

The influence of the Greek civil war on the division of the Greek-Cypriot community's local society

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Abstract

The objective of this paper is to explore the antagonism and the collision of the two dominant political camps -namely the "nationalist" Right and the "communist" Left- under the influence of the Greek Civil war, and the impact of this conflict to the local society of the Greek-Cypriot community. In the late 1940s the political climate had affected local societies in such terms that specific stereotypes (nationalists VS communists) divided public life in all levels: Sports clubs, groceries, cafeterias, etc. had been converted into the battlefield of the two conflictual camps. As a result of this division people had to choose between the "left-wing grocer" and the "right-wing grocer", support the football team of the "communists" or the other one of the "nationalists" and so on. What is striking is that the situation described above has been carried out within this concept up to our days.

Ideological Framework

Because of the positive climate that had been created on the island as a result of the alliance between Britain and Greece during WWII, and the participation of thousands of Cypriots in the war, the colonial administration reinstated the elective system that had been withdrawn twelve years earlier from the municipal authorities. This was the first step towards the restoration of limited and mutilated constitutional institutions for political representation¹. This development in the political rights of Cypriots was approached under different aspects between different parts of society. The working class and their representatives view this development as the starting point of their social

¹ For an analysis of the restoration and concession of constitutional rights, see Rolandos Katsiaounis, "Η Διασκεπτική, 1946-1948" [Diaskeptiki, 1946-1948] (Kentro Epistimonikon Erevnon, Nicosia 2000).

demands and their long-term political goals. On the other hand, the bourgeoisie and the ruling class faced the expansion of the civil rights as a concession of power to political coalitions that were disputing the social balances.

At the same time, both Left and Right were affected by the Greek civil war that was on a climax. The clashes of 3 December 1944 in Athens, and the military confrontation that led to the Varkiza agreement, introduced a new meaning to the concept of so-called "*ethnophrosyni*" (nationalist-oriented thinking). These events known as "*Dekembriana*", brought together the extremist/rightist elements and provided the "*nationalistic*" organisations and groups with an excuse for terminating once and for all every prospect of co-operation with the communist AKEL which was providing support to the policies of EAM-KKE(Communist Party of Greece). The two sides were affected by the civil war climate in Greece and identified themselves with the respective sides there.

From demonstrating simple solidarity to the conflictual sides of the Greek civil war, up to participating by sending fighters and/or financial support to their comrades in Greece, both sides in Cyprus viewed civil war as a development that was reflecting them straightly. Characterizations, phraseology and terms were the most innocent elements that were imported from the civil war.

The emergence and consolidation of the Left

Leftist ideas first appeared in Cyprus in the latter part of the 1910s and acquired formal recognition and a political framework when the Communist Party of Cyprus (KKK) came into existence in August 1926². KKK's radical political manifesto -abolition of private property in the means of production, expropriation of monastic and church property for the benefit of the landless, establishment of a socialist society- constituted an openly hostile movement

² For the first socialist groups in Cyprus see Yiannis Lefkis, *Οι ριζες* [The roots] (Limassol, 1984)

against the ruling class as well as against the Church. Apart from its Marxist and atheist declarations, the Party also adopted an incomprehensible (for that period) anti-colonial policy, favouring an independent Cyprus Workers and Peasants Democracy, incorporated into a "*Balkan Soviet Federation*"³.

The Party was successful in indoctrinating class consciousness, and in sensing the feelings of a section of workers mainly in the towns of Limassol and Famagusta. Only a few years after its establishment, KKK realized that failed to rally the people, had no allies, and was inevitably pushed out of the political limelight. It was unprepared for the 1931 uprising (called Oktovriana)⁴ which had as a result the arrest and exile of two of its leaders and the ban on the circulation of the party's newspaper and its persecution by the colonial government which culminated in the party being outlawed in 1933⁵. All these misfortunes dealt a heavy blow to its operation.

What allowed the reorganization of the party's scope of action was the establishment of a great number of trade unions which gradually came under the control of the KKK. The trade union movement acquired a new dynamic in 1941 when the party contributed to the formation of the Pancyprian Trade Union Committee (PSE). In the early 1940s, the outlawed KKK, through the trade unions in the towns, laid the foundations for penetrating the wide social strata of the lower classes. The trade union movement, with its pragmatic claims and its effective strike rallies, gradually built the needfully class consciousness within the working class. Furthermore, its anti-colonial stand covered a blank space in its political speech and earned it an audience among the townspeople. The Pancyprian Trade Union Committee monopolised the

³ See party's theoretical newspaper *Νέος Ανθρωπος* (18.09.1926)

⁴ Oktovriana was a spontaneous rebellion against the British (October 1931) which was failed. About Oktovriana see Kostas Grekos, *Τα Οκτωβριανά και το ΚΚΚ* [The October rebellion and the Communist Party of Cyprus] (Nicosia 1994). Also see George Georghallides, *Cyprus and the Governorship of Sir Ronald Storrs* (Nicosia, 1985).

⁵ For the situation after the October rebellion see Alexis Κυρου, *Όνειρα και πραγματικότητας, χρόνια διπλωματικής ζωής 1923-1953*, [Dreams and Reality, Years of Diplomatic Life 1923-1953], (Athens 1972).

workers representation until 1943, thus managing to combine economic claims with the anti-colonial struggle. Because of the activities of the trade union movement, the workers secured tangible practical benefits and the Left acquired supporters among the masses as well as recognition and popular legitimisation. The KKK's need to exit the status of illegality led, in April 1941, to the founding of the "Progressive Party of the Working People", known as AKEL (*Anorthotiko Komma Ergazomenou Laou*). AKEL founded as a "*Pancyprian political party of principles*" and was an alliance between communists and a section of the bourgeoisie.

With the Soviet Union's entry into World War II (WWII), AKEL played a leading role in organising anti-fascist rallies. At the same time it intensified its social struggles, using the demonstrations against fascism, which were attended by the lower classes in great numbers. These protests helped to proclaim the party's political positions and at the same time raised the reputation of party officials. In this way the party was well received among the working and lower middle-class strata. As "*a liberal, pioneering and progressive party of the working class*", maintaining anti-fascist activities to its credit, and by lending support for occupied Greece and volunteering slogans calling for unity, the new Left overturned, to a great extent, the unfavourable image and the various stigmas inherited from the KKK. AKEL's manifesto was particularly radical for those years, but it was adapted to Cypriot realities.⁶ In 1944 the KKK which was exist and operate in parallel with AKEL, joined the new party, having first ensured that the control of the party was in the hands of its former members. With the inactivation of the middle class co-founders, AKEL shaped itself as a party unlike all others. It became social-democratic in its public image, gaining

⁶ See Papademitris, *Ιστορική Εγκυκλοπαίδεια της Κύπρου* [Cyprus Historic Encyclopaedia] (Vol. 7, Nicosia, 1980), pp 107-111

benefits from its past actions and at the same time it was communist (in a soviet way) in its internal organisation and operation.⁷

By the summer of 1952, when the new “*radical leadership*” under Ezekias Papaioannou had completed the “*ideological clearance*” process of the party through a series of party member seclusions⁸, AKEL found itself at the head of a wide centreleft coalition. AKEL created coalescences and coalitions with personalities outside its own party domain, and with the help of a network of parallel mass organisations, i.e. the labour trade union of Pancyprian Workers Organisation (PEO), the peasants union known as EAK, the youth organisation of AON, and a women's organisation, actually transformed itself from a powerful political camp into an electoral majority.⁹

The multiformity of the Right

Since the 1920s the Left had been on a course of ideological crystallisation and structural integration. The Right, however, had always been the dominant power, even if it only functioned as a mixture of various leading personalities whose unifying element was the attachment to a strong plexus of nationalist irredentism and traditional values. Only in the 1940s did the Right become a political formation with ideological content. The pivotal axis of the Right had always been the Orthodox Church in its role of “*Ethnarchy*” -an institution for wielding religious and temporal power through a pancyprian network of clerical committees, powerful monasteries- owning large areas of land and with privileges and authority over the Greek educational system. As defender of the

⁷ The principle of democratic centralisation (δημοκρατικός συγκεντρωτισμός) and strict party discipline, had already been decided in the first Congress. For the first Statute, which was adopted on 5 October 1941, see Papademitris, *op. cit.*, pp. 111-116.

⁸ About dethronement of members of AKEL see ASKI, Αρχείο ΚΚΕ, κ. 371, Φ 20/21/40, «Η πορεία του Κυπριακού κινήματος, η κομματικής καθοδήγηση, ο κίνδυνος για το Κόμμα» [Movements situation, party's leadership, the danger for the party] (Budapest, 1 August 1951). Also see Soulla Zavou, *Τα πολιτικά κόμματα της Κύπρου στον 20^ο Αιώνα*, [Political Parties of Cyprus] (Kastaniotis, Athens 2002), pp. 108-111

⁹ For the centreleft coalitions and AKEL see Papademitris, *op. cit.*, Vol. 8, pp. 192-194.

regnant system of values, the Church as an institution, and the clergy as a living resource, had in both theory and practice been the gluing element of the conservative political spectrum¹⁰. A second pivotal axis had been the merchant-middleman classes in the towns, which, in spite of internal differences, made use of nationalist ideology for the purpose of conserving their hegemony. At the same time, a distinct section of rich middle class citizens adopted an undisguised pro-British stand in order to safeguard the continuation of important privileges which they enjoyed. These two pylons of the Right, exercised control over cultural, athletic and charity organisations, and school graduate associations, through which they indoctrinated working class and agrarian population throughout the island. They also had absolute control of the educational system and in particular of the School Committees which had the authority to decide the curriculum of the schools.

The Rightwing frame was completed by the Greek Cypriot newspapers at both a pan-cyprian and local level, in their majority pro the ruling class, as well as by a large group of intellectuals who, theoretically, supported the regnant ideological framework. With the exception of the spontaneous and unorganised rising of 1931, the claim for "*Enosis*" took the form of memorandums and representations to the Greek and British governments in a spirit of moderation and with a friendly disposition toward the British. Palmer's rule during the period 1933-1939 contributed to the loss of coordination and to the fragmentation of urban elites. With the abolition of the limitation of the traditional elective institutions of representation, a significant number of influential members of the ruling middle class openly cooperated with the colonial regime, a fact which caused a credibility crisis in the eyes of the lower classes.

¹⁰ For the role of the Church see Panayiotis Persianis, *Church and State in Cyprus Education - The Contribution of the Greek Orthodox Church of Cyprus to Cyprus Education during the British Administration 1878-1960* (Nicosia, 1978)

Because the Ethnarchic Church was in a state of decomposition, and the Right was leaderless, diluted by Palmer's regime and without a visible "*enemy*", it failed to comprehend the social transformation of the 1930s and remained a passive spectator while the Left briskly involved itself in the working class domain. Several leading members of the middle class, of the Church and of the nationalist intellectuals began to suspect the danger of disordering ideological and political balances with the gradual looseness of the totalitarian measures of British rule mainly because of the appearance and activity of AKEL.

With the Left disputing the leading role of the ruling class in matters of "*national liberation*"¹¹ while at the same time seeking a role in the political representation of the Greek community, the Right found itself face to face with an unparalleled situation that clearly threatened it. Thus, following the 1943 municipal elections, and a year after the Right's Pan-agrarian Union of Cyprus (PEK) came into existence, 18 leading members of the Right decided to put aside their personal differences and organised for the first time, by establishing the Cyprus National Party, known as KEK (*Kypriakon Ethnikon Komma*), the supreme objective of which was to place the concept of the nation above all kinds of social antagonism¹². At the same time, they achieved to disrupt Left's dominance within the trade union movement, by calling for a pullout of all "*nationalist labourers*" from Leftist trade unions and re-accommodating them subsequently in "*new trade unions*". What also contributed to this pullout was AKEL's control over PSE and the way AKEL used PSE to promote its electoral party objectives. The Confederation of Cypriot Workers, known as SEK (*Synomospondia Ergaton Kyprou*), came into existence in October 1944, and this was the first step in the gradual infiltration of the Right into the working

¹¹ For the extension of the Greek national conscience in Cyprus see Paschalis Kitromilides, *From Coexistence to Confrontation: The Dynamics of Ethnic Conflict in Cyprus*, Michael Attalides ed., *Cyprus Reviewed*, Nicosia, 1977, p. 41

¹² See newspaper *Eleftheria*, *Αι προγραμματικά θέσεις του Κυπριακού Εθνικού Κόμματος* [The manifest of the Cyprus National Party], 10.8.1943

class strata¹³. The political climate was polarised and highly sensitive as the two parties considered each other's political initiatives to be unbearably provocative. The involvement of the Left in the struggle for national independence enraged the Right, and the Right's infiltration into the working class was considered by the Left as a brash provocation.

The Greek civil war created conditions that gave the opportunity to anticommunists to accuse the Left as "*ungodly internal enemies*", which had as a result for the Right to manage to organise itself as a party, though with a weak institutional structure. In other words, anticommunism and nationalism were the welding elements that kept the Right from disintegrating.

The absence of a strong political “Centre”

In the period under review, conditions did not favour the formation of an autonomous third "*in-between*" party. Unlike Greece and elsewhere, the political perception of the "*Centre*" did not exist in Cyprus, not even as a political term until the late 1960s. The emergence of a "*Centre*" party in the sense of a moderate and unassertive political party was out of the question due to a number of reasons, but the main obstacle was the colonial administration whose contradictions and totalitarian nature undermined all moderate voices within the two communities. Those who dared to show confidence in accepting British invitations for dialogue with the aim for the creation of a more liberal constitutional framework, found themselves exposed, or lost their society's respect. The fact that the so called «εθνικό ζήτημα» [*national cause*], meaning the aspiration for union with Greece, predominated on the essentially scanty political agenda of public dialogue was another factor. There were moderate elements in both Left and Right but it was impossible for them to meet within a

¹³ Gregoris Gregoriades, *Ιστορία τηςΣΕΚ* [History of SEK], 1st Vol. (Nicosia, 1994).

framework which politically, socially and ideologically was in some times oppressive, and above all divisive.

The climate of the Greek civil war, which was robustiously imported into the island and reached its climax during the period 1947-1949, victimised people who were moderate or neutral, or who were not devoted to either of the two opposing sides. As far as the political life of the Greek community was concerned, the few “*centered*” personalities who, mainly because of the electoral system, sought alliances with either one or other of the two sides, did so in order to survive both politically and economically. With the dynamic return of the Church to the top of the Greek Cypriot political leadership and with the prevalence of the tactical line “*Enosis and only Enosis*”, the possibility of a “*centered*” political party being established was manifestly outside the framework of nationalist legality. A “*centrist*” formation could only arise out of the fragmentation of the two powerful parties, and neither the ideological climate nor the electoral system favoured such a development.

The crisis within the Left that led to the expulsion of some of the most important party leaders in 1952 and could probably have led to a “*third situation*”, if polarization had not been so powerful, and certainly if the Greek civil war had not been so affective to the society of Cyprus¹⁴.

Political climate in the late ‘40s

AKEL managed to face the persecutions of the colonial regime and concentrated its activities in support of *Enosis* and the problems of the working class. The Right, although ostensibly affected by developments in Greece, was put in the corner, because it needed to keep the demand for *Enosis* within the

¹⁴ Vassilis Protopapas, *The Rise of a Bi-Polar Party System, Municipal Elections 1940-1955*, in: Britain in Cyprus Colonialism and Post-Colonialism 1878-2006 (Mannheim und Möhnesee 2006)

framework of British-Greek friendship. Its mild anti-colonial tactics, together with its unproductive and empty anticommunism resulted in its incapacity to penetrate the popular masses. Above all, its anticommunist obstinacy repulsed a number of upper class supporters who did not favour the introduction into Cyprus of the Greek civil-war climate, given that the Cypriot Left had assumed a different attitude from that adopted by their counterparts in Greece. Moreover, after the events of December 1944 the situation in Greece instilled terror in many Cypriots. Also, the fact that the Left had won some respect by ecclesiastical circles helped AKEL to cooperate with “*centered*” personalities, forming the “*National Cooperation Wing*”, known as PES (*Parataxi Ethnikis Synergasias*). As early as January 1946, AKEL tried to press on with a policy of alliances, whereas the Right remained inactive, concentrating mainly on Nicosia. The Leftist argument for national unity exposed the Right as vulnerable under the coercive influence of the extremist elements, entrenched in the Kyrenia Bishopric, insisting that any contact with the communists constituted treason. AKEL submitted proposals to the Right for allocating the positions in the Municipal Councils, but the response was categorically negative.

For the Left, the 1946 municipal elections can be characterised as its crest. During that period its policy and tactics for evolving into a “*new type party*” (AKEL) were implemented. For the Rightist block, the election results constituted a final warning with regard to its dominant role as “*the leading class*”. The Right lost its monopoly of patriotism and national identification, and was facing the danger of becoming the outgrown rear guard.

The election triumph of the Left not only disgruntled the Right but it also enraged the colonial administration that realised the potential dangers from popular class mass mobilisations on behalf of AKEL and the Trade Unions. Rightist circles decided to put aside their political aspirations and coordinated their activities toward the common enemy, whereas the British put forward

constitutional changes in order to appease the tension and the demand for *Enosis*. During this same period Greece was entering the convulsion of civil war.

The future of the island was sealed internally and externally by the following two events:

First, the summoning of the *Diaskeptiki* (Consultative Assembly) by the British, with a view to introducing constitutional reforms that would lead to limited self-government. The Right refused to participate, mainly because of the fear for the potential power that Left could procure in a future self-government, and the Church reacted aggressively with the slogan "*Enosis and only Enosis*", accusing the Left and the "*comarchers*" of a national sell-out. This accusation assumed greater significance after the *Diaskeptiki* collapsed as a result of the contradictory intentions and the unconscionably provisions of the British one year later.

And **second**, there was the tension externally, of the Greek civil war and the initiation of the "*Cold War*".

The already existing differences between the Labour movement and the Left in general, and the conservative class and the Church, were in anyway about to lead the two sides in frontal conflict. These two poles represented basically two opposite worlds the interests of which could not be satisfied together. Thus, the conflict was to be taking place. However, the conditions of that period were such that the politics in the Greek community of Cyprus could not remain uninfluenced by the facts happening in Greece. The Greek civil war, as an initial form of division of the postwar Greece, had affected the population of Cyprus as a whole, as well as the connection of forces of the political world in Cyprus.

The position of Left-Right towards the civil war

Since September 1947 AKEL at its E' Congress (13-15 September 1947) has decided to support even more the DSE (Greek Left forces-Dimokratikos Stratos Elladas) and the Greek Left. Thus, based on this decision, the party organized fund raisings for the collection of money and clothing supply, whereas efforts were made in order to send armed forces. The result was not the desirable one and the main reason was the existing discord in the Left regarding the dimension of implication in the civil war¹⁵.

Apart some doctors and few Cypriot students who were studying at the time in European countries going to Greece to express their support to the DSE, AKEL had been focused on the carrying out of fund raisings for the reinforcement of the Democratic Army. In every chance the members of the party stated that AKEL is DSE and that its rebels "*constitute the Greek civilization*"¹⁶.

The Right, in the presence of the demonstrations and fund raisings of AKEL in support of EAM-DSE could not stay inactive. At a time when the Left was covering a phase of political and ideological clarifications, with the intense and evident internal conflicts, mainly due to the "*Diaskeptiki*", the Consultative Assembly for introducing constitutional reforms¹⁷, the slogan "Enosis kai mono Enosis" (Unification and only Unification with Greece), even though coiling at a great level the Right, did not constitute that much an effective adhesive element for its various departments, as the fanatic anticommunism did. AKEL's positions pro the DSE and the Soviet Union eased exceedingly the anticommunist propaganda of the Right and the Ethnarchy, which was insensibly asking by the British colonists to outlaw AKEL and to "*intern in concentration camps every*

¹⁵ See ASKI, Αρχείο ΚΚΕ, κ. 371, Φ 20/21/13, Φ.Ιωάννου-Α.Ζιαρτίδης, προς ΚΚΕ, «Οι τεχνικές δυσκολίες στο καθήκον για την ενίσχυση του Δ.Σ.Ε.» [The technical difficulties about supporting DSE] (Manumitted Greece, November 1948).

¹⁶ Spyros Papageorgiou, *ΑΚΕΛ το άλλο ΚΚΕ* [AKEL the other KKE] (Nicosia 1984) p. 119.

¹⁷ For the Consultative Assembly, known as "*Diaskeptiki*", see Katsiaounis, *op. cit.*, and Andreas Fantis, *Η Διασκεπτική* [Diaskeptiki] (Nicosia, 1993).

communist as a democratic mean of security of the majority through the restraint of the minority"¹⁸.

The nationalists, united against the enemy, and with the help of extreme rightist elements who came from Greece specially for the reinforcement of the anticommunist struggle in Cyprus, intense the conflict against the communists and organize eclaircissement expeditions in reference to the communist leadership which was "*devoted to Moscow and been working for the Slavic interests*"¹⁹. The Right called its followers to support with fanaticism all the rightwing and nationalists in all occupations. "*Our grocer, our baker, our greengrocer, our employer, our worker has to be nationalist. Let's support the cause of the ideological struggle, the struggle of financial sanctions*"²⁰. The solidarity of the Right to the governmental army of Greece was significant, since, apart of the Cyprus Right and its solidarity towards the Greek nationalists, rightwing trade unions and organizations carried out funding raisings. Also, many Cypriot nationalists, officers of the Greek army, fought on the side of the governmental army of Greece against DSE.

The position of the Church

The Church of Cyprus, having adopted the anticommunism as its official politics, could not stay uninvolved on the existing turbulent tones. On the 7th of September of 1948, AKEL has been condemned by the Church as atheists and "*non patriots*" implying clearly that they would apply an embargo of the Left from every aspect of the social life of Cyprus controlled at least by them²¹.

¹⁸ See rightwing newspaper *Efimeris*, *Εἰς τὴν γραμμὴν, Λόρδε*, [Keep the Line Lord], 03/04/1948

¹⁹ Spyros Papageorgiou, *Ο Γρίβας και η «Χ»*, *Το χαμένο Αρχείο*, [Grivas and "X", the Lost Archive] (*Nea Thesis*, Athens 2004), p. 640.

²⁰ Spyros Papageorgiou, (1984), *op. cit.* p. 52.

²¹ Papademitris, *op. cit.*, p. 183

The support of AKEL to KKE and DSE had been the main reason of its condemn by the Ethnarchy, and at the same time another reason was its electoral force. The fact that a great part of the flock of the Church had escaped from the ideological and political control of the ruling class, indicated that the result of the elections for the primates of the Church could not be under the control of the Right. The massive participation of the Left at these elections (May 1947) had induced the defeat of the Right candidate Sineos Porfurios. The possibility of regaining control of the church's institutions by the bourgeois had been achieved only after the sudden death of Leontios and the assumption of the throne by Macarios Muriantheos.

The strikes of 1948

The upright division of the Labour movement

The conflict between the Left and the Right, with the powerful interpositions -in support of the Right- by the Church, the Greek Consulate and the extremist elements that came from Greece, had as a main reason the Civil war raged in Greece, whereas its main pretext was the decision of the Left to participate in the *Diaskeptiki*. This conflict has appeared in every domain of the public life: education, elections for the bishops, labor movement and Public Services. The climax of the conflict, as it was expected, had appeared there where the ideological confrontation was clearly expressed with its class substance, that is, it was transfigured into a conflict between the workers and the employers. While the influence of the Right was based on its access to the governmental mechanism or on the structures of the power of the Greek community, the Left drafted its power from the support provided by the labour class.

The most important role of the labour movement was played by the unions of builders, port workers and mine workers, which constituted the forefront of the massive left movement. During 1948, three major strikes took place: the mine

workers of the Cypriot Extractive Company (KME), the asbestos workers and the builders. The strikes lasted 266 days in total (more than the 2/3 of the year) and in these 4.300 builders and mine workers participated²². The demands of the Labour movement for improvement of their working conditions were satisfied.

The consequences of the conflict of 1948

From the symptom to the diagnosis

The intensively political character of the strikes of 1948 and the combination of the developments in Cyprus and Greece (*Diaskeptiki* – Civil War), affected at an important level the future evolution of the conflictual sides as well as the political climate which was to be solidified in the Cypriot society. The existing differences between the Left and the Right became clearly class based and were influenced by the discussion regarding the constitutional proposals of the British and were transformed to a particular struggle of survival and domination, in proportion to the results of the *Diaskeptiki*. Additionally, the adoption of characterizations, and in many cases, practices of the Greek Civil War, expanded the differences and raised the gap between the two sides. As a result, the conflict became frontal and violent.

The fact that in Cyprus there was no generalized armed civil conflict is mainly due to the power of the colonist status quo, which did not favor and thus did not allow any active contestation of its autocratic domination, as well as in the chance provided by the circumstances in the Left to decline the choice of response to the violent.

²² About the strikes see *Ιστορία ΠΣΕ-ΠΕΟ*, [History of PSE-PEO], (PEO, Nicosia 1991), Pantelis Varnavas, *Ένας Μεταλλωρύχος θυμάται*, [A mine worker's memories], (Nicosia 1988). About SEK's position for the strikes see Gregoriades Gregoris, *Ιστορία της ΣΕΚ*, [History of SEK], (Nicosia 1994).

In this conflict, which had the strikes of 1948 on the top, the Left mobilized all its mechanism and had significant political benefits. The victory of the Left trade union developed the massiveness of the labour movement and broadened the validity of the Left. The unity and cooperation of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot workers at the strikes, created the preconditions for the further development of demands. AKEL, by including the strikes in the broader scope of the demand for dispensation of the colonial rule, has been able to pass to the society strong political messages and has colligated the democratic front, something that constituted a great need, since the disagreements by the “*co-marchers*” regarding the implication of AKEL in the Civil War, created creaks in the coalition.

On the other hand, the Right achieved in this class confrontation to have a stronger access to the working class, something that can be found in the documents of the members of the rightwing trade union of that period²³. The establishment of SEK as the opposite pole of PEO and as a pure expression of the Right at the Labor movement, in spite of the defeat that had taken, was a result of the front conflict of two perceptions, a fact that coiled the party in view of the municipal elections. Anticommunism became the official ideology of the Right, which used the practice of making enemies abetted by the facts of the civil war.

The stabilization in the society of these two poles (communists≠nationalists) which divided the society of Cyprus can be located everywhere, in every aspect of public life. The measures of mutual financial war that the two sides took are after all these years evident. The fund raisings of the Left for the DSE as well as for the liberation of its leaders who have been prisoners and the appeals of the Right towards the nationalists for support of their followers were elements

²³ Republic of Cyprus, Annual Report of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance for the Year 1968, Nicosia 1969, p. 108.

which have been added in the intensity of the conflict and created in the society of Cyprus certain stereotypes. Thus, especially in the country side, we have the Rightwing grocer, baker, green grocer, barber etc and the Leftwing respectively, up to today.

Even the coffeehouses in almost all the villages, which are usually on the same road, are divided as well in cafes of the Left, and cafes of the Right. Additionally, the *Morfotikoi Syllogoi*²⁴ -Cultural and Sport Associations-, a creation of the Left for “a healthy and creative occupation of the workers”, (mostly these are places where the local organizations of the Left are lodged) are usually opposite the *Ethnikofrona Somateia* – the corresponding associations of the Right- of every village, in which the organizations of the Right are lodged.

Basic area in which the two poles have divided the society of Cyprus is the field of athletics and especially football. In 1948 the conflict has been expanded in the field of athletics. The bishop of Pafos Kleopas initiated on behalf of the Church the politics of dismissal of the left from the sport unions refusing to be present in an activity of the union *Kinyras* because of the left athletes who participated in it, something that had been applied in Larnaca as well in the case of the Club of *Pezoporikos*²⁵. A similar position was kept by *EPA*, the other club of the town, while in Nicosia *Olympiakos* decided to remove its members which had Left political views.

Because of the above reasons, at the beginning of 1948, the exiled athletes that had leftist views, created new clubs in every town of Cyprus. In March 1948 the *Nea Salamina* in Famacusta is founded, in April *Akli* in Larnaka, in

²⁴ About Cultural and Sport Associations of the Left see Christos Petas, *Το κίνημα των Μορφωτικών Συλλόγων, 1939-1945*, [The Morfotikoi Syllogoi Movement 1939-1945], (Nicosia 1992).

²⁵ Newspaper Ethnos, *Κομμουνιστάι δεν έχουν θέσιν εις τον ΄Πεζοπορικόν Όμιλον Λάρνακος*, [Commounists have no position in our Sports Club], 04/04/1948.

May *Orpheas* and in June *Omonia* in Nicosia. These clubs are considered until today Leftist since their followers are in majority well disposed towards the Left.

Conclusions

The quantity and the type of the differences between the Left and the Right/Ethnarchy of that period, made everybody feel that the clash would come soon, and it would be rough. After all, the continuous climax of the divergence between Labour and Capital would normally induce this conflict. However, the importation of the Greek civil war climate, ejected the differences of the two sides in a new level, generating another field of confrontation that Left and Right could cross their swords using more intense and violent ways.

The importation of the Greek civil war climate was absolutely normal, since the Greek Cypriot community was seeking the unification with Greece. The fact that the Greek Cypriots felt as an integral part of Greece, partly justifies their great interest and their participation to the Greek civil war.

The Right aimed to introduce the civil war climate mainly because in this field it could use helpful argumentation for creating the fear to the people of an internal enemy. AKEL, at first with the forbearance of its "*co-marchers*" and later with their disagreement, identified its self with KKE-DSE mainly because of its solidarity principles, but also because the party aimed for the unification of "*a free Cyprus with a free and democratic Greece*".

If something important comes out of this paper, is that the unity inside the Greek Cypriot community could not be achieved, in spite of the fact that all sides were aiming for the unification with Greece, because of the class divergence between Left and Right, helped by the civil war climate, with results visible up to today.

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**EOKA and Enosis in 1955-59:
Motive and Aspiration Reconsidered**

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EOKA and Enosis in 1955-59: Motive and Aspiration Reconsidered

Andreas Karyos¹

ABSTRACT

This paper seeks to explore the essential political aim of the leadership and the active members of the armed organization EOKA. Consequently, special consideration is taken of what EOKA fought for, as revealed in the leaflets and other written material circulated by the subversive movement. In addition, we trace the movement's goals as they were later defined in response to successive British suggestions and 'plans' - from the Makarios-Harding negotiations through to the Zurich/London Agreements. It must be underlined, though, that this project does not intend any full analysis of each plan, which would entail a constitutional history of Cyprus during the four-year revolt. It is only demonstrated how each formula failed to meet the insurgent organization's aspirations. Finally, we explore the reasons why the leadership of EOKA eventually accepted a settlement based on an independent Cyprus, which was critically different from the original desire of the movement for union of Cyprus with Greece - *enosis*. The underground correspondence of EOKA's leadership at a top level (that is, the communication of Grivas with the Greek leadership and Makarios) is vital at this point.

Keywords: EOKA struggle, Enosis, Union of Cyprus with Greece, Cypriot History, Cyprus Question in the 1950's, Cyprus Revolt, Cyprus Emergency, Armed enosis movement, Insurgency, Conflict

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EOKA and Enosis in 1955-59: Motive and Aspiration Reconsidered

1. Introduction

One of the most significant periods of the Cyprus Question is the years from 1955-1959, when the long-lasting polarization between the British and the Greek-Cypriots reached its peak and was transformed into an armed confrontation. In particular as for the Greek-Cypriot side, EOKA (Ethniki Organosis Kyprion Agoniston - The National Organization of Cypriot Fighters), a subversive organization was formed in order to carry out an armed struggle against the British security machinery in the island. The conflict ended in 1959 with the Zurich/London Agreements which terminated the British rule in the island and a new state in August 1960 was established, the Republic of Cyprus. However, during the post-independence years, contested views emerged in Cyprus as to the true character and aims of the ‘EOKA struggle’, which shaped the Greek-Cypriot political culture for the years ahead. The Greek-Cypriot politicians attempted to strengthen their political foothold against the opposition of hardcore enosis supporters, by connecting the goal of independence with the aims of the insurgency during 1955-1959.² Therefore, neologisms emerged during the last thirty years in the official Greek-language historiography, invariably presented as the incontrovertible historical ‘truth’, although acting on political expediency: the EOKA struggle has therefore been described as a rebellion *for* independence, in spite of the fact that the latter goal never existed amongst its initial aspirations. Simultaneously, the same implicit version appeared in the official or unofficial literature in relation with the four-year physical struggle in Cyprus, where the terms ‘*enosis*’ and ‘*the enosis struggle of EOKA*’ were replaced by ‘*liberty*’ and ‘*the liberation struggle of EOKA*’, respectively.³

2. What did EOKA fight for?

2.1 The focus on the political plane

Let us start by exploring the ultimate political goal of the irregular warfare of EOKA. Before proceeding into more detailed aspects of EOKA’s ambitions, it would be beneficial to specify what the insurgent movement *did not* seek. The organization expressed a demand for freedom and self-determination which focused exclusively on the political plane, without any references to a fundamental change of the social and economic status of Cyprus. A proclamation circulated by EOKA in 1958 offers us a typical example of this notion: ‘*We have declared many times that we are conducting*

² John Reddaway, *Burdened With Cyprus: The British Connection* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1986), p.76

³ Examples can be found in *Ιστορία της Κύπρου. Μεσαιωνική-Νεότερη (1192-1974)* (Λευκωσία: Υπουργείο Παιδείας και Πολιτισμού, 1997), σ.232 [*History of Cyprus. Medieval-Modern (1192-1974)* (Nicosia: Ministry of Education, 1997), p.232]; *Ιστορία της Κύπρου για το Γυμνάσιο* (Λευκωσία: Υπουργείο Παιδείας και Πολιτισμού, 2006), σ.112 [*History of Cyprus for High School* (Nicosia: Ministry of Education, 2006), p.112]; *Νεότερη και Σύγχρονη Ιστορία: Γ’ Γυμνασίου* (Αθήνα: Οργανισμός Εκδόσεων Διδακτικών Βιβλίων, 2007), σ.153 [*Modern and Contemporary History: for the Third Grade* (Athens: Organization for the Publication of Schoolbooks, 2007), p.153]

*neither a factional, nor a class struggle, but one for liberty. We are not interested in a clash of ideology. Our concern is for everyone to be patriots...and to join their forces with ours in order to expel the ruler...For this reason, we have made a call to all the Greek-Cypriots, without exceptions, and all the pure patriots from the cities and the rural areas responded, especially the workers and the farmers’.*⁴ Another leaflet, which bore the signature of the military leader, Dighenis, and EOKA, is also characteristic: *‘When I raised the flag of our national movement, I called everyone in the arena, without any exceptions due to social or political beliefs. The struggle was common to all and the right of everybody’.*⁵

In the same way, EOKA’s focus exclusively on the political goals of liberty and self-determination was also fully appreciated by groups within the Cypriot Left. The latter distanced themselves from the official leadership of AKEL after the party’s verbal attacks on EOKA’s efforts in April 1955 and thus supported the armed enosis movement,⁶ under the label of OAP (Organosi Aristeron Patrioton – Organization of Patriot Lefts), later renamed to OAE (Organosi Aristeron Ethnicofronon – Organization of Nationalist Lefts). An undated pamphlet of OAE indicated its support to the rebels’ aims stating that *‘EOKA and PEKA’ repeatedly emphasized that they have no ideological-fractional orientations, but only national. Let’s organize our LEFT NATIONAL FRONT and, together with PEKA and EOKA, steel the strength of the Cypriot people’.*⁸ A second, undated publication is even more indicative: *‘Brothers, EOKA repeatedly stated that it is solely a military Organization whose purpose is to expel the ruler. On the other hand Makarios’ line proved to be the right, fighting and progressive one. It is not the ideal time for socio-political differences. Those who agree that the struggle for self-determination must be uncompromising and that people is justified to resort to violence when necessary, those who agree that an appear-to-be-monolithic leadership benefits the struggle, those who take an oath that they will not sleep if they don’t gain self-determination, let’s rally round the organization of nationalist lefts. We were prompted to leftism by our love for humanity itself as well as for its liberty. In a fight for such an achievement every sacrifice is of minor importance’.*⁹

EOKA’s dedicated focus on political goals is not surprising when considering that the organization emerged from a conservative social context (the Cypriot Right and the Church) which was favourably inclined towards the West and did not aim at the formation of a different social model or the detachment of Cyprus from the Western

⁴ Cited in Σπύρος Παπαγεωργίου, *Αρχείον των παρανόμων εγγράφων του Κυπριακού Αγώνος 1955-1959* (Λευκωσία: Επιφανίου, 1984. Β’ Έκδοση), σ.199 [Spyros Papageorgiou, *Record of the underground documents of the Cyprus Struggle 1955-59* (Nicosia: Eriphanou, 1984), p.199]

⁵ Cited in Σπύρος Παπαγεωργίου, *ΑΚΕΛ το άλλο ΚΚΕ* (Λευκωσία: Επιφανίου, 2004), σ.326 [Spyros Papageorgiou, *AKEL the other KKE* (Nicosia: Eriphanou, 2004), p.326]

⁶ Read more on OAP and OAE in Φώτης Παπαφώτης, *Πραξικόπημα-Εισβολή: Η κατάθεσή μου στην Επιτροπή Φακέλλου της Κύπρου* (Λεμεσός: ΝΕΓΚΡΕΣΚΟ, 2008), σσ.132-133 [Photis Papaphotis, *Coup d’Etat-Invasion: My testimony to the Committee for the Records of the Cyprus Affair* (Limassol: NEGRESKO, 2008), pp.132-133]

⁷ Initials stand for Politili Epitropi Kypriakou Agonos – Political Committee of the Cypriot Struggle. PEKA was created in 1956 by Grivas/Dighenis and was considered by EOKA as its political wing. It was consisted of respectable personalities of the local societies, concentrating amongst others on the promotion EOKA’s activities to the Cypriot people, the cultivation of courage and spirit of resistance, the confrontation of the British propaganda and the implementation of the Passive Resistance.

⁸ See the entire pamphlet in Papaphotis, *Coup d’Etat-Invasion*, pp.136-137

⁹ Ibid, p.140

block. Similarly, the organization desired the maintenance of the island within the Western world, although attached to Greece rather than Britain (both countries being members of NATO). By all means, this did not rule out social and economic reform once national freedom was attained. Nevertheless, the dominant forces for change in Cyprus did not carry the same social and material implications which sometimes prevailed in the general region, as, for example, with the linkage between Nasserism and land reform in Egypt. In the same way, there was no resemblance between the social orientations of EOKA and such insurgencies as the FLN in Algeria or the Viet Minh in Indochina.¹⁰ We should remember, though, that the four-year physical insurrection in Cyprus did throw up occasions where the leadership of EOKA appeared to have shown an anti-Western attitude. One instance was Colonel George Grivas' suggestion in early 1958 (after the UN resolution once again did not meet the desires of the Greek-Cypriot people) that Greek foreign policy should orient 'courageously towards the East; towards the reborn Arab World and Africa, and not...the rottenness of the ungrateful West and the USA'.¹¹ A second occasion came in September 1958 when Archbishop Makarios for tactical purposes (to press the Western block to adopt friendlier views towards the Greek side) recommended to the government of Karamanlis that Greece should come out of NATO.¹² Yet, such views reflected rather disappointment because of the Western alliance's stand against the Cyprus matter, or even tactic maneuvers to assist Greek diplomacy; they did not emanate from ideological origins and choices.¹³ In sum, Hatzivassiliou locates EOKA a significant singularity in comparison with other post-war anti-colonial struggles. The Cypriot movement was, he argues, introduced by its supporters as a *political revolution*: 'political', because it sought change of the international status of the island but not reformation of its socio-economic system (at least not at a drastic extent); 'revolution', because it pursued a radical overthrowing of the ruling regime and its replacement by another – in the case of Cyprus, the overthrow of the colonial regime and its replacement by the Greek state sovereignty.¹⁴

2.2 The aspirational level

However, the question remains: What did the cadres of EOKA fight for? An examination of the publications and pamphlets of the underground movement during the revolt throws light on this issue. It is a fact that the first leaflet circulated by

¹⁰ Ευάνθης Χατζηβασιλείου, 'Ο Κυπριακός Αγώνας και τα Αντιαποικιακά Κινήματα του Τρίτου Κόσμου' στο *Πενήντα χρόνια μετά τον Απελευθερωτικό Αγώνα της ΕΟΚΑ-Μια ιστορική αποτίμηση*, (Λευκωσία: Υπουργείο Παιδείας και Πολιτισμού & Συμβούλιο Ιστορικής Μνήμης Αγώνα ΕΟΚΑ 1955-1959), σ.50 [Evanthis Hatzivassiliou, 'The Cypriot Struggle and the Anti-colonial movements of the Third World' in *Fifty Years after the Liberation Struggle of EOKA-A historical evaluation*, (Nicosia: Ministry of Education and Culture & Council for the Historical Memory of the Struggle of EOKA 1955-1959), p.50]

¹¹ See letter of Grivas to Makarios on 3 February 1958, cited in Σπύρος Παπαγεωργίου, *Κυπριακή θύελλα, 1955-59* (Λευκωσία: Επιφανίου, 1977), σ.599 [Spyros Papageorgiou, *Cyprus Storm, 1955-59* (Nicosia: Eriphanioy, 1977), p.599]; See also Ευάγγελος Αβέρωφ-Τοσίτσας, *Ιστορία Χαμένων Ευκαιριών. Κυπριακό, 1950-63. Τόμος Β'* (Αθήνα: Εστία, 1982), σσ.14-15 [Evangelos Averoff-Tossizza, *Lost Opportunities: The Cyprus Question, 1950-63*, Vol. II (Athens: Estia, 1982), pp.14-15]

¹² Hatzivassiliou, 'The Cypriot', p.51

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ Ευάνθης Χατζηβασιλείου, *Στρατηγικές του Κυπριακού: Η δεκαετία του 1950* (Αθήνα: Πατάκης, 2004), σ.244 [Evanthis Hatzivassiliou, *Strategies of the Cyprus Struggle: The 1950s* (Athens: Patakis, 2004), p.244]

EOKA on 1 April 1955 stated that the organization undertook the initiative for a struggle that would lead to ‘*throwing off the chains of the British rule*’ and consequently to the liberation of Cyprus.¹⁵ Nevertheless, this should not guide us to the conclusion that the ‘liberation of Cyprus’ was the sole objective of the subversive movement; in many leaflets it was made clear that EOKA aimed at the complete satisfaction of the desires of the Greek-Cypriot people for liberty and self-determination.¹⁶ Still, one might argue that from the moment that self-determination entered the frame, independence was at least a possibility. There is also a psychological angle to be considered: to a younger Greek-Cypriot generation (of the later 1940s and early 1950s), aware of movements elsewhere in the world, and all too conscious of being ruled over by foreigners, the prospect of bringing British rule to an end was probably just as real than the more ‘platonic’ ideal of union with Greece. Therefore, it is important to understand how the cadres of the underground Cypriot movement interpreted ‘*self-determination*’. A first indication emanates from a proclamation by the movement, dated 1 April 1956 (the first anniversary since the beginning of the rebellion), which stated the absolute conviction that the day would not be long ‘*when the soldiers of Harding will leave, saluting the blue and white Greek flag which will stream in the free winds of Cyprus*’.¹⁷ The records of a meeting of historians on the EOKA struggle held in Nicosia on 15 October 2005 (with the participation of EOKA veterans) are more specific about the meaning of ‘self-determination’ amongst the active members of the revolutionary organization.¹⁸ These interpretations insist that the implementation of self-determination to Cyprus would lead eventually to national completion and incorporation of the island to the Greek mainland. For instance, Thassos Sophocleous (former section-leader of EOKA and President of the Union of EOKA Fighters-1955-59) considered that after the British would be driven out, the right of full self-determination would be exercised, leaving the Greek-Cypriots to choose their desired future, which was union with Greece.¹⁹ Demos Hatzimiltis (former section-leader of EOKA and diplomat) added that ‘*Self-determination... for us [the EOKA cadres] meant Enosis*’.²⁰ Finally, Lucis Avgoustidis (former EOKA fighter, retired Army officer) offered a slightly different interpretation stating that the EOKA struggle aimed at the first stage at the liberation of Cyprus and only eventually at enosis, thus viewing ‘independence’ as an interim towards the inclusion of Cyprus into the Greek state.²¹

Nonetheless, EOKA did not use publicly the term ‘enosis’ but instead, it replaced it in its political rhetoric with the principle of self-determination. The tactical thinking of EOKA in order to make acceptable to global opinion what the latter might perceive as a nineteenth-century-style irredentism (the inclusion of an island with a large Greek majority to the Greek regime), oriented to promote the demand for enosis indirectly,

¹⁵ Papageorgiou, *Record of the underground documents*, pp.61-62

¹⁶ See the several proclamations of EOKA, covering the period 1955-1959 in *Ibid*, pp.64,66,100-102, 104-106, 119, 120-121

¹⁷ *Ibid*, p.64

¹⁸ Find the records of the convention in *Πενήντα χρόνια μετά τον Απελευθερωτικό Αγώνα της ΕΟΚΑ-Μια ιστορική αποτίμηση*, (Λευκωσία: Υπουργείο Παιδείας και Πολιτισμού & Συμβούλιο Ιστορικής Μνήμης Αγώνα ΕΟΚΑ 1955-1959) [*Fifty Years after the Liberation Struggle of EOKA-A historical evaluation*, (Nicosia: Ministry of Education and Culture & Council for the Historical Memory of the Struggle of EOKA 1955-1959)]

¹⁹ *Ibid*, pp.214-215

²⁰ *Ibid*, p.215

²¹ *Ibid*, p.219

by projecting in its public phraseology the right of self-determination (the right of the inhabitants of the colony to choose on their own their political and national desiderata, which was enosis). One can not but identify in this approach the similar (although not identical), both ‘idealistic’ and ‘legalistic’, strategy of Savvas Loizidis, member of the Revolutionary Committee,²² and of Alexis Kyrou.²³ Although it is not in the objectives of the present project to offer a full analysis of the views of these two persons on solutions to the Cyprus Question, we will simply point out that Kyrou considered the presentation of the Cyprus case to the UN not as a territorial claim on behalf of Greece against the British Empire, but as matter of self-determination of the Cypriot people. This would function as the lever to exercise such a moral pressure to the British side that would assist Greek’s leverage over a future Anglo-Hellenic negotiation,²⁴ leading to the achievement of enosis.²⁵ On the other hand, Loizidis offered a theoretical justification as to why it was essential to put the Cyprus Problem in an international frame, by referring to the principle of self-determination as ‘*international law in effect*’²⁶ (although ‘*principle*’ is one thing, and ‘*international law in effect*’ another. The United Nations was definitely not an ‘*international law court of the public opinion*’ as many personalities of the Greek camp believed).²⁷

2.3 The response to British constitutional suggestions

In exploring the adherence of EOKA to the objective of self-determination/enosis, it was not observed only at an aspirational level. It was also revealed by the negative response of its leadership to the ‘plans’ that were proposed for a settlement to the Cyprus matter (while the insurgency was still going on) because these did not lead to genuine self-determination/enosis. The first instance which manifested EOKA’s desire for union of Cyprus with Greece was the Harding-Makarios talks. During

²² The idea for an armed struggle against the British authorities in Cyprus was evolved around 1951 by a group of Cypriots in Athens who possessed political influence in Greek public affairs. This group was expanded by the participation of conservative intellectuals from the Greek mainland, with a significant social status in the life of early post-war Athens. At the head of the Revolutionary Committee that was formed in order to oversee the initiatives of its members was the Archbishop of Cyprus, Makarios III. It was this group of personalities which after appreciating Colonel Grivas’ qualifications, appointed him as the military leader to prepare and carry out the armed revolt in Cyprus. This Revolutionary Committee commenced during summer 1952 its organizational groundwork under the presidency of Archbishop Makarios, but a notable date in its development was 7 March 1953 when the twelve men who formed the Committee took an oath to support enosis unto death similar to the secret societies of the nineteenth century.

²³ Kyrou was the Greek Permanent Representative to the UN (although of Cypriot ancestry) and from February 1954 Director-General of the Greek Foreign Ministry. He played a key role in the formulation of the policy of the Papagos’ government to internationalize the Cyprus matter in 1954, even overshadowing Foreign Minister Stephanopoulos.

²⁴ It is noteworthy that Kyrou considered a negotiation between Britain and Greece as the only convenient manner to settle the problem between the two allied countries.

²⁵ Αλέξης Κύρου, *Ελληνική Εξωτερική Πολιτική* (Αθήνα: Εστία, 1984), σσ.322-323, 439-441 [Alexis Kyrou, *Greek Foreign Policy* (Athens: Estia, 1984), pp.322-323, 439-441]. See a sophisticated analysis as well as critique of the thoughts of Kyrou in relation to the internationalization of the Cyprus Question in Ioannis Stefanidis, *Isle of Discord. Nationalism, Imperialism and the making of the Cyprus Problem* (London: Hurst, 1999), pp.265-269

²⁶ Quoted in Hatzivassiliou, *Strategies of the Cyprus Struggle*, p.117; See also Σάββας Λοϊζίδης, *Ατυχη Κύπρος* (Αθήνα: Μπεργαδή, 1980), σσ.52-55, 76-77, 85-86 [Savvas Loizidis, *Unfortunate Cyprus* (Athens: Bergadi, 1980), pp.52-55, 76-77, 85-86]

²⁷ Find a more detailed analysis on the beliefs of Kyrou and Loizidis in Hatzivassiliou, *Strategies of the Cyprus Struggle*, pp.113-118

October 1955-February 1956, Archbishop Makarios and the Governor of Cyprus Field-Marshal Sir John Harding had a series of meetings to discuss the future of the colony. These negotiations were so crucial that some scholars regard them as a lost opportunity²⁸ since the British formula contained an indirect recognition of the right of self-determination and in the interim a wide measure of self-government. Towards the end of the talks, Makarios (whose capacity for negotiating on behalf of all the Greek-Cypriots was fully accepted by EOKA) came close to accepting a compromise, which was essentially not about self-determination but about *self-government*, and leaving self-determination for a later stage. In fact, Makarios had a meeting with Grivas on 28 January 1956 in order to decide whether the Greek-Cypriot side would come to such a settlement.²⁹ During this meeting, the Archbishop argued that they should accept the British formula as he considered that it would advance their effort for self-determination; they would require, though, specific guarantees as to the ‘*wide measure of self-government*’. The principal guarantee required was for Makarios an explicit acceptance that in a restored Legislative Assembly there would be a Greek elected majority. Despite his initial reservations, Grivas reluctantly agreed to this, adding a significant condition in an amnesty for all EOKA fighters (such a demand indeed would be raised again by Dighenis during the preparatory stage of the London/Zurich Agreements). In the next day he announced to his guerrilla group based on Kykko Monastery area that the Archbishop was to reach to agreement with the Governor and moreover, for the first time he allowed himself to take photos with his men.³⁰ The Colonel even gave a general order to all his subordinates for a two-week lull in the activities of EOKA in order to give fresh talks a change.³¹ As for the rest EOKA fighters, including also those being detained by the British authorities, they became aware of the content of meetings from the vernacular press. The vast majority of them state that they did not follow in detail the course of the talks not as much as because of the insufficient information reaching them,³² but primarily because they felt like soldiers whose chief focus was on the military aspects of the rebellion. They all underline absolute confidence³³ that the handlings of their leadership (both Makarios and Grivas) would succeed in achieving a solution resulting in enosis either directly or after a definite time, and thus they would obey to any political resolution of their superiors. In accordance with their testimonies, infinitesimal opinions within the bosom of the organization were recorded at that time in favour of the British proposals, whereas the decision of their leadership (after the impasse of the talks) to continue fighting on in order to pursue self-determination,

²⁸ Averoff-Tossizza, *Lost*, Vol.I, p.95; Ευάνθης Χατζηβασιλίου, *Κυπριακό, 1878-1960: Η Συνταγματική Πτυχή* (Αθήνα: Ελληνικά Γράμματα, 1998), σ.163 [Evanthis Hatzivassiliou, *The Cyprus Question, 1878-1960: The Constitutional Aspect* (Athens: Greek Letters, 1998), p.163]

²⁹ See the relative pages from Grivas’ diary quoted in Papageorgiou, *Cyprus*, p.438

³⁰ Find the relevant testimonies in *Simerini*, (3 February 1988)

³¹ See Grivas’ general order dated on 15 February 1956. Cited in Γεώργιος Γρίβας, *Απομνημονεύματα Αγώνος EOKA 1955-59* (Αθήνα, 1961), σ.91 [George Grivas, *Memoirs of EOKA Struggle 1955-59* (Athens, 1961), p.91]

³² Notably, Thassos Sophocleous (former sector-leader of EOKA) admits that ‘*When we heard about the talks, we did not have in mind solutions with constitutions; we thought that we were heading towards union with mother Greece*’. Interview with Thassos Sophocleous in Nicosia on 17/11/2008. Furthermore, Photis Papaphotis (former sector-leader of EOKA) states that he became aware of the exact proposals of each side only after the end of the rebellion. Interview with Photis Papaphotis in Limassol on 14/11/2008

³³ Particularly, Papaphotis testifies that Grivas had assured him that EOKA would have the last word. Interview with Ibid

found them in clear majority.³⁴ But eventually, one of the reasons (amongst others)³⁵ for the rejection of the British proposal by Makarios was that despite the removal of Whitehall from its previous adamant stand (that the principle of self-determination was not applicable to Cyprus), the formula it offered was still too complex and did not amount to a cast-iron guarantee that the colonial power would follow a policy of eventual self-determination to the island via constitutional developments.³⁶ According to Makarios, the British suggestion did not even provide the Greek-Cypriot people with such guarantees ‘*to secure the capability for a democratic governing of the Island up to the stage for the application of the principle of self-determination, which did not stop for a moment to constitute the sole and ultimate goal*’.³⁷

A second example of EOKA’s devotion to the object of self-determination/enosis can be found in its response to the next constitutional offer for a settlement after the British deported in March 1956 Makarios to the Seychelles (with the ‘*Operation Airborne*’). The distinguished jurist Lord Radcliffe, after being appointed as Constitutional Commissioner to come up with a solution, submitted his recommendations in November 1956 to the British Conservative government for a draft self-governing constitution. The ‘*Radcliffe Report*’ (or the ‘*Radcliffe Plan*’ as is referred in the Greek-language literature) made no mention of self-determination; on the contrary it concerned a system of diarchy, which was limited self-government, and was distinguished by the distribution of powers between the British Administration (essentially the Governor) and a restored Cypriot Legislative assembly.³⁸ The assumption of the report was continuing British sovereignty, allowing the colonial government to function regardless of the opposition of elected representatives. According to the suggested arrangement, the colonial government would be able to interfere in the educational system, whilst internal security would remain under the authority of the Governor of Cyprus. In addition, there would *not* be established a genuine parliamentary government as its members would be appointed by the Governor of Cyprus, who could relieve them from their duties and replace them. Not only that but also, the decrees by the Governor would prevail over those of the colonial legislation, whereas the Governor would be the sole responsible to decide whether his actions were compatible with his competences (from a Greek point of view, this could mean that granting the Cypriot Legislative assembly with any power

³⁴ Interviews with Ibid; Pavlos Pavlakis in Agia Napa on 15/11/2008; Thassos Sophocleous in Nicosia on 17/11/2008; Renos Kyriakides in Nicosia on 18/11/2008; Giannis Spanou in Nicosia on 20/11/2008; Claire Angelidou in Nicosia on 24/11/2008

³⁵ Makarios felt that he could not meet the British side on three major issues: an elected majority in a restored Legislative Assembly, the control of internal security and the matter of the amnesty.

³⁶ For a sophisticated analysis on the Harding-Makarios negotiations see primarily the book of Hatzivassiliou about the constitutional aspect of the Cyprus Question: Hatzivassiliou, *The Cyprus*, pp.76-83; See also Evanthis Hatzivassiliou, *Britain and the International Status of Cyprus, 1955-59* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota, 1997), pp.47-58; Νίκος Κρανιδιώτης, *Οι διαπραγματεύσεις Μακαρίου Χατρινγκ 1955-1956* (Αθήνα: Ολκός, 1987) [Nicos Kranidiotis, *The Harding-Makarios Negotiations 1955-1956* (Athens: Olkos, 1987)]

³⁷ Find the full text of the official statement by the Archbishop in the press conference after the negotiations, dated on 6 March 1956 in Ibid, pp.88-91

³⁸ A complete discussion on the ‘Radcliffe Report’ is out of the agenda of the present analysis. A full analysis of the recommendations by Lord Radcliffe can be found in Ρόμπερτ Φ Χόλλαντ, *Η Βρετανία και ο Κυπριακός Αγώνας, 1954-59* (Αθήνα: Ποταμός, 1999), σσ.286-288 [Robert F Holland, *Britain and the Revolt in Cyprus, 1954-59* (Athens: Potamos, 1999), pp.286-288]; Hatzivassiliou, *The Cyprus*, pp.86-90

could be revoked at any time).³⁹ As it is understood, the Radcliffe proposals neither contained sufficient provisions for the right of self-determination for the Greek-Cypriots nor they provided genuine internal autonomy (the two pillars of Makarios' line during his talks with Harding). Thus, not surprisingly, EOKA came out in opposition to Radcliffe's recommendations⁴⁰ and as soon as Colonel Grivas was informed of their substance, he wrote to Angelos Vlachos,⁴¹ the Consul-General of Greece in Cyprus, that it was not in his '*intentions to accept such a Constitution that does not correspond to the line of Makarios... Two years of bloody struggle can not be crowned with a pseudo-constitution*'.⁴²

Another occasion which reveals that the ultimate ambition of EOKA was self-determination/enosis is the third British constitutional offer over Cyprus' sovereignty. On 19 June 1958, the British Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan, made his proposal to the Greek side for an arrangement on the island's constitutional future. This became known as the '*Macmillan Plan*'. In this plan, which a Greek historian described as '*apotheosis of the influence of the international factors to the matter of the internal regime of Cyprus*',⁴³ the element of '*partnership*' was dominant in every aspect: it proposed the maintenance of the British rule in the island for seven years, while Greece and Turkey would appoint representatives to the colonial government to collaborate with the Governor for the administration of Cyprus. The Greek-Cypriots and the Turkish-Cypriots would remain British citizens as well as acquire also the citizenship of their motherlands. Furthermore, they would decide their own communal affairs based on the principal of '*maximum communal autonomy*' and thus there would be established two houses of representatives (a Greek-Cypriot and a Turkish-Cypriot one).⁴⁴ The Greek side saw in the substance of the proposal a partitionist dynamic and to use the words of a Greek diplomat '*the Plan typically did not provide partition, but it did, in reality establish it*'.⁴⁵ More precisely, the provision that the Greeks and the Turks of Cyprus would be also citizens of Greece and Turkey, respectively, automatically meant that these two countries had the right to interfere in order to protect their subjects in the island, as much as the British rule would continue. Similarly, the possible change of the international status of the colony with the withdrawal of Britain after the seven-year period would mean for the two motherlands a direct right of intervention (and a possible war between Greece and Turkey). It worth mentioning that the Macmillan proposal seemed extortionate for the Greek camp (which up to this point demanded self-determination) primarily because it was so devised by Britain as to bring Greece to choose between two 'evils': preservation of the British sovereignty over Cyprus or partition after seven years.⁴⁶ EOKA was not slow to word its objection to the new British formula and phrase once again its will for self-determination. Actually, Makarios (who had been released from

³⁹ Ibid, p.89

⁴⁰ TNA, PRO, CO926/2084, 'Cyprus Policy, October 1955- October 1957' memorandum by the Governor Field-Marshal Sir John Harding, 3 November 1957, p.289

⁴¹ The exact date of the letter is not stated.

⁴² Quoted in Grivas, *Memoirs*, p.140; Compare with Ανδρέας Αζίνας, *50 Χρόνια Σιωπής: Η ώρα της Αλήθειας*. Τόμος Β' (Λευκωσία: Airwaves, 2001), σ.598 [Andreas Azinas, *50 Years of Silence: The Moment for Truth*. Vol.II (Nicosia: Airwaves, 2001), p.598]

⁴³ Hatzivassiliou, *The Cyprus*, p.103

⁴⁴ Find a more detailed analysis on the 'Macmillan Plan' in Ibid, pp.103-107

⁴⁵ Άγγελος Βλάχος, *Μια Φορά κι Ένα Καιρό Ένας Διπλωμάτης*, Τόμος Δ' (Αθήνα: Εστία, 1999), σ.435 [Angelos Vlachos, *Once Upon a Time a Diplomat*, Vol.IV (Athens: Estia, 1999), p.435]

⁴⁶ Ibid

exile and resided in Athens because he was not allowed by the British to return to Cyprus) rejected the plan as inadmissible and stated that he was ready to discuss on the basis for a transitional period of self-governing.⁴⁷ Dighenis circulated a pamphlet notifying that ‘*The Greek people do not ask for pseudo-constitutions. Our claim is ONE...: SELF-DETERMINATION*’.⁴⁸ Simultaneously, on 25 June 1958 he underlined in a letter of his to Anthimus, Bishop of Kitium and *Locum Tenens*, that ‘*no other solution is acceptable apart from such that will lead to self-determination*’.⁴⁹ After all, the same demand was expressed in many of the leaflets that EOKA circulated publicly and addressed to the new Governor, ever since Sir Hough Foot arrived to Cyprus on 3 December 1957.⁵⁰

3. Makarios, Grivas and the Zurich/London settlement

3.1 Makarios and independent Cyprus

Moving on to the termination of the physical insurgency in Cyprus, this was reached with the negotiations in Zurich (between Greece and Turkey) during 5-11 February 1959 and the agreement at the London Conference in 17-19 February 1959 (between Britain, Greece and Turkey).⁵¹ These Agreements formed the basis of the constitution of the Cyprus Republic:⁵² both enosis and partition were blocked; instead, these established an independent island republic, including an element of communal autonomy. Nevertheless, both Makarios and Grivas, despite their previous rejections of three British constitutional offers on the grounds that they did not contain assurances of self-determination, finally accepted a compromise based on *independence*.⁵³ To a skeptical reader, their action would seem an oxymoron thus it is imperative to explore their change of attitude. As for Makarios, he accepted ‘independence’ because he understood, however reluctantly, the grim implications of the Macmillan formula. Nothing brought out the starkness of these impositions than their unfolding application by Britain and Turkey (and against the will of Greece) and above all the arrival of the Turkish representative in Nicosia. In the face of the ‘*partitionist Macmillan Plan*’, the Archbishop signified to Evangelos Averoff-Tossizza (the Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs) in early September 1958, during a private conversation, that he was willing to accept independence as a solution rather than face the defeat which the implementation of the Macmillan Plan would involve.⁵⁴

⁴⁷ See the letter of Makarios to Vlachos, dated on 17 June 1958, quoted in *Ibid*, p.436; Compare with Averoff-Tossizza, *Lost*, Vol.II, p.52

⁴⁸ Quoted in Grivas, *Memoirs*, p.261

⁴⁹ See the letter of Grivas to Anthimus dated on 25 June 1958. Quoted in *Ibid*

⁵⁰ See the various EOKA publications in Papageorgiou, *Record of the underground documents*, pp.100-106, 119-120

⁵¹ In fact, the physical harassment of the British Security Forces by EOKA essentially terminated in December 1958, when the organization declared a ‘truce’, in order to assist the carrying out of negotiations for a solution.

⁵² A full analysis on the Zurich and London Agreements can be found in Hatzivassiliou, *The Cyprus*, pp.111-131; Averoff-Tossizza, *Lost*, Vol.II, pp.183-243

⁵³ It is interesting to note that there were manifested EOKA fighters who expressed openly their disagreement with Makarios’ change of line in favour of independence, but at the end all state that they felt obliged to comply with the decision of the leadership in order to avoid the possibility of a civil war. See for instance interview with Thassos Sophocleous in Nicosia on 17/11/2008

⁵⁴ See Stephen Xydis, *Cyprus, Reluctant Republic* (The Hague & Paris: Mouton, 1973), p.181

Consequently, he had welcomed in token of good will the idea of an independent Cyprus during an interview to the British Labour MP Barbara Castle on 24 September 1958 and finally, after the talks in Zurich and London in February 1959, he signed the agreed settlement.⁵⁵ There has been a debate in the Greek-Cypriot post-independence political culture whether Archbishop Makarios accepted the Agreements, despite the fact that he disagreed, because the Greek government ‘trapped’ him, did not inform him adequately and confronted him with a *fait accompli*. Such allegations were made by the Archbishop himself and his supporters several times after the signing of the Zurich/London arrangement. However, sophisticated archival research has shown that the Greek government kept Makarios informed at every turn on the views and initiatives of the Greek diplomacy both during the discussions at the UN (in late November-early December 1958) as well as during the talks in Zurich and London, and asked for his opinion four times.⁵⁶ The entire procedure was conducted by the Greek government of Karamanlis (acting on behalf of the Greek-Cypriots) and not by Makarios in person, but still the Greek diplomats fulfilled this acting on the Archbishop’s advice. The allegation that Makarios disagreed with the Zurich/London arrangement does not hold water also when taking into consideration that the Archbishop’s reservations did not regard the essence of the Agreements as a whole, but only some aspects.⁵⁷ Indeed, during the conference in London, the British chairman (and Foreign Secretary) Selwyn Lloyd interpreted at one point Makarios’ concerns as seeking to undermine the very foundations already agreed between the three governments. Yet, the supreme hierarch of the Cyprus Church protested about the ‘misunderstanding’, clearing up that he did not reject the Zurich Agreement and that his objections were related to certain points of the future Constitution, which made the functioning of the governmental machinery impossible.⁵⁸ Moreover, it is interesting to note that Makarios wrote to the government of Constantine Karamanlis (published in the press on 12 February 1959) to thank him for the whole assistance to reach an agreement during the negotiations in Zurich and London.⁵⁹

3.2 Grivas and the formula for independence

On the other hand, it is necessary to have a closer look also at Colonel Grivas’ stand against the Zurich and London Agreements. As stated earlier in this paper, Dighenis’ attitude of rejecting three British constitutional proposals because they did not include genuine self-determination, and finally consenting the Zurich/London arrangement (based about *independence*), seems contradictory and thus needs further tracing. In

⁵⁵ Find a more complete description and analysis on the Archbishop’s attitude during the London Conference in Hatzivassiliou, *Strategies of the Cyprus Struggle*, pp.353-354; Μηνάς Γαβριήλ, *Η Εθνική Αυτοματαίωση του Ελληνισμού στην Κύπρο*. Τόμος Α’ (Αθήνα: Αρμός, 2007), σσ.39-46 [Minas Gabriel, *The National Self-Frustration of the Hellenism in Cyprus*. Vol.I (Athens: Armos, 2007) pp.39-46]

⁵⁶ Find more details in Hatzivassiliou, *The Cyprus*, p.129; Σπύρος Παπαγεωργίου, *Από την Ζυρίχην εις τον Ατίλαν*, Τόμος Α’, (Αθήνα: Λαδιά), σ.55 [Spyros Papageorgiou, *From Zurich to Attila*, Vol.I, (Athens: Ladia), p.55]; Averoff-Tossizza, *Lost*, Vol.II, pp.167-176

⁵⁷ Find the record of the London Conference in TNA, PRO, FO371/144641; Παναγιώτης Παπαδημήτρης, *Ιστορική εγκυκλοπαίδεια της Κύπρου, 1878-1978*, Τόμος 12, (Λευκωσία: Επιφανίου, 1979-80), σσ.47-80 [Panagiotis Papadimitris, *Historical encyclopedia of Cyprus, 1878-1978*, Vol.XII, (Nicosia: Epiphaniou, 1979-80), pp.47-80]

⁵⁸ *Ibid*, p.66

⁵⁹ The letter is quoted in Averoff-Tossizza, *Lost*, Vol.II, p.192. Compare with Papageorgiou, *From Zurich*, Vol.I, p.46

addition, as the analysis shifted to the diplomatic plane, Grivas' stand was dealt in the historical writing obliquely and therefore it must be researched more deeply. A third reason why Dighenis' position must be given special attention is because of the tension surrounding the Colonel's response (two years after the end of the insurrection, Grivas stated in his memoirs that he was misled and not informed fully about the contents of the Zurich and London conferences).⁶⁰ The next segment will note a necessary succession of letters, which will prove beneficial in reconstructing Dighenis' position on the settlement of the Cyprus Question in February 1959: When the military leader of EOKA was acquainted by Makarios about his willingness to accept independence as a solution, he expressed his reservations concerning this type of arrangement. Moreover, he believed that this proposal would be the beginning for further concessions.⁶¹ It is obvious that up to this time period, Grivas was indeed not open to suggestions of a prospective settlement beyond an exclusive preoccupation with enosis.⁶²

As soon as the Turkish government approached the Greek side for discussions on the basis of independence in late December 1958, the Greek Foreign Minister informed (although not in details) Dighenis on 27 December 1958 about the general frame as well as the course of the negotiations.⁶³ In his reply, the Colonel appeared reserved. However, he did not disagree in an explicit manner. He advised the Greek government to seek '*A solution that would meet the desires of the Greek-Cypriots...A solution clear and not hermaphrodite...That would secure peace...and that would not enclose thorns in the flesh*'.⁶⁴ The Foreign Minister of Greece communicated with Grivas again on 11 January 1959, letting him know that the governments of Greece and Turkey had made progress regarding Cyprus' future. He pointed out (still not giving many details) that there was an understanding in matters such as the solution of independence, the participation of Turkish-Cypriots in the administration (although the Greek-Cypriot participation would be dominant) and the maintenance of British sovereign bases on the island.⁶⁵ The military leader of EOKA once more did not clarify his views, but asked the Greek diplomat to continue keeping him informed on the talks.⁶⁶ It was clear that the Colonel desired to learn as much as possible for the negotiations and then make up his mind. Critics of Grivas might argue that he simply had no intention of actually taking responsibility for a real political decision hemmed in by the growing constraints. However, there are reasons to believe that the Colonel had, indeed, sense of responsibility for a decisive response when the time for a solution reached. To take an instance, particularly during that time, the military leader

⁶⁰ Grivas, *Memoirs*, pp.386, 390.

⁶¹ See the correspondence between Makarios and Grivas on 28 and 29 September 1958 cited in *Ibid*, pp.304-305

⁶² More specifically, Grivas stated several times in his communication with Averoff that he preferred rather to be killed while fighting than accepting any type of compromise. Quoted in Averoff-Tossizza, *Lost*, Vol.II, p.77

⁶³ See Averoff's letter to Grivas, received on 27 December 1958. Cited in Grivas, *Memoirs*, p.337; Compare with Σπύρος Παπαγεωργίου, *Τα Κρίσιμα Ντοκουμέντα του Κυπριακού, 1959-1967*, Τόμος Α' (Λευκωσία: Επιφανίου, 2000), σσ.16-17 [Spyros Papageorgiou, *The Crucial Documents of the Cyprus Question, 1959-1967*, Vol.I (Nicosia: Epiphaniou, 2000), pp.16-17]

⁶⁴ Letter of Grivas to Averoff on 29 December 1958. Quoted in *Ibid*, pp.17-19; Compare with Grivas, *Memoirs*, p.338

⁶⁵ Letter of Averoff to Grivas on 11 January 1959, cited in *Ibid*, p.352; Compare with Papageorgiou, *The Crucial Documents*, p.32

⁶⁶ Letter of Grivas to Averoff on 16 January 1959. Cited in *Ibid*, pp.32-33; Compare with Grivas, *Memoirs*, p.352

of EOKA was very disappointed with Makarios' decision not to include any personalities appointed by the organization⁶⁷ in the advisory body (drawn wide from Greek-Cypriot parties, including the Left) that the Archbishop called to accompany him to London to sign of the Agreements (if this Greek-Cypriot 'assembly' approved them).⁶⁸ Obviously, Dighenis *did* want EOKA to express its opinion through its representatives as soon as the Archbishop would inform them in London for the substance of the imminent arrangement. After all, this is what he wrote to the Bishop of Kitium a couple of months earlier: '*It comes to my mind, at this moment, how would be possible for the voice of the fighting Greek-Cypriot people to be heard and represented in future negotiations, which would take place with the Ethnarch [Makarios], provided that representatives of the Cypriot people would also be necessary to participate ... In such a conference, the real voice of the fighters must be heard*'.⁶⁹ Even more revealing is another letter of Grivas to Anthimus, Bishop of Kitium, a bit later, where the Colonel asks for coordination between the politicians and EOKA because '*I [Grivas] also have responsibilities and perhaps even more than any other against the Cypriot People, from whom for four years I ask to offer only sacrifice and blood. Tomorrow, very reasonably, they will ask me: Where do you lead us? Why all these sacrifices?*'.⁷⁰

Averoff sent another letter to Dighenis on 5 February 1959 (immediately before his departure for the conference between Greece and Turkey in Zurich), but, as the Colonel himself admits in his account, he had already acquired a more clear view about the procedure of the talks due to a letter of Azinas dated on 23 December 1958.⁷¹ In his letter, Azinas gave a brief but significant account regarding the initial proposals of each part as well as the final approach: creation of an independent state, withdrawal of the British rule, participation of the Turkish-Cypriots in the administration machinery in proportion with their population number.⁷²

On 13 February 1959, two days after the end of the Zurich negotiation, Dighenis received a letter by Makarios,⁷³ which provided him with the context of what was agreed in the city of Switzerland and primarily about the future range of participation

⁶⁷ Actually, the Archbishop invited persons who were related, one way or another with EOKA, such as Glafkos Clerides (lawyer) and Vassos Lyssarides (doctor). Tassos Papadopoulos (lawyer), then member of EOKA's subsidiary organization PEKA, was also called by Makarios to accompany him to London. These persons, despite being related with EOKA, they were not appointed by the organization itself to represent it. For instance, Grivas states that neither Papadopoulos was appointed by him nor he was given any instructions by the Colonel with regards to the Agreements. Moreover, Papadopoulos himself made clear to all the Greek-Cypriot representatives gathered in London that he did not speak on behalf of EOKA and that the views he expressed corresponded only his personal thoughts. See letter of Papadopoulos to Grivas on 26 February 1959, quoted in Papageorgiou, *The Crucial Documents*, p.136; Read further on this matter in Grivas, *Memoirs*, p.381; Papageorgiou, *From Zurich*, Vol.I, pp.63-64

⁶⁸ Averoff-Tossizza, *Lost*, Vol.II, p.201

⁶⁹ See the letter of Grivas to Anthimus dated on 10 November 1958. Cited in Grivas, *Memoirs*, p.378

⁷⁰ Letter of Grivas to Anthimus dated on 19 January 1959. Quoted in Papageorgiou, *The Crucial Documents*, pp.36-37

⁷¹ Azinas was instructed by Averoff to write this letter to Grivas in order to the military leader of EOKA obtain a concentrated informing about the understanding between the governments of Greece and Turkey. See Averoff-Tossizza, *Lost*, Vol.II, p.195; Compare with Azinas, *50 Years*, Vol.II, p.766

⁷² Letter of Azinas to Grivas dated on 23 December 1958. Quoted in *Ibid*; Compare with Grivas, *Memoirs*, pp.354-355

⁷³ Letter of Makarios to Grivas received on 13 February 1959. Quoted in *Ibid*, p.377; Compare with Papageorgiou, *The Crucial Documents*, pp.70-71

of the two communities of Cyprus in the Government as well as the future deployment of 600 Turkish soldiers in the island.⁷⁴ In the interim, the Colonel had already answered to the Bishop of Kitium⁷⁵ that in order not to give the impression to the British side that the Greeks had achieved a better settlement than the Macmillan Plan,⁷⁶ EOKA would not state anything about the Archbishop's acceptance of the Zurich resolution. He also added that he could not consent to the stationing on Turkish troops under any capacity.⁷⁷ Nonetheless, it is noteworthy to observe that the simultaneous issuing of a general order to the fighting wing of the organization giving directions for strict discipline⁷⁸ was interpreted (although not correctly) by the Greek Foreign Minister, Averoff, rather as assent of Dighenis to the initiatives of both the Greek government and Archbishop Makarios.⁷⁹

The government of Constantine Karamanlis, in an effort to quieten the Colonel's opposition to any future presence of Turkish Army forces to Cyprus, gave him more details about this particular part of the settlement just a day before the London Conference (which was to start its sessions on 17 February 1959).⁸⁰ Furthermore, the General Consul of Greece to Cyprus, Phrydas, asked Dighenis to declare for Archbishop Makarios' acceptance of the Zurich Agreement.⁸¹ But once again, the military leader of EOKA maintained his view against any future stationing of Turkish soldiers and preferred not to make any public statement before becoming aware of the precise text of the Agreement.⁸²

The signing of the London Agreement between Britain, Greece and Turkey was the main topic of the next letter of Anthimus, Bishop of Kitium, to Grivas on 21 February 1959.⁸³ In this letter, the Colonel was informed that Britain was to preserve its military bases in the island (Anthimus attempted to calm him down in advance on this), an issue which Dighenis later criticized strongly in his memoir account.⁸⁴ Moreover, Makarios wrote a letter to Grivas, describing the general context of the London settlement, citing its main points as well as underlying the positive ones. At the end, the Archbishop did not omit to congratulate the Colonel for his courage and

⁷⁴ Makarios did not send Grivas the exact documents of the Agreement, an action for which the military leader of EOKA expressed his complaints in his memoirs, claiming that he was not properly informed with regards to the Zurich Agreement. See Grivas, *Memoirs*, pp.377-378

⁷⁵ Anthimus, Bishop of Kitium, had requested from Grivas to express EOKA's sympathy for the initiative of Makarios to accept the Zurich Agreement. Find the letter of Anthimus to Grivas received on 12 February 1959 in *Ibid*, p.375; Compare with Papageorgiou, *The Crucial Documents*, pp.68-69

⁷⁶ See the letter of Grivas to Anthimus dated on 13 February 1959. Cited in *Ibid*, pp.69-70; Compare with Grivas, *Memoirs*, p.376

⁷⁷ *Ibid*

⁷⁸ Find Grivas' general order dated on 13 February 1959 in *Ibid*. Compare with Averoff-Tossizza, *Lost*, Vol.II, p.196

⁷⁹ Averoff-Tossizza, *Lost*, Vol.II, p.196

⁸⁰ Note of Phrydas to Grivas dated on 16 February 1959. Cited in *Ibid*, pp.77-79; Compare with Grivas, *Memoirs*, p.383

⁸¹ Letter of Phrydas to Grivas dated on 17 February 1959. Quoted in *Ibid*, p.384; Compare with Papageorgiou, *The Crucial Documents*, p.80

⁸² Letter of Grivas to Phrydas dated on 19 February 1959. Cited in *Ibid*, p.82; Compare with Grivas, *Memoirs*, p.385

⁸³ Letter of Anthimus to Grivas received on 21 February 1959. Quoted in *Ibid*, pp.385-386; Compare with Papageorgiou, *The Crucial Documents*, pp.106-107

⁸⁴ Grivas, *Memoirs*, pp.386, 390

services.⁸⁵ Alongside with the previous two letters, Dighenis was the receiver of a long letter by Averoff. The Greek Foreign Minister was more explanatory about the Greek rationale behind the settlement and the advantages of the Agreements for both the Greek and the Greek-Cypriot sides. The Greek diplomat also mentioned that he did not provide Dighenis with the exact documents of the arrangement as these would be announced in the press.⁸⁶

In his reply to Averoff, the military leader of EOKA stated once again that he had serious objections about the Zurich/London Agreements, but he would not stand against the decisions of the political leadership because this would divide not only the Greek-Cypriots but also the entire Greek nation. However, one significant issue remained, for which the Colonel demanded complete satisfaction: general amnesty and acceptable conditions for any EOKA member, even for those held by the British Security Forces (such a demand by Grivas was previously expressed during the negotiations in February 1956. A strong sense of responsibility to his fighters is discernible). Had this condition not been respected, Grivas stated that he would continue fighting.⁸⁷ The same demand was also expressed to the Greek General Consul of Greece to Cyprus when the latter posted him on 23 February 1959 various extracts of the Agreements and asked for Dighenis' views regarding the matter of amnesty.⁸⁸

After being satisfied on this point,⁸⁹ Dighenis circulated a pamphlet on 9 March 1959, announcing the cessation of EOKA's revolutionary activities, calling the Greek-Cypriot people for concord and unity as well as to rally round Archbishop Makarios.⁹⁰ Moreover, he issued a general order to the EOKA combatants on 13 March 1959, ending the irregular warfare and explaining the reasons that forced him to accept the achieved by the Greek political leadership settlement.⁹¹ Finally, Dighenis expressed the same day in two other publications his gratitude to '*The brave fighters of EOKA*'⁹² and especially to '*The robust youths of EOKA*'.⁹³

At this point, we must make a number of observations regarding Grivas' final consent to the Zurich/London Agreements. First of all, it is notable that all the primary material we have on the Colonel's attitude during this crucial phase derives from the memoirs of principally Grivas himself and Andreas Azinas, two documentary editions

⁸⁵ Letter of Makarios to Grivas dated on 20 February 1959. Quoted in Ibid, pp.386-387; Compare with Papageorgiou, *The Crucial Documents*, pp.107-108

⁸⁶ The Greek Foreign Minister also commented on the future stationing of 650 Turkish officers and soldiers, a point of the Agreements to which Grivas was against. See letter of Averoff to Grivas received on 21 February 1959. Cited in Ibid, pp.101-105; Compare with Grivas, *Memoirs*, pp.388-390

⁸⁷ See letter of Grivas to Averoff dated on 22 February 1955. Quoted in Averoff-Tossizza, *Lost*, Vol.II, pp.221-223. Compare with Grivas, *Memoirs*, p.390

⁸⁸ Letter of Grivas to Phrydas dated on 23 February 1959. Cited in Grivas, *Memoirs*, p.398. Grivas complained in his memoirs that the documents which the Greek government provided him with were incomplete and that these related with the British Sovereign bases were absent. See Ibid, p.398

⁸⁹ The intense negotiations which followed between the Greek and the British side about the details of an amnesty will be not traced in here.

⁹⁰ Quoted in Papageorgiou, *Record of the underground documents*, pp.141-142; Compare with Grivas, *Memoirs*, p.403

⁹¹ Cited in Ibid, pp.404-405

⁹² Ibid, p.405

⁹³ Ibid; Compare with Papageorgiou, *Record of the underground documents*, pp.142-143

by Spyros Papageorgiou⁹⁴ as well as the account of Evangelos Averoff-Tossizza on the Cyprus matter during the 1950's, whilst there is a complete absence of private papers on behalf of Archbishop Makarios.⁹⁵ Also interesting is the fact that, during the three-month preparation stage (leading to the Agreements), Grivas exchanged views principally with Averoff (the Greek Foreign Minister), Phrydas (the Greek General Consul to Cyprus) and Anthimus (Bishop of Kitium) but *not* directly with Archbishop Makarios (apart from three times).⁹⁶ This raises a question about the Makarios-Grivas relationship at that time, but unfortunately the absence of any relative material does not allow us to make any further assumptions. Nevertheless, all the previous description of Dighenis' communication with the main personalities who handled the Cyprus Question on behalf of the Greek side provides us with a solid basis to reach conclusions. Colonel Grivas, despite the reservations he expressed in his letters during the preceding period of the Zurich/London settlement, neither was distinctly against nor distanced himself publicly from the initiatives of the Greek leadership at any phase of the process. In particular, his reservations regarded not the general substance of 'independence' as a solution to the Cyprus matter, but issues of military nature such as the stationing of Turkish troops in the island, the extent of the British Sovereign bases, the conditions of EOKA's disarmament as well as the future legal status of the members of the subversive organization.

When dealing with the attitude of Dighenis during the last three months of the revolt, his objections to the Agreements can be best comprehended from the point of view of a person who, as Averoff commented, '*For four years had staked his head and those of his followers, had shed blood, had surmounted severe difficulties for one solution... It would be reasonable not to accept a compromising solution which would suddenly emerge and would be so different from the one he had been fighting for years*'.⁹⁷ We must also take into account the state of his health: the military leader of EOKA was isolated in his hideout in Limassol, living under pressing conditions (being underground), with Makarios not communicating often, while at the same time he understood that in the face of a prospect solution he had to weigh and respect the sacrifices of the Greek-Cypriot people for enosis, before reaching to a decision.

As previously commented, Grivas, despite his reactions, at the end consented to the Hellenic-British-Turkish arrangement about Cyprus. He reached this decision because of two principal reasons: the first one was related to his fear that had he decided to continue the struggle, he would fight not only against the British but also against the Greek government and Makarios. This would inevitably lead to a Greek-Cypriot civil war.⁹⁸ The second factor which influenced the Colonel's action not to move against

⁹⁴ Papageorgiou, *The Crucial Documents*; Ibid, *Record of the underground documents*

⁹⁵ The former President of the Cyprus Republic, Tassos Papadopoulos, informed in October 2005 the President of the Council for the Historical Memory of the EOKA Struggle (CHMES), Claire Angelidou, that Archbishop Makarios kept his Private Papers in the Archbishopric, which were unfortunately destroyed during the heating events of July 1974. See the relevant testimony in *Fifty Years*, p.221

⁹⁶ The Archbishop wrote to Grivas about the negotiating procedure only three times: on 3 February 1959, when the approach between Greece and Turkey was in the making; on 13 February 1959, after the end of the Zurich Conference; on 20 February 1959, after the signing of the London Agreement.

⁹⁷ Averoff-Tossizza, *Lost*, Vol.II, p.194

⁹⁸ Grivas, *Memoirs*, pp.401-402; See about this view by Grivas also the personal testimony of Vias Livadas, an EOKA fighter, in Βίας Λειβαδάς, *Πορεία προς την Αμμόχωστο*, (Λευκωσία: Γκοβόστης, 2001), σ.319 [Vias Livadas, *March to Famagusta* (Nicosia: Govostis, 2001), p.319]

the political compromise of Zurich and London was of more decisive nature. Grivas', and by extension EOKA's position during the course of the rebellion was always connected with the help offered (either materialistic, either by promoting the movement's aim and activities publicly) by Makarios and the Greek official leadership. In this regard, EOKA could not continue fighting on without their crucial support and consequently the military leader of the organization would have no other choice but to be dragged by the initiatives of the Greek government and Makarios when time came for the latter to accept a compromise settlement. As a British historian acutely commented '*The decision facing EOKA's leader was not whether to lay down his arms and go back to the 'Motherland', but the manner in which he did so*'.⁹⁹

4. Conclusion

In this paper we have examined the ultimate goal which the armed enosis movement pursued since the beginning of the revolt in Cyprus. This was the termination of British rule and the incorporation of the island into the Greek motherland. Yet the revolutionary organization EOKA did not include in its rhetoric the term 'union' in order to express its claim, as this referred historically to a previous generation of European national movements which contributed to the end of the continental multi-national empires. Instead, it demanded the application of the principle of 'self-determination' because it believed that such a term was more familiar, contemporary and therefore acceptable in the international forums. The word '*self-determination*' appeared continually within the publications of EOKA during the four-year physical struggle; but the settlement of the Cyprus Question in 1959 with the Zurich/London Agreement and the establishment of a self-standing Cypriot state does not disguise the genuine commitment of the movement to its ultimate political ambition nor it leads us conclude that it simply paid lip-service to self-determination under the banner of enosis as a popular rallying cry: The leadership of EOKA, both Makarios and Grivas, rejected three plans proposed by the British side because these did not regard immediate enosis or at least constitutional developments that would lead to eventual self-determination after a definite time-period. Makarios oriented towards seeking a compromise such 'independence' only after the British Conservative government introduced the Macmillan Plan into Cyprus, without any involvement of the Greek side. Nevertheless, the Archbishop signed the Agreements willingly, without being misled or 'trapped' by the Greek leadership. On the other hand, the military leader of EOKA was more cautious about the agreed settlement, but the reservations he expressed regarded military matters and not the general philosophy of the Zurich/London arrangement. Despite his own beliefs, he was obliged to consent to the signed Agreements not only because he desired to avoid the possibility for a civil war within the Greek-Cypriot community, but also because EOKA would be dispossessed of any assistance by the Greek leadership as well as Makarios. Had Dighenis decided to continue fighting, this primarily meant no international projection of the organization's political desiderata. Consequently, it would result in the demotion of the Cyprus case from an international problem to a local uprising where the ratio of power would become fatal for the Greek-Cypriot side.

⁹⁹ Holland, *Britain*, p.559

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The two Plebiscites and Constitutions of 1968 and 1973

Both plebiscites and their results, the constitutions, shall be compared with each other and interpreted in the historical context of the late sixties and early seventies. The working hypothesis of my paper concerns the fact that the Greek military junta conducted itself differently in its organisation and management of the plebiscite and constitution in 1973 than in 1968, when it was inexperienced in the exercise of power. In the first case (1968), both the plebiscite and the constitution were used by the regime to legitimise itself, to consolidate power and gain time. The second time around (1973), however, the regime was under pressure due to internal factionalism and external political and economic problems, and sought to acquire a more political solution. Thus, I classify this solution as the highest action of the regime's "limited political pluralism" that threatened its consolidation and led to its regression in November 1973.

1. Introduction

What can be the point of an examination of the plebiscites and constitutions of an authoritarian system that is based on an unconstitutional state order? The answer to this question should be sought, primarily, in the nature of the authoritarianism, which is more an indication of the politically contradictory mentality of its representatives (both military and civilian), rather than a representation of a unified basic political attitude, let alone a practice of democratic conformity.

2. Two Opinions

Two diametrically opposed political science points of view, concerning the relationship between military dictatorship and politics, should be presented at this point.

According to Eric Nordlinger, authoritarian military regimes seek to set up a façade of democracy through rational-legal methods. They pass laws and draw up a constitution; they declare elections with pre-ordained candidates; they hold referenda in which the government receives the support of over 90% of the votes; and they declare the regime to have been “civilianised”, whereas all that the military leaders have actually done is to take off their uniforms.¹

The basic idea of Nelson Kasfir is completely different; writing about the background to his micro-analysis of Sudan, he maintains:

“Political life does not stop when military regimes come into power in developing nations. The new military government must search for new policies to establish its own legitimacy...A dilemma is created by the removal of those structures through which the military might test its own acceptance and perhaps consolidate its support.”²

In spite of their opposing viewpoints, both authors are concerned with the question of the political, which I also intend to pursue.

3. Theory, Methodology and Purpose

According to Juan Linz’s Concept of Interpretation, authoritarian regimes are defined as political systems which have “*a limited, non-answerable political pluralism*; they possess distinct mentalities rather than a formulated, guiding ideology; and, within them, there is no extensive, or intensive, political mobilisation, other than at a few specific moments in time. The political involvement of a limited number of independent groups or institutions becomes institutionalised.”³

My paper focuses on a point which is not without controversy – to the extent that it is almost taboo – in the literature relevant to the subject: the analysis of the mentality – in other words the forms of conduct and the conceptions – of the Greek military dictatorship, concerning possible forms of both short- and long-term political articulation, and perhaps also participation. Initially, such conceptions were clearly in contrast to the repressive and brutal apparatus of the regime (the police and the military; cf. Althusser), and remained no more than empty promises; however, from our present-day viewpoint, and against the background of both the “liberalisation experiment” and the regression of 1973, such “political”

¹ Nordlinger 1977: 133f.

² Kasfir 1975: 344-346.

³ Linz 2000: 129, 131.

conceptions constituted a lasting, and at the same time painful, accompaniment to the dictatorship which, after much hesitation, eventually came to the belated decision to open itself up, politically. This relatively slow – and in many respects contradictory – process of political development in the dictatorship, from a level of limited mentality through to the practical realisation of their political conceptions, is the centre of my scientific concern. The question that we should bear in mind, therefore, is whether or not a “limited political pluralism” occurred in the Greek military dictatorship – and, if so, what form did it take?

4. The Two Referenda

Referenda are a part of the political mentality of military dictatorship, serving the purposes of legitimisation and self-vindication both domestically and abroad. A dictatorship will often present “the benevolence of the state, without impairment to the power of the regime”⁴ as the motive for introducing a referendum. Further pretexts for referenda are direct opportunities for participation in decision-making in the affairs of state, secure provision for the will of the people in decisions of major significance, etc.⁵

The Greek dictatorship’s reasons for presenting the populace with two referenda (on 29th September, 1968, concerning the decision about drafting a constitution, and on 29th July, 1973, concerning the question of form of government) were certainly to do with self-legitimisation. Nonetheless, there are a number of other hypotheses⁶ which, for reasons of limited time, I will simply list here:

- a. The military dictatorship wanted to compensate for the loss of faith in the political world which had been produced by the coup.
- b. The aim was to procure consensus, particularly following the serious political crisis of 15th July, 1965, and its consequences.
- c. The junta wanted to demonstrate the ideologically conditioned unity between the authorities and the people – a central characteristic of authoritarian regimes.
- d. When they are carried out in democracies, referenda acquire a “quality of directness”. Yet dictatorships also aspire to this same quality, all the more so when they are constantly talking about the goodwill of the people. The Greek dictatorship, as well, wanted to make use of the principle of direct participation. In their conception of politics, the referendum was a substitute for the dreaded election. Basically, however, the Greek regime was forcibly extracting from the people a posterior confirmation of two political changes (1968: the military dictatorship; 1973: the republic) which had already been reality for some time. In the light of this, one can hardly speak in terms of truly direct participation.⁷
- e. Referenda contain a symbolic quality of theatricality; they serve as:
 - i. a substitute for the elections which are being forever promised but never delivered;
 - ii. a celebration of co-operation, consensus and unity. They transmit a politically unified image beyond fanaticism and radicalism (in fact, they make a demonstrative denial of the significance of individualism); furthermore, they serve
 - iii. the self-presentation of the regime.

⁴ Schleifer 2006: 131.

⁵ Schleifer: 131

⁶ <http://hsozkult.geschichte.huberlin.de/termine/id=10378&sort=datum&order=down&search=elections+under+>;
<http://hsozkult.geschichte.huberlin.de/termine/id=11240&sort=datum&order=down&search=elections+under+>

⁷ Alivizatos³1995: 281.

- f. In crisis situations – such as those following 13th December, 1968, or the “Velos Revolt” of May, 1973 – referenda serve as a “deus ex machina”.
- g. They are a further variable of indirect repression, in that they may be used as an opportunity for “negotiations”, and the supposedly open expression of differences of opinion.
- h. However, the risks inherent in referenda must not be forgotten, because:
 - i. The people can use them as an opportunity for protest;
 - ii. they can lead to the disruption of internal balance. In this case, the reactionary circles – the so-called “hard-core” of the regime – see the dangers of political transformation in the referendum; loyalty is called into question, and contradictions become significant.

5. The Two Constitutions

I will now turn my attention to the two constitutions⁸ and I will concern myself solely with the aspects of state that they contain – in particular, with the armed forces, the form of government and the head of state.

During the talks on the constitution in 1968, Papadopoulos had already intimated that the state had, up until then, been showing signs of weakness that were based either in the arbitrary conduct of its executive organs in relation to the people, or in the ineffectiveness of the law. Therefore, according to Papadopoulos, it was necessary to establish a balance between the function of the state and the activities of its citizens.⁹

5.1. The Armed Forces

“The main provisions of the 1968 constitution revealed the desire of the regime not only to politicize the armed forces but also to grant them complete operational autonomy. Articles 129 to 132 of the 1968 constitution elevated the status of military professionals and gave them complete jurisdiction over civilian affairs. The commander of the armed forces, appointed by the government, would now govern the military; once appointed, he could not be dismissed. Law 58 set the boundaries of the commander’s jurisdiction. He could reorganize the bureaucracy and day-to-day proceedings of the Supreme Council of National Defence in the way he chose and, under (ill-defined) ‘special conditions’, could take over the administration of one or more parts of the civilian authorities’ apparatus.”¹⁰

The politicisation of the armed forces basically resulted in the opposite effect, namely the militarisation of the state. In addition to this the constitution of 1968 was also concerned with the institutionalisation of the regime, which was to be secured through further constitutional articles and laws. In Article 49 (1968), for example, whilst the king retained his right to give orders to the armed forces, the authority of command was now put into the hands of the government. Moreover, a further rule was imposed upon the armed forces, within the framework of which the regime not only further secured its political position in the state, but also advanced its civilianisation. It involved the listing of rules concerning the political conduct of the military – primarily, to do with their sense of nationality, and with how to combat subversive groups and movements opposed to the existing state and social order, etc. “Article 130 §2 (1968) and Article 130 (1973) were deliberately drafted in such a way as to define *national security* very broadly, thus legitimizing the interference of the armed forces in

⁸ <http://www.verfassungen.eu/griech/verf68-index.htm>

⁹ National Printing Office 1969: 8.

¹⁰ Article 129 § 1 and 2 (1968) und Article 128 (1973); Duman/Tsarouhas 2006: 410.

matters of civilian concern. This tactic aimed at the intervention of the military into civilian affairs whenever ‘social and political conditions’ deemed it ‘appropriate’ and hence the institutionalization of the regime.”¹¹

At the very latest, this intervention of the military into political affairs was authorised once and for all in Article 138. This Article, amongst other things, prohibited the formation of political parties until further notice. Thus, the military was to operate as the only “civilianised” group, as a substitute party.

It is only in relation to an examination of the constitution of 1968 that we should now return to the question that was posed at the beginning of this paper: whether or not a “limited political pluralism” is the case in the role and significance of the armed forces in this first constitution. So far, the following characteristics may be observed in the armed forces: politicisation, operational autonomy, civilianisation and the role of substitute party. In the conception of the colonels, all four of these may be regarded as being politically relevant, as they were authorised by a constitutional document. The constitutional order of 1968 was, however, defensive-reactionary, in that it was primarily concerned with disconnecting civilian society from politics, and replacing it (civilian society) with the army. In my opinion, this displacement of civilian society under a repressive state apparatus in no way constitutes a limited political act. On the contrary, politics were being eliminated by a single state apparatus. In the political conception of the dictatorship the state is not regarded in its entirety; rather, it is shrunken down to one single part, which the dictatorship idealises and instrumentalises for its own purposes.

On the other hand, in 1968, the regime was inexperienced in the exercise of power. In this case both the plebiscite and the constitution were used by the regime to legitimise itself, to consolidate power and gain time. A limited political pluralism can be categorically ruled out, during this early phase in the life of the regime – thus we can concur with the view of Eric Nordlinger.

From this point of view, the attitude of the colonels towards ‘politics without politics’ may be interpreted as instrumental and defensive. There are two main points: on the one hand, the setting up and putting into place of an exclusive sovereignty for the military in the new state order – a role which they had been obliged to share with the king and the parliament during the 1950s and 1960s; on the other hand, the regime’s conception of its own identification with the state. The constitution of 1968 gave them an institutionally legitimised cover for this purpose. There can be no question that what we see here is a freedom-consuming state of exception in which the political say had been claimed by the military, through the regime.¹²

5.2. The Form of Government and the Head of State

The king’s coup, on 13th December, 1967, put the relationship between the king and the regime under severe strain, and further challenged the legitimacy of the regime. This led to a rift within the armed forces.¹³ Nevertheless, the colonels stuck to “monarchic democracy” as the official form of government in their system of rule.¹⁴ A declaration of lasting loyalty to the king, on the part of all members of the regime, emerges from the constitutional acts of 1968. However, political calculation plays the major role here. In particular, the sustaining of political unity within the armed forces, and the avoidance of international isolation – against which the royal institution always provided a safeguard – made the colonels very sceptical with regard to the abolition of the monarchy at this early stage. The retention of the monarchy

¹¹ [Zimpoulakis 1969] Constitution of 1968; Constitution of 1973; Duman/Tsarouhas 2006: 410.

¹² Albrecht 2006; Constitution of 1968, Art. 138.

¹³ Diamandouros 1991.

¹⁴ Constitution of 1968, Art. 2 § 1.

until 1973 guaranteed their institutional legitimacy. Similarly to Spain under Franco, the connection between the royal institution and the drawing up of the constitution was intended to give the impression of a “constitutional monarchy”.¹⁵

The situation changed in 1973, when the regime was faced with the dilemma of “politicisation or repression?” A compromise was forced, between continuity and change, and so the term “limited politicisation” applies here. There are three examples which argue in favour of this: the abolition of the monarchy in 1973 was thought of in terms of a political change; the transition from repression to gradual liberalisation indicated a further step in this direction; and the armed forces were no longer meant to be the exclusive representatives of the state – rather, they were to operate as political presenters in the background. In my opinion, this is a significant indication of political evolution in the regime, manifested in such measures of political openness in the civilian society, which were born of the necessity for presenting publicly a clear political countenance. This same political evolution is nonetheless distinguished by its “limited nature”. What lay behind it was the well thought-out strategy of the dictatorship to regulate the political transformation in such a way that it would have no seriously aggravating consequences for them. The move towards the gradual demilitarisation of the political state was to be accompanied by a decision which guaranteed the future role of the armed forces in the state. The dictator Papadopoulos took upon himself responsibility for the risk involved in this decision. The constitution of 1973 conferred upon him, a colonel, political duties and jurisdiction of central importance. Although they were intended to give the armed forces a secure role in the new political order, they nevertheless signified, for junior officers, an overlapping of political and military functions which favoured the political. Accordingly, the president of the republic was not only the head of state, but also the symbol of national unity, held in high esteem by the armed forces. He could nominate and dismiss the ministers and vice-ministers for foreign affairs, public order and, most importantly, national defence¹⁶ – which was intended to have a positive effect within the armed forces. Moreover, Papadopoulos took over the executives of the three key ministerial portfolios (foreign affairs, public order and national defence) in addition to the post of president of the republic. This, in its turn, was intended to provide security within the armed forces.¹⁷ Article 49 §2 (1973) also gave the president the right to issue orders to the armed forces, and to exercise the power of command. In the same article, the president, once again, was now responsible for choosing the commander-in-chief and commanders of the army, the navy and the air-force.

The accumulation of so many offices and responsibilities undoubtedly made Papadopoulos into an over-powerful man, and led automatically from the militarisation of politics to their personification. The aforementioned role-change of the armed forces, from “substitute party” to political presenter – similar to that in Turkey after 1963 – meant a loss of political prestige for them. The call for elections before 31st December, 1974, was perceived by them as a direct threat. Such moves towards liberalisation were particularly worrying for the hard-core of the regime, which brought an end to the short-lived Markezinis government on 25th November.

Similarly to Franco’s Spain, Greece also managed to force a state-regulation slowly into the background, and to modify it so that the repressive state opened itself to civilian society step by step. Franco’s basic constitutional laws did not emanate from the sovereignty of the people. Their representative was not the people but the head of state. Once again, in the case of Greece, we have a similar tendency, with Papadopoulos as the strong man of the regime. However, we do not know in what way the political liberalisation might have developed, or where it may have led to, because the Markezinis experiment was brought to an abrupt end by

¹⁵ About Spain see Beck 1979: 155.

¹⁶ Article 30 § 1 and 43 § 1 (1973).

¹⁷ Article 49 § 1 (1973).

the reactionary Ioannidis Group. In this respect, the constitution of 1973 remained unfinished.¹⁸

6. Conclusion

From this point of view, one can speak of 1973 as a deliberate, though uncompleted, “limited process of politicisation”, the main feature of which was the internal struggle with regard to the question of “transition: yes or no?” The change from the militarisation of public life through the politicisation of the armed forces within the framework of a political vacuum (1968), to the liberalisation of public life through the institutionalisation of the president and within the framework of limited political concessions (1973) was one that would never be experienced.

¹⁸ About Franco see Schleifer: 145, 189. Kaminis 1999: 63 talks about „fictitious Constitutions“.

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