1961, p. 931, Gursoy, C.R. *Kıbrıs ve Türkler* (Cyprus and Turks), Ankara, 1964, pp. 7-8.

The remains that have been excavated in Cyprus belonging to the Stone and Bronze Ages are similar to those that have been found in Anatolia. Archaeological and anthropological research has shown that the primitive population of Cyprus was an offshoot from Asia Minor and North Syria(2).

Since Cyprus was on the rich commercial routes it has attracted various powers in the region. It was under the Hittite domination in the 15th century B.C., and, later, it passed on to Egyptian rule. The first Greek colonies were established in the island after the Trojan War in 1200-1100 B.C. The industrious Phoenicians did not fail to follow in the footsteps of the Greeks in founding colonies. Rich copper mines, arable land, thick forests and ports attracted any growing power in the region. Around, 1,000 B.C. Phoenicians were the growing power in the Eastern Mediterranean(3).

In the 8th century B.C. the Assyrians established themselves as a power in the island under Sargon II. Following the breakup of the Assyrian kingdom, Egypt dominated the area and there were various city-states on the island. They paid tributes to various conquering powers. The conquest of Egypt by the Persians made Cyprus a part of the Persian Empire of Darius in the 6th century B.C.

After the victory of Alexander at Issus in 333 B.C., all the city-states of Cyprus welcomed him. After his death Cyprus became a part of Egypt under Ptolemy I. In the year 58 B.C. Cyprus became a Roman territory. Saints Paul and Barnabas were the two who brought Christianity to the island in the year 46 A.D. After the division of the Roman Empire in 395 A.D., Cyprus was a part of the Eastern Roman Empire, later known as the Byzantine Empire.

In the 7th century A.D. Arabs under the leadership of Mu'awiya conquered Syria and laid Cyprus under tribute. From this period onwards, the island of Cyprus was the object of dispute between the Byzantines and the Arabs. In the time of Caliph Abdal-Malik the revenues of the island were divided between the two powers(4).

For two hundred years Cyprus was an integral part of the Byzantine Empire until the coming of the Crusaders under the leadership of Richard, the Lion-Hearted. He sold the island to the Knights Templar, who then bestowed it on Guy de Lusignan, the dispossessed king of Jerusalem.

The Genoese controlled Famagusta, and Venetian merchants assumed an increasing economic and political control until in the 15th century Cyprus became part of the Venetian Empire. But in 1426 the Mamelukes of Egypt invaded Cyprus and collected a large sum in ransom from the local rulers. The Venetian administration lasted till 1571 when Turks conquered island.

(2) Hill, Sir G., *A History of Cyprus*, Cambridge, at the University Press, 1940-1952, Vol. IV, pp. 488-89 and footnote 3.

(3) Alasya, H. F., *Kıbrıs Tarihi ve Türk Eserleri* (History of Cyprus), Ankara, 1964, pp. 16-17.

(4) *The Middle East and North Africa, 1966/67*, 13th Edition, Europa Publications Ltd., London, p. 165.

III. FROM THE TURKISH CONQUEST TO THE "CROWN COLONY"

Although the Turkish conquest of Cyprus took place in 1571, the Turkish interest in Cyprus began after the Conquest of Egypt in 1517. The Venetian ambassador had an audience in Damascus with the Turkish Sultan Selim I, who was on his way back to Istanbul from Egypt. Following this, the Venetian agreement with the Mamelukes was renewed with the new ruler of Egypt(5).

The conquest of Cyprus depended on three major factors, as follows: A. Political and Strategic; B. Economic; C. Religious(6).

Cyprus had been an area of conflict between the powers which ruled Anatolia, Syria and Egypt. Once the Ottoman Turks established themselves as the only power in the region, their eyes turned to the island. The Venetians controlled the sea routes in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Venetian pirates attacked Turkish vessels from time to time. The Turkish Sultan became Caliph after the conquest of Egypt and, therefore, also the protector of the Muslims. The Muslim pilgrims-to-be on their way to Mecca were also harassed by the Venetian pirates, and this called for decision-making on the part of Sultan Selim II (7).

In the conquest of Cyprus 50,000 Turks were killed in action and most of the cities were damaged. The Greek Cypriots showed sympathy to the Turks. After the capture of Nicosia, it was a Greek Cypriot who hauled down at the palace the standard of St. Mark and hoisted the Ottoman ensign(8). Archimandrite Kyprianos who published the chronicles of the island in 1788 stated that the Greek Cypriots preferred to be subject to the Ottoman Turks rather than to the Latin power. Under Turkish rule they found freedom to practice their rites and customs(9).

I won't go into details of the Turkish administration from 1571 to 1878, but I would like to mention some of the rights that were granted to the Greek Cypriots. First of all, they held complete freedom in conducting religious rites as well as in possession of their churches. All individuals received the right to acquire house and land, with the power of transmission to their heirs. Turks recognized the supremacy of the Greek Orthodox Church in the island and later the Greek Archbishop was also recognized as the ethnarch of the Greek Cypriots. The restoration of the archbishopric was not recognized by the Latins for three centuries. Above all, serfdom, which the Greeks had suffered even under the Byzantine domination, was abolished(10).

(5) Alasya, H. F., *op. cit.*, pp. 42-43.

(6) İnalçık, H., *Kıbrıs Fethinin Tarihi Mânası* (Historical Meaning of the Conquest of Cyprus), *Kıbrıs ve Türkler*, Ankara, 1964, p. 21,

(7) Alasya, H. F., *op. cit.*, pp. 44-50.

(8) Luke, H., *Cyprus*, George G. Harrap & Co., Ltd., London, 1957, p. 75.

(9) Luke, H., *op. cit.*, p. 77.

(10) Luke, H.C. *Cyprus Under the Turks, 1571-1878*, Oxford University Press, London, 1921, pp. 14-16.

The Ottoman Empire in the 19th century was a declining power, and support for the "Sick Man of Europe" was given by Great Britain, especially against the growing power of Tsarist Russia. Even before the Russo-Turkish War of 1878, Lieutenant-Colonel Robert Howe, who was sent to Istanbul on an intelligence mission, wrote that in case Russia acquired territory from the Turks, then Great Britain should occupy Cyprus and the Dardanelles. England had established herself as a power in the Eastern Mediterranean by occupying Egypt, and her interest was the protection of the Suez Canal and the route to India(11).

Great Britain acquired the island of Cyprus after the Turkish defeat against Russia in 1878. Tsarist Russia was encroaching on the warm ports by getting territory in the Caucasus and in the Balkans, according to the San Stefano Treaty. Great Britain wanted to revise the Treaty in Berlin with other European powers. Russian gains in the Balkans were, to a certain extent, lessened, and for the protection of the Ottoman territory England received the island of Cyprus under one condition: if the Ottomans were ever to recover Kars, Ardahan and Batumi, then the island was to be ceded back to the Turks.(12).

With the coming of the British to Cyprus the Greek Cypriots had the hope of union with Greece. After all, it was the British who helped the Greeks to receive their independence from the Turks. It was Gladstone who ceded the Ionian Islands to Greece. Even in 1830, when Greece received her independence, the Greek Cypriots revolted against the Turks in order to unite with the mainland, but the revolt was suppressed and Cyprus remained under the Ottoman administration.

In 1893 when a suggestion was made by Greek Cypriots that cash payment be made to Turkey in return for the island of Cyprus, Turkish Cypriots protested strongly. These protests resumed in 1895 and especially in 1902 when the Turkish Cypriots assurances against such an action and stated that it would be "to deliver peaceful people into the hands of wild beasts and ruin and destroy them". This type of counter-reply from them Turks continued and shows the opposition to enosis (union with Greece) fifty years ago(13).

During World War I Turkey joined the Central Powers. England immediately annulled the Treaty of 1878 unilaterally and annexed Cyprus. Greece accepted this action as the final stage towards "national restoration". In October 1915 England offered to cede Cyprus to Greece on condition that Greece should join the Allies by going to the aid of Serbia, which was under Bulgarian occupation. But the Zaimis government declined to renounce its neutrality. (14).

In 1919 the Labour leader Ramsay MacDonald stated that his party would apply the principle of self-determination in Cyprus. This caused Turks to ask for the return of the island to Turkey. These demonstrations were disturbing to England, at the time invol-

(11) Lee, Dwight E., *Great Britain and Cyprus Convention Policy of 1878*, Cambridge, Mass., 1934, p. 38.

(12) Hill, Sir, G., *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, p. 300 ff.

(13) Mayes, S., *Cyprus and Makarios*, Putnam, London, 1960, pp. 83-85.

(14) Adams, T. W., *U.S. Army, Area Handbook for Cyprus*, No. 550-22, Washington, D.C., 1964, p. 39.

ved in the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire, and all the leaders of this group were interned immediately(15).

The British acquired the administration of the island as one of the powers in the Eastern Mediterranean. France became one of the interested parties when the plan to partition the Ottoman Empire into respective spheres of influence was accepted in the Sykes-Picot agreement of 1916. England recognized France as a new power in the Middle East and accepted the idea that France would be consulted in case of a change in the status of Cyprus. This later became the Franco-British Treaty, signed on December 23, 1920 (16).

British annexation of the island was recognized by Turkey at the Lausanne Conference in 1923 where France was also a signatory. This was a great blow to the Turkish-Cypriots who were expecting some kind of compromise for their own existence on the island. In 1925 Cyprus became a "Crown Colony". As a result, many Turks migrated to Turkey and settled on the southern shores of Anatolia(17).

IV. CYPRUS UNDER BRITISH ADMINISTRATION

The 1882 constitution provided Cyprus with a legislative council consisting of 12 elected and 6 appointed members, 9 elected by Greeks and 3 by Turks; 6 members were appointed by the High Commissioner to whom 9 to 9 stalemates were always brought for a deciding vote. After Cyprus became a Crown Colony in 1925, the legislative council was enlarged to 24, of which 12 were elected by the Greeks and 9 appointed.

According to the Lausanne Treaty, England accepted that payment for the Ottoman Debt be taken from Cyprus revenues. In 1926, the elected members of the legislative council passed a resolution that the Ottoman Debt payments from Cyprus should be stopped. This was accepted by the British government. The Greek Cypriots hoped to gain even more and in 1929 they sent a memorandum to London which was followed by a Turkish-Cypriot counter-memorandum. Sidney Webb, the Colonial Secretary, stated that the question of enosis was closed(18).

The Greek Cypriots rioted over the collection of tax in October 1931 when they burned down the Governor's House and other buildings. In reality, these were enosis riots and the movement went underground when the British government took stern measures(19).) The Greek prime minister, E. Venizelos, declared that, "... it was an internal affair of Great Britain. There was no Cyprus question between the British and Greek governments." (20). The legislative council was abolished and all the leaders of the riots were exiled to Greece. This situation continued to the end of World War II. It is interesting that the enosis movement always came from Cyprus and not from Greece.

(15) Mayes, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

(16) Royal Institute of International Affairs, *Cyprus, Background to Encala*, Chathan House, London, October 195. p. 48.

(17) Alasya, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

(18) Mayes, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

(19) Adams, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

(20) Hill, *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, p. 548.

Italian and German forces occupied Greece during the war. Some Greek Cypriots fought with British troops in defeating the German troops on the Greek mainland, as well as in the Aegean islands. After the war, the Dodecanese Islands were given to Greece, in 1947. Turkey faced the Russian threat with Russia demanding the Kars and Ardahan regions of Eastern Turkey and military bases at the Turkish Straits. Turkey was in no position to reconsider the lost territories, but had to mobilize the army in case Russia attacked.

The Truman Doctrine, begun in 1947, helped Turkey to stop the Russian threats and Greece to carry on fighting the communist guerillas who were infiltrating from communist Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Albania.

Turkey and Greece were admitted to NATO in 1951 when their positions became stronger and more stable. Until this date none of the Greek governments had accepted the "Cyprus question" in their foreign policies. On February 16, 1951, for the first time in almost 100 years, the prime minister of Greece officially declared that Cyprus should be ceded to Greece. Before this date, in 1948, King Paul had declared that Greece desired union with Cyprus, but the statement was unofficial(21).

The Democrats, who came to power in 1950 after the first free elections in Turkish history, declared through their new foreign minister, Professor Fuat Koprulu, that Turkey did not recognize a Cyprus problem as such(22).

Even right after World War II, Turkish journalists such as A. E. Yalman in *Vatan*; Cihat Baban in *Tasvir*; and A.S. Esmer in *Halkçı (Ulus)* were declaring that the Cyprus question could not be solved without Turkey(23).

The pressure coming from the Turkish press and from various student organizations made the Turkish foreign minister announce on April 21, 1951 that a legal change of the status of the island would involve Turkey and that Turks would not accept actions taken against their rights(24).

From 1951 onward Turkey was deeply involved in establishing various defense pacts in the area. The Bled Treaty between Greece, Yugoslavia and Turkey was signed in 1954. With British backing Turkey signed the Baghdad Treaty with Iraq on February 24, 1955; Pakistan and Iran followed with signatures.

Britain had started to remove her troops from Egypt and sought a defense organization in the area under the leadership of one of the strong states. Britain became a party to the Baghdad Pact so that she could protect the British interest in Suez, the Persian Gulf, Iraq Transjordan and the area east of Suez. The British accepted the fact that Turkey was the strong power in the Eastern Mediterranean, and they did not want to divide

(21) Adams, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

(22) Armaoğlu, F. H., *Kıbrıs Meselesi 1954-59 (The Problem of Cyprus)*, Ankara, 1963, p. 24.

(23) Armaoğlu, *op. cit.*, pp. 9-10.

(24) *Hürriyet* (daily newspaper), April 21, 1951, as mentioned in Armaoğlu, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

themselves from the Turks. Mr. Eden said, "I regarded our alliance with Turkey as the first consideration in our policy in that part of the world." (25)

It was not before 1954, when Papagos, the new Prime Minister of Greece, brought the Cyprus question to the United Nations and asked for self-determination, that this became a part of Greek foreign policy. Self-determination was requested according to clauses 1 and 55 of the United Nations Charter. (26)

Britain tried hard to avoid an international issue by offering a new constitution which, in return, was rejected by the Greek Cypriots. The U.N. refused to discuss the Cyprus issue when it was brought up again by Greece in 1955. This brought terrorism against the British in the island by EOKA. The history of this underground organization goes back to 1951 when the Greek Colonel Grivas was invited to Cyprus to establish a Greek Cypriot youth organization, PEON. Makarios III, who was elected as the archbishop and ethnarch of the island in 1950, collaborated with this organization.

Activities of PEON were found to be against the British interest and thus it was disbanded in 1953. From this date onward it took the name of EOKA and received supplies from Greece in order to work secretly to bring about union with the mother country(27).

Terrorism started on the island on April 1, 1955 when bombs exploded in major cities. The Cypriots had observed that the terrorist campaign of the Zionist Jews was the primary influence which made the British administrators bring about a speedy solution to the Palestine Mandate in 1948, when the state of Israel was created(28). It is also noteworthy that the terrorism was initiated against the British and not the Turkish Cypriots.

The British were alarmed by the terrorism, and a tripartite conference was convened at London in August 1955. Greece and Turkey became official interest parties in the issue. Britain accepted the fact that it was an international matter, but the representatives of Cyprus were absent from the London meeting. Britain proposed a constitutional progression toward self-government in which Greek Cypriots would have the majority and Turkish Cypriots a specific number of the seats in the General Assembly. Foreign affairs, defense and public security would stay in the hands of the governor.

The Greek Foreign Minister, S. Stephanopoulos, stated that self-determination should be granted to the people of Cyprus and rights of Turkish Cypriots would be recognized (29). The Turkish Foreign Minister, F.R. Zorlu, discussed the geographical, economic and strategic position of the island and said that the Lausanne Treaty of 1923 brought a balance between Greece and Turkey and that if there were to be a change in the status of Cyprus it must be ceded back to Turkey(30).

While the London Tripartite Conference was still taking place: on the evening of September 6, a protest against the Greeks was initiated in Istanbul and İzmir. This was

(25) Eden, A., *Full Circle*, London, 1960, pp. 409, 400.

(26) Loizides, S., *The Cyprus Question and the Law of the U.N.*, Second edition, September 1954.

(27) Alasya, *op. cit.*, pp. 116-117.

(28) Adams, *op. cit.*, p. 209.

(29) The Tripartite Conference on the Eastern Mediterranean and Cyprus, London, H.M.S.O., 1956, Cmd. 9594, pp. 114-119.

(30) Cmd. 9594, *op. cit.*, pp. 164-170.

triggered by the explosion of a bomb in the house at Salonika where the Turkish national leader Kemal Ataturk was born. The Turkish government backed up this demonstration which was started by university students, but which quickly turned into mob action, culminating in the destruction of the Greek minority's property in Istanbul. The mob was joined by Turkish refugees from Greece and Bulgaria whose property had been expropriated by the Greeks and Bulgarians. The Turkish army intervened before midnight, and the next day the government decided to pay for the damages. This demonstration was interpreted as anti-western, anti-christian and anti-Kemalist, and, to a certain degree, it might show the discontent of the new industrial workers and the lower class because the Greeks and others they attacked were mainly prosperous and middle-class. The demonstration crippled the Turkish point of view on Cyprus for months. Anti-Greek riots, failure of the Conference and the 'inadequacy' of the British proposals promoted the EOKA violence(31).

The Greco-Turkish tensions over Cyprus escalated not only on the island but on the mainland. The dormant feud between the Greeks and Turks came to life again. Turks started to interpret the Greek aspirations as the "megali idea", the great idea for the unity of all Greek speaking peoples and territories including Istanbul, which had been the Byzantine capital. For Greeks, it was the Turkish nationalism which appeared with a new face, different from the "National Pact". The Cyprus problem revived the problem of relations between the Turks of Anatolia and Turks who live outside the borders of the republic(32). Once this type of feud is revived, the whole Greek-Turkish relations are weakened by bringing up the position of Turks in Western Thrace, the position of the Greek Patriarchate in Istanbul, not to mention the Turks of the island of Rhodes.

The new governor of the island, Marshall Harding, had private talks with Archbishop Makarios. The governor stated that self-determination could never be applicable to Cyprus. And Harding deported Makarios to the Seychelles Islands in March 1956. Immediately following this the Suez Canal was nationalized by Egypt, thus increasing the strategic importance of Cyprus to the British government.

Britain thought that she needed sovereignty over Cyprus for her commitments in the Middle East, so there was no change in her policy except to write another constitution. This time it was the Radcliffe Proposals. On July 12, 1956, Lord Radcliffe was appointed to frame a liberal constitution. The external affairs, defense and internal security were left to the governor and sovereignty to Britain. The constitution was to embody principles of eventual self-determination along with guarantees for minorities.

The Radcliffe Proposals were different from the former British policies, which had maintained the *status quo*. The principle of partition was introduced. The Turkish Cypriot community and the Greek Cypriot community received the right to decide for themselves their future status. While the Turkish slogan became "double-enosis", self-determination for both ethnic communities, the Greeks rejected the idea as a whole.

(31) Royal Institute of International Affairs, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

(32) Bilge, A. Suat, *Le Conflit de Chypre et les Chypriotes Turcs*, Political Science Faculty of Ankara University, Ankara, 1961, p. 115.

It is rather interesting that before Lord Radcliffe was appointed in July 1956, the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs assigned the International Relations Institute of Ankara University to prepare a draft constitution for an independent Cyprus which would include provision for the protection of the Turkish Cypriot community. The Institute of Public Administration was also included in the work. Dr. Küçük, leader of the Turkish community, who was in Ankara at the time, was invited to the meetings to give the necessary information about legal, social and economic conditions of the Turkish Cypriots(33).

Once the terrorist actions started against the Turkish community there was no other way out but to establish defense organization. The Turkish Cypriot leaders visited Ankara to confer with the Turkish government in June 1956. The British ambassador in Ankara invited the Turkish Cypriot leaders for a talk and the Turks asked permission to form their own militia forces to protect the Turkish villages(34).

In the year 1957 the Turkish underground VOLKAN was founded, most probably after the talks of the Turkish Cypriots in Ankara. There is a possibility that the idea of such an organization was suggested by the British(35). The name was later changed to TMT (Turkish Resistance Organization). The Turkish underground received necessary ammunition and weapons from Turkey. EOKA's targets started to shift from the British to the Turks. The Ankara government (advocated partition and the matter was debated in the Turkish Parliament(36).

The international outlook was not good in 1957. The Russians launched the first Sputnik and were pressing the West in Berlin. The British Defence Secretary, Duncan Sandys, visited Cyprus in 1957 and advised Her Majesty's Government that England did not need the whole island. This change in policy led to the MacMillan proposals and in some way brought about the idea of an independent Cyprus(37). The Turks agreed to discuss the plan, but the Greeks rejected the whole idea, stating that it had elements which would divide the Cypriot people(38).

When MacMillan offered a modification of his original plan the Greeks did not accept it. But the British government went on with its new program. It set up two separate Greek and Turkish municipal councils. The Greeks were afraid of a partition of the island, and they turned to the idea of an "independent Cyprus" in order to keep enosis within its boundary. Makarios said that they might be faced with a *fait accompli* which would give more rights to the Turks. On September 7, 1958 Makarios privately told the Greek government that he was ready to accept independence for Cyprus. This was a kind of answer when the Greek Consul-general in Cyprus, Vlachos, wrote to Grivas on

(33) Armaoğlu, *op. cit.*, pp. 237-38.

(34) Bilge, A. Suat, *Le Conflit de Chypre et les Chypriotes Turcs*, Political Science Faculty, Ankara University, Ankara, 1961. p. 115.

(35) Interview with some Turkish Cypriots who asked to remain anonymous.

(36) Armaoğlu, *op. cit.*, p. 213.

(37) Stephens, Robert, *A Place of Arms*, London, 1966, p. 157.

(38) Adams, *op. cit.*, p. 222.

July 25, 1957 that Makarios should accept, independence which would not exclude enosis(39).

No solution was arrived at and the new Secretary-General of NATO, Mr. Spaak, introduced his good offices for mediation. He would no longer wait for prognostication, but insisted that his proposals, which were based on the MacMillan plan, be adopted.

But unsuccessful NATO talks had broken down by November 1, 1958. The defeat of the Greek resolutions in the United Nations made Sir Pierson Dixon, the British ambassador to the U.N., arrange a meeting between the Greek and Turkish foreign ministers.

The Turkish government from 1956, the British government from 1957, and, lastly, Makarios's government from 1958 onward were ready for an independent Cyprus.

Greek Prime Minister Karamanlis and Turkish Prime Minister Menderes with their foreign ministers met in Zurich to discuss the future of Cyprus. Then the representatives of Turkish and Greek Cypriots came to London for the signing of the treaty. The Zurich-London agreements included the treaty of establishment, a treaty of guarantee, a treaty of alliance and a constitution of the republic. A Greek Cypriot president and a Turkish Cypriot vice-president were to be elected by the people. This was a kind of compromise that was achieved between the parties. Union with Greece or partition were specifically prohibited in the agreement, and sovereignty was recognized for the British bases. The president was to be head of the state and government; the vice-president could only give suggestions to the president. The executive power was composed of 7 Greek and 3 Turkish ministers. The legislative power was to be exercised by the House of Representatives in all matters except those reserved to the Communal Chambers. The fifty member house was to be elected for five years and with a ratio of 7 Greeks to 3 Turks. The resolutions were to be passed by two-thirds majority of each community in the House. In addition, there were two Communal Chambers, one for each community, to discuss their own religious, educational and cultural matters.

The civil service was to be established according to the 7:3 ratio; the armed forces, a standing army of 2,000 men, on a 6:4 ratio. A supreme constitutional court was composed of a Greek, a Turkish and a neutral judge, appointed jointly by the president and vice-president. It passed on any controversy arising from or relating to, an interpretation or violation of the constitution.(40).

V. FROM INDEPENDENCE TO CRISIS

The independence of Cyprus, which was achieved under various pressures, came as a compromise between the Greek and Turkish governments. There were some impracticalities about the constitution which needed "tolerance, good-will, common-sense and mutual give-and-take to make it work."(41)

(39) Stephens, *op. cit.*, op. 152-156.

(40) *Cyprus*, London, H.M.S.O., 1950, Cmnd. 1093.

(41) *Economist*, London, January 4, 1964.

The future difficulties were already initiated in the press giving news of the coming crisis. *Avghi*, the communist newspaper in Greece, remarked that "the vassals have signed the enslavement accord, not the nation. The Cyprus question may have closed for the colonists, but it has not closed for the Greeks or for the Cypriot people. The struggle for freedom continues."(42)

Eleftheria, center independent, stated that "independence is a morally unacceptable, politically stupid and nationally dangerous solution."

Coşkun Kırca in the Istanbul daily, *Vatan*, criticized the Zurich-London agreements and said that it was a weak treaty from the Turkish point of view(43).

The leader of the opposition, İsmet İnönü, stated in the Turkish Parliament that the treaty blockaded partition where it left the way open for enosis.(44). The Greek opposition took almost the same position. They accepted the agreements as a failure and hinted that they would help Cypriots to achieve enosis (45). On the other hand, the Turkish Cypriot community felt that their future was insecure even though they had some constitutional rights and sanctions. Some Turkish teachers resigned and two thousand children demonstrated, carrying placards reading, "We will not accept a murderer for our president." (46). In order to feel secure, the Turks were smuggling arms into Cyprus(47).

The Republic of Cyprus became a member of the United Nations and started to act as a responsible state among the nations. But President Makarios and some of the ex-EOKA leaders in the cabinet, and Vice-president Dr. Küçük and the president of the Turkish Communal Chamber, Rauf Denktaş, were the extreme nationalists. John Clerides a moderate, and his Democratic Union Party criticized the electoral laws as "unfair" and "undemocratic" and even accused the supporters of Makarios of having "dictatorial tendencies". On the other hand, the Turkish moderate leader, Faiz Kaymak, went into voluntary retirement and two newspapermen who opposed Dr. Küçük were assassinated by unknown persons(48).

With the establishment of the state, the first communal disputes started in the House of Representatives. There was debate on customs duty in March 1961, tax legislation in December 1961 (taxes were levied by the Communal Chambers), the composition of the national army (There were only 150 cadet-officers in the army.), and the percentage of Turkish Cypriots in civil service. But it is also interesting to note that President Makarios tried his best not to antagonize the Turkish military government in Ankara, which had come to power after the revolution of May 27, 1960. Makarios's announcement in December of a rule by decree came after a weak coalition government came to

(42) *The Athens News*, February 21, 1959, as quoted in Fairfield, R.P., "Cyprus: Revolution and resolution", *Middle East Journal*, Summer 1959, Vol. 13, No. 3, p. 242.

(43) *Vatan*, January 22 and February 14, 1959, as quoted in Armaoğlu, *op. cit.*, p. 532.

(44) *Ulus*, Ankara daily, March 5, 1959, as quoted in Armaoğlu, *op. cit.*, p. 540.

(45) Stephens, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

(46) *The Nashville Tennessean*, March 29, 1959, as quoted by Fairfield, *op. cit.*, p. 243.

(47) *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*. Vol. 12, p. 17069.

(48) *Ibid.*, Vol. 14, 1963-64, p. 19258A.

power in Turkey under the former opposition leader, İsmet İnönü, in September. In a speech on January 4, 1962 President Makarios even suggested for the first time the possibility of a change of the constitution(49).

Another important factor which later influenced the escalation of the tension of the two ethnic groups was the behavioral patterns of the President and Vice-president. Makarios spoke English; Dr. Küçük knew French. In private talks Dr. Küçük used an interpreter. Their relationship was not cordial and sometimes it became rather rude. In the case of foreign policy, Makarios wanted to join the non-aligned countries, and Dr. Küçük was pro-western. Even though the President and the foreign minister, S. Kyprianou, were required to take the advice of the vice-president, they failed to do so in the case of the non-aligned conference in Belgrade in September 1961. Mr. Kyprianou refused to supply Dr. Kucuk with copies of all correspondence concerning foreign policy which Dr. Küçük claimed he had a right to veto(50).

One of the most serious constitutional problems arose at the end of 1962. The Zurich-London agreements created separate municipalities in five towns. Separate municipalities existed *de facto*, but the Greek Cypriots began to argue that the system was unworkable, and Makarios announced that it could no longer be extended to separate administrations. On January 2, 1963, the Council of Ministers set up "development boards" to run the main towns. Turkish Cypriots established a similar municipality in the town of Lefka, and Makarios rejected this decision. The neutral president of the Constitutional Court, Dr. Fortshaff of West Germany; decided that these two decisions were invalid(51).

Makarios officially visited Greece in September and Turkey in November. While the November 3 election brought Papandreou to power in Greece, İnönü's weak coalition government resigned on December 2, 1963, to be reappointed.

On November 30, 1963, Makarios delivered a letter to Vice-president Küçük containing his 13 proposals for the amendment of the constitution as a basis for talks. In fact, he had had these points in mind even before signing the London agreement. (52). The details were also submitted to the British, Greek and Turkish governments. The 13 points would have abolished separate municipalities, ended the veto power and given the right to the vice-president to deputize for the president. Finally, Cyprus would have become a unitary state. Before the Turkish Cypriots gave their reply, the Turkish government rejected the proposals. This was followed by the communal violence on the island during the week of December 21-26, 1963.

Once again an inter-ethnic, interpolitical and international crisis came into being, even worse than before. Escalation or de-escalation of the tension were completely in the hands of the leaders in Cyprus, Greece and Turkey. The Greek and Turkish undergrounds were preparing in case a communal fight took place(53).

(49) Keesing's, *op.cit.*, Vol. 13, p. 18641.

(50) Stephens, *op. cit.*, p. 174; Keesing's, *op. cit.*, Vol. 13, p. 18641.

(51) Stephens, *op. cit.*, p. 177; Keesing's, *op. cit.*, Vol. 14, p. 1952.

(52) *Cyprus-Today* Greek Communal Chamber publication, Vol. 1, No. 6, Nov. - Dec. 1963, p. 19.

(53) Stephens, *op. cit.*, p. 175; (Deniz incident) Keesing's, *op. cit.* Vol. 12, p. 17069.

The Cypriot Greeks interpreted the crisis as a Turkish insurrection in order to provoke the military intervention of Turkey and produce a *de facto* partition of the island(54). The Turkish Cypriots, on the other hand, interpreted the crisis as a deliberate plan to frighten the Turks into accepting Greek demands or make them leave for Turkey.

It is rather difficult to give a definite explanation of how the attack was initiated. The important point is that the tensions never disappeared with the Zurich-London agreement, but calmed down temporarily, and with the establishment of the Cyprus republic, started to grow again. The timing of the constitutional proposal was not selected properly; it was rather too early. Even Dr. Fortshaff, the president of the constitutional committee, said that if Makarios had stuck to the constitution for five years he could have had a workable document in his hands. (55) On December 25, 1963, Britain proposed that a joint force composed of British, Greek and Turkish troops should establish order on the island. By December 27, a green-line guarded by British troops established order in Nicosia.

The Turkish Fleet left Istanbul and the troops from central Anatolian garrisons were moved to the ports of Mersin and Iskenderun. The Turkish commander of the Second Army stated that they were ready to embark when required to do so. Next day, the Cyprus representative at the U.N., Mr. Z. Rossides, requested a meeting of the Security Council to consider a complaint of Turkish intervention in the internal affairs of Cyprus by threat and use of force against its territorial integrity and political independence. The following day, Turkish jets were sent over Cyprus to show force and thus try to encourage a quicker truce. Tension in Cyprus quieted down, but Greek-Turkish enmity hardened.

President Makarios announced on January 1, 1964 that he had abrogated the treaties of guarantee and alliance with Britain, Greece and Turkey, which had been imposed on the people of Cyprus.

On January 15, the London Conference convened and the Greek delegation asked for complete independence. The Turkish delegation asked for some sort of partition. The conference was suspended after fruitless discussion. While Turkey asked for U.S. intervention, the Soviet Union protested against the proposal of a NATO force to keep the peace. Mr. Ball's visit to London, Athens, Ankara and Nicosia did not bring any compromise. The situation in Cyprus worsened when Turkish leaders established separate Turkish radio, postal services and police(56).

Makarios, on February 25, announced that a force of special police, later called the National Guard, was formed of volunteers in order to put the island back into order. By March 4 a U.N. resolution to send a peace force and appoint a mediator had been approved. The main body of U.N. forces started to arrive in April. Mr. Jakari Tuomioja, the Finnish ambassador to Sweden, was accepted as the U.N. mediator by both sides. Makarios was very careful in dealing with the Turkish Cypriots so that there might be no Turkish intervention.

(54) *Cyprus Today*, Vol. II., No. 3-4, p. 9.

(55) *Cyprus, Past, Present, Future*, A special committee on Cyprus affairs under the chairmanship of Prof. Dr. Suat Bilge, Ankara, 1964, p. 31.

(56) Keesing's, *op. cit.*, Vol. 14, p. 20117A.

Makarios switched from military to economic pressures. There was a blockade of food, fuel and water supply; electricity and telephone services were cut off in the Turkish quarters of the towns(57). All these restrictions escalated the tension and, in return, brought threats of invasion from Turkey. From time to time, the Turkish Cypriots depended entirely on supplies from Turkey.

The Turkish government, in order to bring pressure upon the Greek government, abolished the 1930 Turkish-Greek Convention which gave rights to Greek citizens to settle and do business in Turkey. It was an untimely action on the part of the Turks. Ten thousand Greek nationals were sent back to Greece, creating an economic problem for their homeland.

All the Turkish Cypriots who resigned or withdrew from their jobs in the State were paid by the Turkish government. They were totally dependent upon Turkey(58). By June the Greek and Turkish nations were almost on the verge of war when U.S. President Johnson intervened by inviting the two prime ministers for talks. They resulted in nothing.

Before these meetings in Washington, President Johnson sent a letter, dated June 5, threatening that if Turkey intervened in Cyprus she could not count on American or NATO support against the Soviet Union. On July 3, Dean Acheson was sent to mediate between the Greek and Turkish delegations. He proposed a plan which called for:

1. Union of Cyprus with Greece;
2. Castellorizo Island (MEIS) to be ceded to Turkey by Greece;
3. Turkish military bases on Cyprus;
4. Formation of two cantons for Turkish Cypriots;
5. Payment of compensation to Turks who wished to migrate to Turkey.

These proposals were rejected by Makarios. The tension between the two communities depended upon proposals and their rejection.

General Thimayya, the UNF commander, appealed to the Turkish and Greek Cypriots for a cease-fire. The Greek Cypriots decided to Launch an attack in order to cut off the Turkish supply line at Kokina. This was the only supply line for the Turks, for all the other ports were under Greek control and the Greeks were smuggling arms freely.

On August 8, Turkish jet fighter-bombers intervened to check the Greek attacks. The bombing continued for two days, which made the Greek Cypriots ask the assistance of the Soviet Union in case of intervention.

On August 15, representatives met again at Geneva, and Makarios agreed to ease the economic blockade of the Turkish Cypriots. Restrictions on food supplies were lifted and oil and gasoline were permitted. Later, postal and medical services were also restored. By December 1964 the Turkish Cypriot community has lost 15,000,000 in income,

(57) *Ibid.*, p. 20266B.

(58) Stephens, *op. cit.*, p. 195.

including farming income, trade, salaries, wages, and had abandoned 13,000,000 worth of land. 25,000 Turkish Cypriots were unemployed and 56,000 needed support and aid(59).

At the end of August Makarios and Kyprianou visited Egypt for talks with Nasser, and Kyprianou visited Moscow in September. In a communique of October 1, 1964 the Soviet Union agreed to give assistance to Cyprus. This assistance included conventional arms, torpedo boats, fighter-aircraft, radio equipment, anti-aircraft artillery and rockets(60).

The Turkish Foreign Minister's visit to the Soviet Union changed the picture. This time the Turks received assurances that Cyprus should be independent and a federal form of government could be established on the island(61).

Galo Plaza, who succeeded Tuomioja who had died of a stroke, tried to find a solution to the tension between the two communities in Cyprus. He submitted his report on March 26, 1965. While completely rejecting the idea of *enosis* and partition, he advocated the principle of adequate protection of the Turkish Cypriot community and demilitarization of the island. Turkish rights should be guaranteed by the U.N. supervisors(62).

Turkey rejected the Plaza Plan and Plaza, himself. Greece received it sympathetically, but Greek Cypriots were not very happy. They criticized the omission of the *enosis* clause.

Dr. Galo Plaza resigned in December 1965. U Thant, the Secretary-General of the U.N., appointed Jose Rolz-Bennett to find out the new local views on the mediation and examine the position of the U.N. peace force on the island.

There was much discussion on the future of Cyprus in 1966. The Turkish government showed her approval of an independent Cyprus with demilitarization and exclusion of *enosis*. But, at the same time, President Makarios revealed that he opposed any solution which would restrict the independence of Cyprus.

The same condition prevailed towards the end of 1966. While the political situation is still in a stalemate, President Makarios lifted some of the economic blockade under Western pressure; this helped ease the tension between the ethnic groups and governments.

But even in 1967 the "Cyprus problem is awaiting a peaceful solution that would be acceptable to Greek and Turkish Cypriots, as well as to the Greek and Turkish governments.

VI. CONCLUSION

One of the causes of the ethnic tension was the separation of the Greeks and Turks that came from the *millet* system of the Ottoman administration. The word *millet* occurs in the Koran with the meaning of religion. It was first used for the community of Islam. In the Ottoman Empire it was used for the organized and legally recognized religi-

(59) Keesing's, *op. cit.*, Vol. 14, p. 20629 A and B.

(60) Keesing's, *op. cit.*, p. 20371B.

(61) Keesing's, *op. cit.*, Vol. 14, p. 20630A.

(62) *Ibid.*, p. 20989B.

ous communities, such as the Greek and Armenian christians and the Jews. All religious communities had their own religious and traditional laws. The Ottoman Turks interfered only if the suits involved both muslim and non-muslim, and, in such a case, they were tried in muslim courts.

From the beginning of the Turkish administration the two communities lived apart from each other. Within their own communities they followed Greek or Turkish customs and maintained completely their own religious and cultural traditions. Inter-marriage was very rare. Even though there was this segregation, the family structure, which was the backbone of society in Cyprus, was very similar from group to group. Both Greeks and Turks emphasized family honor and family loyalty. Economic factors affected the two communities to change the extended family type of unit into smaller families with more individualism. It was predominately a patriarchal system.

During the Cyprus crisis, the Greek Cypriots emphasized particularly economic and demographic factors; whereas the Turks stressed the geo-political and strategic position of the island and the rights of a separate community. It is true that in ancient times Cyprus was conquered or administered after a power ruled either Anatolia, Syria or Egypt. This was true with the Assyrians, Persians, Macedonians, Egyptians, Byzantines, Arabs, Turks and British. The Turks failed to mention this important historical point. The Greeks, on the other hand, had also failed to recognize the strategic position of the island, and argued from the self-determination point of view. The idea of self-determination became widespread after the Bolshevik Revolution when the Russians tried their best to bring about revolutions against the imperialist powers in every corner of the world. The same notion was more meaningful after World War II, especially in the Afro-Asian states. This time it meant only to get rid of the colonial power.

It is a well known fact that the British administration after 1878, and especially after Cyprus became a "crown colony", was always in favor of the Greek Cypriots. The British rulers thought of returning the island to Greece whenever the time came for it. The Greek Cypriots always faced the Turkish Cypriot opposition in the island, but until 1958 there was no intercommunal tension. The neglect of the island by the Turkish government in Ankara meant that the British administration was able to take away some rights from the Turks without opposition.

Except for a period of a few years, the Archbishop and ethnarch of the Greeks was free in administering his church and people under the British, but the Turkish religious foundations administration (EVKAF) was under British supervision, and Turks could not even elect their own mufti (religious leader). Besides, there was control over the Turkish educational system up to 1955. All these rights were recognized to the Turks before the Turkish government was invited to the London Conference.

Demographic and economic factors as well as British favoritism toward Greeks made the Greeks think that they had to deal with the British on the future of the island until 1958 when the Greeks changed their attitude and accepted the fact that it was the Turkish Cypriots who were in the way of enosis.

The Greek government always kept herself away from the internal crisis of Cyprus and always considered the matter as a non-Greek affair. The Turkish government also accepted it as a domestic affair of the British Empire, and stuck to the *status quo* until 1956. The Turks were very legalistic in their interpretation of the Lausanne Treaty and held to the same view even after the crisis arose.

The British government changed her attitude towards the Turkish Cypriots before 1955 and had to apply new tactics and interpretations. If England had decided to turn Cyprus over to Greece after World War II, most probably the Turkish government would have accepted it without much opposition, due to the Russian threat against the Turkish Straits and eastern Anatolia at the time.

As Turkey became part of the NATO alliance system and the major power of the Baghdad Pact, England had to back up the Turks in order to serve her interests in the Middle East.

The Tripartite Conference on the Eastern Mediterranean internationalized the Cyprus question among the three states, but the Greek government insisted that it was a matter between Greece and the United Kingdom. This was understood by the Greek Cypriots in 1958 when they turned the terrorist movement against the Turks. The Turkish Cypriots also needed some advice in establishing a counter-underground organization, TMT. The Greek underground organization, EOKA, could frighten or evict the British administration from the island, but it was not easy to expel the Turkish community. Once this fact was understood by the Greek government and the Greek Cypriots, they needed time to change their tactics and win world public opinion to their cause.

The British administration sided with the Turks. The new administration tended toward partition of the island between the Greeks and Turks. Archbishop Makarios realized the bitter truth, that the only way to keep Cyprus unpartitioned was to accept independence.

The compromise was reached at the Zurich-London talks. While the Greek and Turkish prime ministers showed great statesmanship, Makarios had already thirteen criticisms of the new constitution, which he wanted changed. Dr. Küçük and the Turkish contingent on the island thought that the constitutional sanctions would probably work.

President Makarios kept his 13 points in mind and looked upon the constitution as a temporary document to be changed later in favor of the Greek Cypriots. Dr. Küçük thought that it would be easy to go back to the old idea of partition if anything went wrong. The Greek and Turkish governments backed up the community leaders. To a certain degree this backing strengthened their positions and increased the tension later. The community leaders and the two governments acted irresponsibly.

When the crisis was unleashed in December 1963, the old forgotten disputes were all brought up. This was not a simple ethnic problem between the two communities, but involved the relationship between Greece and Turkey. Both countries had economic difficulties at home, so Cyprus became an outlet for their internal affairs.

Minorities living outside the frontiers tend to become more nationalistic, and Cyprus was not an exception to the rule. Most of the teachers were sent from the mother country or they were educated in Athens or Istanbul. Their nationalism is introvert and interwoven with Greek Orthodoxy or Islam. The Greek Cypriots looked upon enosis not as a political union, but rather a cultural union taking its roots from the Byzantine civilization. The Turkish Cypriots stood for partition (Taksim) so that they wouldn't come under the yoke of the Christian administration. After all, they were the descendents of the conquerors of the island.

Both Turks and Greeks are emotional people of the Mediterranean basin. That is also one of the causes of this crisis, where it becomes difficult to satisfy the two communities and the two nations. The clash between the two communities also sparked the tensions between the Greek and Turkish governments. Various student organizations, labor unions and even the Greek and Turkish armies were affected. While the students demonstrated against the countries the armies were put on the alert. The U.S. government had to intervene in order to avoid a military clash in the southern flank of NATO.

The Greek Cypriots also pointed out that the economic life of the island was in their hands, and that was another factor in favor of majority rule in Cyprus. After the conquest of Cyprus, the political and administrative power went to the Turks. The Turks who were resettled in the island were mostly peasants. The Turkish interest in the industrial and economic life started with the British administration. But British favoritism towards Greeks caused many Turks to emigrate to Anatolia. This continued until 1953 when the Ankara government banned further immigration from the island. This decision helped the Turkish Cypriots to go back to the island and begin to do business. From 1953 onward, the Turks had 14 % of industry, 24 % of agriculture, forestry and fisheries, 15 % of mining and 14 % of commerce in their hands. 18 % of the national income was contributed by them. Greek Cypriots realized that the Ankara government would continue to give financial assistance to Turkish Cypriots, thus making them economically independent and stronger. The Greek Cypriots' attitude on Turkish villages and sections in the towns has some economic cause. The Turks who left their mixed villages or their jobs in the Greek quarters of the towns are left unemployed and are in need of relief from Turkey, which is also under Greek supervision. 27,000 Turks became refugees, living in tents near the Turkish villages. In addition, there are 24,000 Turks who are unemployed. In other words, 50 % of the Turks are not contributing anything to the economy of Cyprus. The Turkish community of more than 100,000 makes up 1/5 of the population; the 400,000 Greeks make up the other 4/5.

The Turks and Greeks are ethnically rather too stubborn, a fact which is reflected in the communal leadership. Personal behavioral attitudes reflect the decisions that were arrived at by Dr. Küçük and Archbishop Makarios. Once the Archbishop received power, it was not so easily given away. Before the republic he was communal leader; now he is head of the state and government. Dr. Küçük has no similar power as vice-president, but he exercises his authority by using his veto.

Perhaps there is no example in the history of such a small territory with such a small population causing such a big international problem with no satisfactory solution, pleasing both parties, in view for the near future. It is a psychological, historical, political, ideological, strategic, military, economic, cultural and humanitarian problem, with all facets interwoven. One can not be separated from the others. When the emphasis upon some of these factors decreases then the other factors become more important. The solution to the problem is not very easy to arrive at. But with some patience and statesmanship the parties involved could come to some kind of compromise.

I will not dare to attempt to give a clear cut formula for the Cyprus crisis. What I will do is give some suggestions for breaking the deadlock.

In democratic countries, if a government fails in its program it is likely to receive a vote of no confidence, and the cabinet falls. In Cyprus, the Greek and Turkish leaders who brought about this stalemate should be forced to resign and more moderate people should be allowed to come to power, for the future of their republic.

The compromise arrived at in the Zurich-London agreement should be maintained; that is, an independent Cyprus ruling out enosis and partition. The crisis began mostly due to the Greeks and Turks who did not respect the compromise, which was rather a sudden action, accepted without making any preparations for statehood. The Turks were not ready for the constitutional amendments, but the world did not approve the Greek way of imposing by force, either. One of the main points that was stressed by Turkey was that of the strategic position of the Island. This could be overcome by demilitarization and neutralization of the island, which would also satisfy the Soviet Union, which advocated an independent Cyprus, apart from alliances.

The most important and difficult part of the question is the type of government suitable for Cyprus. Here, I think the Lebanon example will help the problem. Constitutionally, the majority, who are the Maronites, elect the president, and the minority, moslems, elect the prime minister. In order to recognize more constitutional rights to the Turkish leadership, one of the two positions could be given to Turks. This would bring a sense of balanced responsibility and, as a result, a unitary type of system, which the Greek Cypriots have advocated, could be acceptable. Religious, educational and economic sanctions should be given to the Turks constitutionally. The Parliamentary system should be changed according to proportional representation. This percentage should be checked every ten years in order to keep up with population changes.

The constitutional rights of the Turkish Cypriots must be supervised by the U.N. appointees, which would be a very difficult job to do.

Of course, these are only the main suggestions for a workable constitution. The details should be concluded in the same spirit and manner.

Above all, the intention to find a workable solution and to live together are the most important factors to be kept in mind.

ÖZET

Kıbrıs'ın genel bir tarihsel değerlendirilmesi yapıldıktan sonra 1571'den başlayan Türk yönetimi incelenmiştir. İngiliz yönetiminde Türkler'in bazı legal hakları tanınmış ve ayrı bir etnik olduğu kabul edilmiştir. Daha önce Osmanlı yönetiminde millet sistemi-ne göre çok rahat etmiş olan Rumlar, İngiliz yönetimi başlar başlamaz, bir çok talepler-de bulunmuşlardır.

Gerek Türk ve gerek İngiliz yönetiminde Türkler ve Rumlar beraber değil, fakat yanyana yaşamışlardır. Böylece her iki etnik grubun dini, sosyal ve kültürel hakları ayrı olarak gelişmiştir. Her iki toplumda aile şerefi ve aile bağılılığı ortak bir özellik olarak ortaya çıkar. Toplumlarda ataerkil sistem hâkimdir.

Kıbrıs sorununda Türkler jeo-politik ve stratejik hususlardan söz ederken ayrı bir toplumun haklarından da bahsederlerdi. Rumlar ise nüfus ve ekonomik faktörden söz ederdi. Şunu bilmekte yarar var ki Kıbrıs, Anadolu, Suriye ya da Mısır'da hükmeden devletlerin hâkimiyeti altına girmiştir. Bunlar Asurlular, Persler, Makedonyalılar, Mısırlular, Bizans, Arap, Türk ve İngiliz idi. Bu tarihsel gerçeği belirtmekte yarar vardır. Buna mukabil Rumlar, adanın stratejik önemini göstermişler ve daima selfdeterminasyon-dan söz etmişlerdir.

1978'den sonraki İngiliz yönetiminde Rumlar daha fazla desteklenmişlerdi. Hatta İngilizler Kıbrıs adasını zamanı gelince Yunanistan'a devredeceklerini düşünmekteydiler. Rumlar'ın karşısında daima Türkler bulunmaktaydı. 1958'e kadar iki topluluk arasında bir gerginlik olmamıştı. Rum Ortadoks kilisesi özerk olmasına rağmen Türk evkaf malları ise İngilizler'in yönetiminde idi. Türkler kendi müftülerini dahi seçmek hakkına sahip değildiler. 1955 yılına kadar Türk eğitimi de İngiliz yönetiminde idi. Bütün tanımayan haklar 1955 yılında yapılan Londra Konferansı'na kadar devam etti.

Rumlar'a verilen İngiliz desteğinden dolayı adanın geleceğinin sadece kendilerini ilgilendirdiğini zannediyorlardı. 1958'den sonra ENOSIS'e karşı olanın, Türkler olduğunu anladılar. Bu arada Türk hükümeti de soruna çok legal bir açıdan bakıyordu. Sorunu bir iç sorun olarak görüyordu.