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Reintegration in Cyprus:

Nationalism and Citizenship in the RoC

and the TRNC

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# Reintegration in Cyprus: Nationalism and Citizenship in the RoC and the TRNC

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#### Abstract

This study investigates dynamic processes of citizenship formation in the Republic of Cyprus (ROC) and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) and the effects of Cyprus' accession to the European Union (EU) on these processes. I will mainly focus on the use of the past by both Greek and Turkish Cypriot nationalisms after 1974 Turkish intervention to construct identity for their own citizenry. In doing so, I will show that since 1974 in the divided island there have been two different, but in content very similar, processes of history-writing that relies on images of eternal enemies and irreconcilable differences. This is related to the emergence of de facto two "small nation-states" coupled with the effort to redefine their ethnnocultural identity in a context of widespread political and ideological indoctrination. Thus, the main objective of this study is to seek to capture the nature of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalist strategies in the formation of citizenry and collective memory and what kind of changes, if there are, occur in these strategies by EU accession process. Two developments in the island have challenged existing establishment of both sides: EU accession process and opening border. It is argued that these recent developments are paving the way for the re-formulation of new histories and collective memories for both communities of Cyprus and creation a suitable atmosphere for a dialogical integration and awareness to live together again.

Key words: nationalism, citizenship, history-writing, dialogical integration,

#### Introduction

This paper seeks to investigate the effects of dynamic processes of citizenship formation in northern and southern Cyprus on possible reintegration of the Republic of Cyprus (RoC) and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). I will mainly focus on the use of the past by both Greek and Turkish Cypriot nationalisms after 1974 Turkish intervention to

construct identity for their own citizenry. Unlike the pre-1974 context where community boundaries cross over though most of Turkish populated areas were blocked, the Turkish invasion led to the emergence of de facto two states coupled with the effort to redefine their ethnnocultural identity in a context of mass-migration within and outside Cyprus and widespread political indoctrination associated with their own nationalistic ideologies. These resulted in two small-scale nation-building processes. In this sense this study is based on the idea that any analysis of historical, political and social evolution of redrawing the boundaries of two communities provides us some clues to understand the political demands of today's leaders of two peoples.

In order to understand the scope of relationship between citizenship and nationalism or between citizenship formation and statehood in Cyprus, it seems necessary to make a comparison between Greek and Turkish Cypriot experiences. After 1974, monopolizing RoC at the international arena, Greek Cyprus redefined the Turkish Cypriots as a "privileged" minority community. This has occurred within the context of vigorous processes of cultural and ethnic formations. On the other hand, Turkish Cypriot leadership has defined statehood as necessary for the survival of Turkish ethnic community and identity, which would be possible within a federal or confederal form established by two autonomous political bodies (Greek and Turkish Cypriots). That's why the establishment of a quasi-state after 1974 provides a new cultural content and meaning to existing Turkish identity through turning Turkish Cypriots into citizens of a "sovereign" state. In this sense any analysis of historical, political and social evolution of redrawing the boundaries of two communities through their own notions of statehood provides us some clues to understand the demands of today's leaders of two communities. However, in this study, I am not only going to examine the political efforts of both sides for cultural production, but also the effects of EU accession process and the recent border crossings on both sides on citizenship processes.

#### Nationalism, Citizenship and Integration

When we talk about the relationship between nationalism and citizenship, one thing comes to the fore processes of identity formation to provide sense of politicocultural membership. All leaders of modern states use several mechanisms to foster such membership. Among them is narrative telling that dwells mainly on ethnicity, religion, nationality and common ancestry. In one way or another, this seems to be true for all modern state including liberal, multi-cultural federal, or even pre-socialist, states. It is that characteristics that makes processes of citizenship formation more problematic especially in terms of exclusionary and assimilating notions of nationalism. Here it seems necessary to shed some lights on the relationship between statehood and nationalism to understand what kinds of stories leaders use to forge sense of membership to both state and nation.

All nationalisms have become the main instrument in the hands of state rulers to make connections between the state and individual *via* producing and spreading a cultural identity to its own nation. A political community, one end-product of nation-building processes, is without doubt made up of both "civic-liberal" and "ethnic-cultural" elements. "Combinations of "civic" and "ethnic" elements", writes Smith, "are still to be found everywhere, sometimes more benign, but all too often malignant" (Smith, 2002: 7). Thus, although the distinction between them seems useful to understand modern nationalist policies in a way that political communities are some more "civic", others more "ethnic" in terms of exclusion and integration, civic and ethnocultural visions of nationalism do not depict the illiberal and antidemocratic aspects of nationalist ideology (Brown, 2000). At that point it should be noted that all "civic" or "ethnic" elements are not necessarily democratic and liberal. This implies that the political nature of nationalism determining efforts to furnish a common bond is closely tied to the "status position of those who articulate it, and to the developmental optimism or pessimism which underlies its construction" (Brown, 2000: 2).

That's why it is obvious that one of the main problems to establish pluralist democratic regime is the use of chauvinistic and exclusionary indoctrination through a state-sponsored mechanism. In a very selective way, for that goal, leaders use some political events and cultural forms to promote sense of citizenship. These processes of citizenship formation, as "political processes", include "two political elements: *force* and *stories*", which serve to "constitute institutions of membership and exclusion that structure and distribute power and resources in unequal ways" (Smith, 2002: 12). Although it is generally argued that the problem revolves around what kind of and how (ancestral, ethnic, national, religious and linguistic) stories being utilized by state institutions, the politics of people formation itself includes inescapably exclusions, exclusion of those who are deemed as both internal and external "outsiders", or "others", by those in power. These stories seems necessary to help conceiving, or providing justifications on the basis of historical, cultural, ethnic or linguistic account, individuals belonging to a political community. At the same time, sometimes, they pave the way for restrictive and repressive policies for the "others".

In a globalizing world this secure world of (nation-states') nationalism began to be challenged by two well-known simultaneous processes: universalization (changing the existing notion of sovereignty) and revival of local cultures (questioning homogenizing account of nation-states). The term integration has come to the fore within the frame of both processes. In the former one it reflects processes of development of new international, regional bodies leading to a cooperation of two or more states in which geographical proximity is playing an ultimate role. Discussions turning around the latter one signify, in dealing with rising diversity, a form of multicultural integration that makes it possible for minorities or excluded to be represented as 'they are' at the national level, but at the same time it implies a certain level of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Smith goes on to write, "force has been fundamental to the creation and maintenance of most political membership in world history", but "the support mustered via elite deployment of certain sorts of accounts or stories."

disintegration in a national politics.<sup>2</sup> Overall taking into account integration as a dynamic process, it might be observed, Cyprus is undergoing two simultaneous processes of integration. The Cyprus Question is now subject to processes embedded in both the issue of "regional/national" integration that is about reconciliation of two or more regions and the issue of regional integration (EU) that expresses transnational democratic governance making it possible pluralistic representation of different ethnocultural groups, if necessary, in terms of political autonomy.

It is clear in Cyprus that the problem is not simply about a choice between ethnocultural assimilation and civic integration. Relying on the critique on civic and ethnic forms of nationalism, civic integration is seen as inevitably including politically constructed and exclusionary cultural bases if it continues to rely on a nationalist endeavor led by leaders of a nation-state (for the critics see Kymlicka, 1997: 22-27; Nieguth, 1999). Thus, it might be argued that the Cyprus Question can be understood and settled by going beyond the perspective of "multicultural" integration.

The above framework is more helpful to explain what has been happening in Cyprus through last 40 years. That's why the following analysis on the issues of nationalism and citizenship in the island aims to understand some historical and political reasons behind the development of two rival nationalisms and to what extent both become obstacle to the attempts to solve the Cyprus question.

#### The Scope of the Cyprus Question

As mentioned in the introduction, Turkey's 1974 intervention led to the emergence of *de facto* two states in the island of Cyprus. It was also the end of the bicommunal RoC established in 1960 by the two (Greek and Turkish) communities. But, by the intervention, the Greek Cypriots in the south continued to control the existent state internationally recognized as

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> For two faces of integration in a globalizing world see Bekemans, Fiorentino and Langenhove (2000: 67).

the Republic of Cyprus (except Turkey). In the north the Turkish Cypriots organized their own state mechanisms on the basis of the legal and political structure of the RoC. Then in 1983 they declared independence as the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), only recognized by Turkey. All international organizations including the UN and the EU reject to recognize the TRNC as blaming it a kind of "secessionist act". By using its position of being internationally recognized body, the Greek Cypriot Government continued to impose an economic blockage, as well as political one, on the Turkish Cypriots to get back declaration of independence; that embargo gained an international character by the mid-1990s, which has very negatively affected the northern economic and social life (Talmon, 2001). Nevertheless, in the pre-1974 period, the Greek Cypriot-led Government enforced embargo and blockage on the Turkish Cypriots, majority of them imprisoned in the armed enclaves after 1963.

Although by 1974 in the island of Cyprus there emerged *de facto* two "nation"-states, the seeds of two politically autonomous communities became apparent when before Cyprus attained independence in 1960. The armed struggle between two nationalist groups determined the fate of 1960 Cyprus Republic. The Greek Cypriots organized around underground resistant EOKA (*Ethniki Organosis Kyprion Agoniston*, National Organization of Cypriot Fighters) with a goal of *enosis* (the union of Cyprus with Greece)<sup>3</sup>, but the Turkish Cypriots set up their own counter-resistance organization called the TMT (*Türk Mukavemet Teskilati*, Turkish Defense Organization) seeking to achieve their own separate political entity on the basis of idea of *taksim* (the partition of Cyprus into separate, sovereign Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot states). 1960 Republic was a bicommunal state (of the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities) based on the logic of consociation. In fact, under the new state structure that was made up of two ethno-national groups, instutionalized inter-communal relations were very less. Here the consociational structure gave higher priority to the continuation of "ethnocultural"

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The EOKA started its terrorist activities in April 1955 lasting in 1959, which led to many deaths of British and Turkish officials, and Turkish and even Greek Cypriot civilians.

balance rather than majority rule. Although the constitution drew the boundaries of Cyprus citizenship as a legal and political status, there were practices of two national culture formations respecting difference in language, culture, religion and national traditions. The official languages were Greek and Turkish; the Greek and Turkish flags continued to symbolize two communities, though there was one national flag; both communities celebrated the Greek and Turkish national holidays and religious days without any restriction. These practices were exercised via two communal chambers, one Greek, the other Turkish, which fulfilled different functions ranging from educational to sportive activities, religious to economic organizations (for the constitutional and cultural aspects of the Republic of Cyprus see Kyle, 1983).

These practices, when the Greek Cypriot leaders began to monopolize the government of the RoC and the Turkish Cypriot leaders in turn withdrew from all common institutions after 1963, gradually turned into means of a "small nation-state" for both Greek and Turkish Cypriots. The enclaves into which by 1963 the majority of the Turkish Cypriot population concentrated being scattered throughout the island, stand to appear as arms of that state having all legal, political and other institutions that included "defended borders", "public services", and some "luxuries like a Football Federation" (Stavrinides, 1975: 55). That means that the "official" State of Cyprus came under full control of the Greek leaders, continuing to be internationally recognized as the Government of Cyprus. But the Turkish Cypriot nationalists began to form a new social and political life for Turkish Cypriots by excluding any relations with Greek community (Kizilyürek, ???.: 80). Through the late 1960s the island included two autonomous political bodies with separated and controlled territories and identification processes (formation of national identities). This became clearer in terms of citizenship status of both the Greeks and Turks; the Turkish residents of Greek-controlled areas could not exercise full citizenship rights such as the right to vote in the elections, "so all Turkish Cypriots, in whatever part of Cyprus they may have lived, identified themselves with, and

supported, the "unofficial" Turkish-run quasi-State" (Stavrinides, 1975.56). These sub-citizenship statuses were to a greater extent determined via ethno-national hostility and differences (Greek vs. Turk). Thus, that making of citizenry as legal, political and cultural status developed on the basis of two competing, antagonistic nationalisms that led to the rise of ethnic, armed conflict from 1963 to 1974. As Stavrinides (1975: 56) aptly notes, after 1963, "Greek and Turkish nationalisms became matters of official policy and inspiration... to arouse and rally their communities around them" and to maintain a propaganda by "attributing evil motives". Both sought to define their positions by degrading the other. He goes on to write:

The image of the Turks which the Greek side cultivated was either that they were a minority of greedy people who, owing to an Anglo-Turkish conspiracy, obtained a Constitution that gave them super-privileges at the expense of the Greek majority and resorted to armed rebellion when the Greeks made a firm stand on their legitimate democratic rights.

On the Turkish side the Greeks were presented and viewed as an unscrupulous and violent people, a part of the Greek nation that had long been the opponents of the Turkish nation, and who, in their pursuit of *enosis*, used cunning and force to break up the established constitutional arrangements... From inside their armed enclaves the Turkish Cypriots developed a theory that they could no longer entrust their safety to Greeks... and they should live in separate areas, governed and policed by themselves.

The rise of that tension between two communities resulted in the deterioration of every kind of inter-communal (legal, social, commercial and cultural) relations as a form of ethnic conflict and armed struggle. The Greek nationalist position became solidified with the Akridas Plan that anticipated reducing the Turkish Cypriots to the status of a minority and adopting the idea of the self-determination for the Greek Cypriots. Here the goal was to reconsider all international agreements on the RoC in terms of the demands of the Greek side, which meant for the Greek nationalists an implicit realization of *enosis*.

The Turkish Cypriot nationalism from 1963 to 1974 evolved around the following ideals: "resistance to *enosis*", being an equal partner of the bicommunal RoC, rejection of being a minority, new territorial-based federative structure (necessary for self-administration), and seeing Cyprus as the homeland of the Turks, not only the Greeks. All these ideals found its true

expression in Turkish Cypriot rulers' long-term demand for *taksim*. However, the Greek Cypriot nationalism seeking to realize "nationalist Cypriot Hellenism" developed in terms of two poles, Makarios's and Grivas's supporters, though Makariosites represented the main stream position. It was about the constant reproduction of Cyprus as a Hellenic homeland throughout history and the idealization of the myth of "resistance" to "barbaric invasion", mainly by the Turks. In fact, that anticipated one political solution for the island that was the Greek-controlled State of Cyprus, including as an ultimate, but largely implicit, goal for *enosis* with the mainland Greece (for the positions of these two nationalisms see Stavrinides, 1975: 76-84). For the two sides during this period we can see the politicization of ethnic elements, traditional forms and practices within the confine of modern state mechanisms.

#### Citizenship and History in the TRNC

In 1974, following the Athens-led coup aimed at annexing Cyprus to Greece or *enosis*, Turkey, one of three Guarantor Powers (The UK, Turkey and Greece), intervened in the island to stop the coup. This divided Cyprus into the Turkish zone in the north and the Greek zone in the south, which became more settled by a population exchange between two regions in the following year. For Turkish Cypriot leaders the intervention was necessary, and even constitutionally valid, to protect the lives of the Turkish Cypriots. Thus, in their views, providing needed physical conditions in the making of a territorially divided federal state, it was the significant attempt to solve the Cyprus Problem. What is meant by the solution here is the realization of Turkish Cypriot nationalism's motto, *taksim*. The Turkish Cypriot leadership still emphasizes recognition and existence of two-states under a new political structure. It is true that 1974 Turkish intervention rescued the Turkish Cypriots from their often besieged enclaves and concentrated them in a physically more secure larger territory, but it has become

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> For the views of TRNC's President (Rauf Denktas) on this issue see *Kibris* (northern Cyprus daily), 5 August 2003.

unrecognized and isolated place more dependent on Turkey. However, the Greek Cypriot side view Turkey's intervention as "invasion" and then began to regard it as the starting point for the Cyprus Problem by outlawing the "constitutional regime". Up till today, there has been an embedded war between two states of Cyprus, the RoC in the south and the TRNC that was established unilaterally in 1983 in place of the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus proclaimed in 1975 immediately after the 1974 intervention, in the north.

When we look at the TRNC's official narratives of Turkish Cypriot nationalism, unlike the previous attempt to produce a "countervailing identity which was both Turkish but also distinctively 'of the island'" against pro-enosis view of "Greekness" of Cyprus (Scott, 2002: 108), we see the attempts to re-formulated Turkish Cypriot history, tradition and culture by merging Turkish Cypriot nationalism with, and using some credentials of, Turkey's official Turkish nationalism. Accordingly, TRNC's 1985 constitution highlights that the Turkish Cypriots are indivisible part of the great Turkish nation. In narrating Turkish Cypriot identity there is an effort for re-writing history of Turkish Cypriots in Cyprus in which the TMT's heroic resistance to the EOKA takes an important place. This has revolved around the accentuation of the TMT memories and ceremonial celebration of some important events in the "national" resistance. In the Turkish Cypriot view, the EOKA and the struggle for *enosis* were regarded as the causes behind making the Turkish Cypriots victims. The Turkish Cypriot historiography has used the notion of *enosis* as a reference point for the resistance and gaining Turkey's protection (Facts about Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, 2002: 10-11).<sup>5</sup> Commemoration of *sehitler* (the heroes of the past who sacrificed themselves for the causes of survival of Turkish Cypriots), the Turkish army's arrival viewed as the "Peace Operation", and 1983 "Declaration of Independence" led to the appearance of new and free life for the Turks in the island (for the politics of remembrance in Turkish Cypriot nationalism see Onurkan-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> The reason behind that is the development of Turkish Cypriot nationalism against the rise of Greek nationalistic feeling and demands for *enosis* in Cyprus.

Samani, 1999). Thus, these commemorations seek to keep new generations' allegiance to the national goals. Here it is obvious that memories of past atrocities have been narrated in a very selective way, which is also true for southern Cyprus. The Turkish Cypriot leaders have launched the commemoration of the sacrifices led by violent conflicts or interethnic fighting from 1957 to 1960 and especially from 1963 to 1974, although the Greek Cypriot nationalist stand remains silent over these past events. These "assault on Turkish Cypriots" in the Turkish Cypriot historiography are regarded as parts of the organized "ethnic cleansing campaign of the joint forces of Greece and the Greek Cypriots" *Facts about Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus*, 2002: 6). It is obvious that such a politicized view of history is used to ignore some commonalities between two communities and also it is invoked to legitimate the existing status quo.

The new Turkish state in the north upholds two types of forgetting processes; first, what is emphasized in the official discourse is to forget the southern part of the island and highlight today's part as the home of the Turkish Cypriots. Second is about forgetting the previous coexistence of two communities. Although the Greek Cypriot leaders have claimed to the owner of the whole island throughout history, in terms of defining territorial boundaries, the Turkish ones were very pragmatic and tried to attach the Turkish Cypriots to the TRNC's boundaries; even there was a deliberate forgetting of some Ottoman-Islamic heritages of the island remaining the south, which were in the 1950s and 1960s used to forge as constituting elements of Turkish Cypriot identity (Papadakis: 110). What was priority for Turkish Cypriot rulers was to survive in the island in any way. Now the Turkish Cypriot state's strategies have reformulated existing Ottoman-Islamic remnants in the north to establish "Turkishness" of northern Cyprus. In addition to that formation of north Cyprus as a homeland of Turkish Cypriots, the attempts to tie them to the mainland, Turkey, continued to be made. That's why, the state continued to celebrate some national holidays of the mainland, Turkey, as part of

TRNC's official nationalism to identify with the Turkish national identity. Like the north, the Greek Cypriot Government of Cyprus follows Greece's national celebrations.

The Turkish Cypriot leaders used their own highly politicized view of the past and national events to activate a "collective memory" for and cultivate national self-consciousness among the Turkish Cypriots in a context of international isolation, political, economic and even cultural embargoes. The goal has been to produce, re-produce and spread Turkish Cypriot identity. Here TRNC citizenship is coupled with that identity formation, while including liberal ideals like individual rights, rule of law, constitutional and parliamentary democracy; this is exactly case in ROC citizenship formation detailed below. This effort to blend ethnocultural and civic-liberal elements may be seen in most of nationalist endeavors (Smith, 2002).

One of the pillars of the Turkish Cypriot nationalism is the rejection of being minority in possible-future united state in the island. For that view, the Turkish Cypriots were equal partner of 1960 Republic guaranteed by the constitution, and their leadership now wants a settlement of the Cyprus problem on the basis of a "federation of two separate Cypriot states" having "international legal personality" *Facts about Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus*, 2002: 14-16). The rejection of minority status by the Turkish Cypriot nationalists seems to be based on the idea that for them, although the Greeks are a majority on the island, they are small minority in the region, given Turkey's geographical closeness and power (Cyprus, 40 miles away from Turkey's southern costs, but 500 miles away from the Greek mainland). This makes it normal development for the authorities of the TRNC migration from Turkey to the island. But migration to the north from Turkey and naturalization of the migrants in the north has been subject to a political debate not only between southern Cypriot authorities and northern ones, but also among the TRNC's politicians. Although there is still controversy over exact numbers, according to the recent release, the number about how many foreigners have been made

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> For a concise evaluation on the significance and impacts of "international legal personality and entity" for TRNC leadership and government see Ozersay (2003: 241-48).

TRNC's citizens is 53,000, almost one-fourth of North Cyprus' total population (*Kibris* (Cyprus Daily), May 29, 2003). The connection between these migrants and Turkish inhabitants of the island is established in terms of unification of two peoples of the Turkish nation.

#### **Greek Cypriot Nationalism and Citizenship-Making in Southern Cyprus**

In the post-independence period (1960-1974) Greek Cypriot nationalist effectively used the idea of *enosis* as a basic force for their movement. For its realization there emerged an island-wide intercommunal fighting that led to 1974 Turkish intervention. When the intervention resulted in an identity crisis for Greek Cypriots who had seen themselves as Greek, Greek Cypriot nationalism entered into a new phase of redefinition that although there was an emphasis on Greekness of the island and Greek identity, the focus gradually shifted more to the political independence of the united Cyprus. The Greek Cypriot state's nationalism stresses the necessity of maintaining close ties with Greece both to gain its protection and to keep alive the "Hellenic culture" of Cyprus. Here Greek-Cypriot culture is depicted as Hellenic and so the name of being member of the Greek nation; that is, there is an endeavor to define the Greek nation as a cultural, rather than political, entity, or reformulating *enosis* as a cultural unification (for the development of Greek-Cypriot nationalism see Mavratsas, 1997). Here "Greek" aspect can be found in "Greek Cypriots' dependence on Greece and their Greek origins and cultural heritage", but there also emerged a need to emphasize the common "Cypriot" dimension to "rapprochement with the Turkish Cypriots" (Papadakis, 1998: 153). The Greek Cypriot rulers' endeavor to merge "Greekness" and "Cypriotness" led to a "symbolic official double-talk reflecting ambivalence":

The clearest illustration of this on the level of state symbols is found in the simultaneous use of the Cypriot flag with the Greek national anthem. In another example, whereas Greek flags were previously dominant, after 1974 the Cypriot flag was added at school buildings as well as the armistice border and the two flags were flown together on all national holidays (Papadakis, 1998: 153).

Thus, the main-stream official policy was coupled with the attempt to show the Greekness, Hellenic nature, of Cyprus by remembering the glorious past and heritages. Particularly the emphasis on the heirs of ancient Aegean civilizations that Western civilization relies on is accentuated to instill nationalistic pride of being "civilized", "superior". The EU membership of Cyprus has been seen a chance to realize "cultural, Hellenic, reunification" with the mainland.<sup>7</sup>

The Greek Cypriot administration has produced stereotypes and myths about the Turks regarded as the significant "other" for Greek-Cypriot nationalism. With the help of these statesponsored stereotypes and myths propagated via regular education and public communication devices, a Greek Cypriot identity has been constructed against the Turks. Through education a kind of imagination of Turks who are represented as "cruel", "barbaric", "invader" is forged on children within and outside schools in a very complex process of construction (Spyrou, 2002). It is obvious that the above-mentioned construction occurs in a context of lack of any interaction between Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities. Here the border between the Greek State and Turkish State of Cyprus has served for the Greek leaders to depict the Turks as a threat to their own "civilized", "good" life world. In the process state-led "myths" took place of facts about the people living in the "occupied" territory of the island.

It is here suggested that the process of that national identification in the post-1974 period works on the basis of a logic of both remembrance and forgetting. Greek Cypriot leaders' stories used to form a common ethnic bond for their own citizenry involve the emphasis on the 1974 intervention as a starting point of the Cyprus problem, or source of "horrifying" events in Cyprus; however, at the same time, there emerges a total forgetting of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Greek PM Simitis, during his visit to Cyprus after Greek Cypriot government signed to join the EU, delievered a speech mentioning Cyprus membership as the realization of *enosis*.

pre-1974 violent ethnic conflict between two communities and enclaving Turkish Cypriots. In the post 1974 Greek Cypriot nationalism such an attitude is also coupled with the myth of suffering, suffering from "Turkish occupation" that divided "Greek Cypriot homeland" into two parts. This is closely related to the outcomes of the Greek Cypriot national narratives that forge the Hellenic heritage of Cyprus to prove how "Greekness" of Cyprus is primordial (Bryant, 2001: 901). In general, there is a negative effect of the use of the past in an antagonistic, rigid nationalist discourse over peace attempts in the island. In this respect, as Mavratsas aptly notes, "both before and after 1974, Greek-Cypriot nationalism entailed an organic unity of nationality and citizenship which neglects the independence of the two communities and stifles their functional competence. History, interpreted on the basis of nationalist principles, conjures images of eternal enemies and fundamentally irreconcilable differences" (Mavratsas, 1997).

Greek Cypriot historiography seeks to prove "Greekness" of the island *via* narrating the history of Cyprus in an *ahistorical* way. For it Greeks came to the island around 1200 BC and brought together civilization: "The newcomers brought with them their language, their advanced technology and introduced a new outlook for visual arts. Since then Cyprus has remained predominantly Greek in culture, language and population" *Cyprus: A Historical Sketch*, 2002: 5). In that historiography the Turks has a minor and derogatory place. In periodizing the rulers of the island, the rule of the Turks, or the Ottoman Turks, (1571-1878) is depicted as "Ottoman Occupation" in a pejorative way, although others are mentioned just as "Frankish and Venetian Rule" or "British Rule" (*Cyprus: A Historical Sketch*, 2002: 9). Greek Cypriot history stresses that the Ottoman Turks always constituted the "Muslim minority" of the island. As in parallel to the official policy to accentuate "Cypriotness", the "Muslim

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Employing very subjective and selective strategies in history-writing, Greek Cypriot historiography put blames on Turkey as being responsible for the emergence of the Cyprus Problem. It also emphasizes the EOKA struggle against British rule until 1960 and Turkish Cypriots' TMT until 1974 as signifying a military success. But, in that history, for the period 1963-74 there is only a stress on the "threat of partition" launched by Turkish Cypriots and Turkish government cooperation (*Cyprus: A Historical Sketch*, 2002: 11, 13-14; Mavratsas, 1997).

minority during the Ottoman period eventually acquired a Cypriot identity" (*About Cyprus*, 2001: 21). Population size of the Turkish Cypriots also contributes their inferior position in Greek Cypriot history that seeks to justify Greek Cypriot hegemony over the whole island. It was not acceptable that, after independence in 1960, the Turkish Cypriots constituting 18% of population had 30% of the posts in the state bureaucracy (*Cyprus: A Historical Sketch*, 2002: 12-13). As constituting majority of population the Greek Cypriots had the right to rule the island.

#### Population and Nationalism in Greek and Turkish Cyprus

The issue of population is another hot topic for Greek Cypriot nationalism in dealing with the Cyprus problem and citizenship formation. According to the census data of the southern government, the total population of Cyprus, also speaking on the behalf of the north, is 755,000 of whom 85,1% (643,000) are Greek Cypriots; 11,7% (88,000) are Turkish Cypriots; and 3,2% (25,000) are foreigners living in Cyprus (*About Cyprus*, 2001: 10). For that view the "Turkish invasion and occupation" changed population characteristics of the island, which forced Greek Cypriots who lived in the north to the south and forced some of Turkish Cypriots to migrate (estimated 55,000) to third countries. Southern official document says that since Turkish side followed the policy of "re-population" of the north, around 115,000 "illegal" settlers came to the north mostly from Turkey. However, the northern government's statistics calls those who live in the north as the Turkish Cypriots (according to the 2002 estimates 213.491 people living in the TRNC of whom 99% are Turkish Cypriots) (Facts about Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, 2002: 3). But, as mentioned above, according to the recent official release, since 1974, around 54,000 foreign origin people achieved citizenship status in the TRNC (Kibris, 13 October 2003). Thus, considering total population in the north, approximately 155,000 (75%) are Turkish Cypriots and 55,000 (25%) are Turkish immigrants. In opposite to the endeavor to create a homogenous national community in the south, due to

international migration, there is significant number of Pontus Greek, Iranian, Filipino, and Arab immigrant communities. Except first group whose flow is due to mainly ethnic reason, others came to the island as labor force (Wallace, 2002). Except Greece and Pontus Greeks, number of (legal and illegal) foreign workers is approximately 70,000. It is apparent for Greek Cypriot nationalism that the emergent multi-ethnic population structure in the south might have a potential to change the exclusionary, chauvinistic certainties of Greek Cypriot ethnocultural nationalism.

There are huge inconveniences among both sides' numbers. The reason might be found in their nationalist endeavors according to which Greek Cypriot leadership has stressed to rule the island because they are majority, but Turkish Cypriot leadership has rejected the status of minority negating being minority in population sense. It is obvious that the size of population is much more important for the Greek administration to constitute majority, which means to guarantee the Hellenic nature of Cyprus both culturally and politically, and so, as part of the Greek Cypriot population policy, Greeks from mainland and Pontiac Greeks were welcomed and naturalized. On the other hand, Turkish Cypriot government sees the issue of population as one of basic aspects of its policy to abandon the status of minority, because it gives importance to number of Turks who live in the island to equalize power balance between the Greek and Turkish Cypriots and so it welcomed migration from Turkey.

#### Cyprus' EU Membership and Border Crossing

Therefore, the effect of Cyprus membership to the EU has gained much more importance through last eight years for the settlement of the Cyprus Question. At the beginning it was EU leaders' intention that EU membership would play a "catalyst" role in finding a political solution for the divided island (Larrabee, 1998: 25). However, as Barkey & Gordon write, the "idea of inviting Cyprus to join the EU has not led to a political settlement as was

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> The Cyprus Weekly (southern Cyprus weekly), August 29-September 5, 2003)

anticipated" (Barkey and Gordon, 2001/2002: 86). After the Greek Cypriot community achieved the right to join the EU on behalf of the whole island, the Question of Cyprus is entering into a new phase. The EU accepted the whole Cyprus as a member in April 2004, but with the provision that the laws and membership benefits –applied to the Greek Cypriot southwill not extended to Turkish Cypriot north until after reunification. <sup>10</sup> The European Commission has pressed two sides, especially Turkish Cypriot leadership to reach a political settlement. It proposed a goodwill package to northern Cyprus including supporting local governments and civil societal organizations. <sup>11</sup> EU accession process in Cyprus has resulted in further improvement of southern Cyprus, although until recent times deliberately the EU authorities had disregarded northern part of the island.

Although lack of homogeneity, less shared values, mutual distrust, bad memories or "negative experiences" stand as the obstacles to possible reintegration in Cyprus, the EU has been creating great hopes, or "shared expectations", among two communities, especially in the north, in the divided island. <sup>12</sup> Thus, what happened in northern Cyprus are that EU accession process and a globalized world have made some groups thinking and imagining beyond existent state of affairs, and, as a result, pro-EU political and social movements begin to being getting more and more ground among the Turkish Cypriots. In the north of the island groups with pro-settlement and pro-EU inclinations have been launching a form of grass-root movement against the establishment via demonstrations, being organized and rising support for the opposition. Related to the role of the EU, one might say that, as well as encouraging factor,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> New York Times on the web, 15 July 2003.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> In order to bring the Turkish Cypriot community closer to the EU, the EC proposed 12 million euro financial assistance to Northern Cyprus to support infrastructure projects for the main cities and feasibility studies to prepare economic integration of Northern Cyprus with the EU after a political settlement. Also, if the settlement happens, for the period 2004-2006 an additional amount of 206 million euro is foreseen (see <a href="http://europe.eu.int/comn/enlargement">http://europe.eu.int/comn/enlargement</a>).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> As Groom (2000: 79 and 81) argues, while "negative experiences" with their psychological and political effects come as the main reasons for disintegration, "shared levels of expectations in political, economic, social, cultural... affairs" increase the possibility of integration.

the EU in Cyprus is becoming more and more a coercion tool to push the Turkish Cypriots leadership get on agreement particularly accept the Annan Plan. That's why the EU often acts as a "hegemonic patron" rather than a referee between the Greek and Turkish Communities. It seems that in this move coordination and mutual interests are disregarded.

Since April 23, 2003, when the Turkish Cypriot government unexpectedly opened the border for travel across the cease-fire line, called the Green Line, <sup>13</sup> the Cyprus problem has entered in a new unalterable process. This decision came after the last mediations attempt by the UN general secretary, Kofi Annan, to settle the Cyprus issue on the basis of a new plan called the Annan Plan (proposing a single state made up of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot federal regions) failed like the many previous. It is clear that opening border causes reidentification processes in both sides, which seem to be closely related to the logic of bottomup. This finds its clear expression in the words of Dan Lindley: "The open border is creating a revolution from below". 14 After lifting the ban on free-crossing a lot of Greek and Turkish Cypriots have crossed the line between the north and the south in a general sentiment of joy and peacefully. 15 At the end of September, total number of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots crossing to each other's side was over 1,500,000. In these crossing no serious incidents have been reported, on the contrary there has been an atmosphere of a warm welcome given to the visiting Greek Cypriots by Turkish Cypriots and to the visiting Turkish Cypriots by the Greek Cypriots. People from each side visit their long-lost homes and properties, go to restaurants and entertainment places, and establish new joint associations. What is obvious now

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> It is the buffer zone between the south and the north that, as Frantz argues, "remains no longer only a line on a map but a state of mind and way of life".

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> He made a speech at the symposium *Crossing The Green Line: A forum on walls and impenetrable borders in Cyprus and other parts of the globe*, Cornell University, Ithaca, November 7-8, 2003

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> According to a poll carried out following the opening of the border, almost 80 per cent of the interviewed Turkish Cypriots welcomed to lift the ban on free-crossing, and half of them believe that it will result in positive effects on resolution of the Cyprus Question (*Gündem* (Northern Cyprus Monthly), June 2003). This is also greatly true for the southern part of the island.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> See *Note on the Recent Confidence-Building Initiatives by the Turkish Cypriot Side*, TRNC's official release, September 2003.

in the island is that these new inter-communal interactions appear to have a power to open a new chapter for the future of Cyprus.

This is important because the opinion poll carried out in February 2003 shows that there is a serious trust problem between two communities, especially among the Turkish Cypriots.<sup>17</sup> According to that poll, 64% of the Turkish Cypriots do not believe that they will again live together with the Greek Cypriots in a Cyprus state under the EU because they do not trust the Greek Cypriots and see the aim of Greek Cypriots to make the island totally Greek, on the contrary 76% of the Greek Cypriots say yes and just 29% of them do not trust the Turkish Cypriots. For 65% of the Turkish Cypriots the good relationship between Greek and Turkish communities depend on living in completely separated places, on the contrary %65 of the Greeks Cypriots demand a mixed life for the good relations. Another public opinion poll launched in June 2003 shows that almost three fourth of people from each side do not agree on a member of their family marrying someone from the other community. <sup>18</sup>

It is true that opening border led to an identity crisis in both sides' official and popular imagination. The open border has smashed some myths of two sides: Turkish Cypriot leaders claimed that the two communities could not live together as violence would become dominant again; and the Greek Cypriot leaders propagated that Turkish soldier kill people indiscriminately in the streets of the north are myths. Nonetheless, the most serious one occurred among the Greek Cypriots when they faced to the "facts" in the north different from their imagination based on the official narratives. As reported by M. Woolacott, the Greek Cypriot young "have satisfied their curiosity and learned, for example, that, as a Greek student, put it, 'It's not Pakistan on the other side'". 19 For the Turkish side, rising people's concern free

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> The opinion poll was carried out by the Turkish Frekans and Greek Opinioun-Rai companies for the name of the Turkish-Greek Forum. It was publicized by Istanbul Politikalar Merkezi and Frekans Arastirma (Carkoglu and Kalaycioglu, February 2003).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> *The Cyprus Weekly*, 13-20 June 2003.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> See *The Guardian*, 9 May 2003.

passing is negating Denktas' common assertion that we can not live together. See *Ibid*). Similar inclination may be observed in a letter sent out to *The Cyprus Weekly* (July 4-10, 2003) by a Greek Cypriot woman, Nikki Theodorou:

I recently went "up north" and was expecting the worse, a poverty-stricken, peasantry society with kind of gray buildings you often find in Eastern bloc states... But it wasn't like that at all. In Lapithos and Kyrenia, I noticed that people looked rich, were dressed in clothes that look like they had purchased on the day and ate well. Every car showroom had a showroom shine on it. The gardens of the houses looked well-manicured. Every shop looked well-stocked and busy. I was expecting our Turkish Cypriot compatriots to be afraid to speak, but they were open, lively and often too direct. I think everybody should visit to the north... to eliminate any prejudice or false impressions we may have of them. <sup>20</sup>

Nevertheless, to maintain embargo and blockage over the north administration, the Greek government is discouraging its citizens and providing some sanctions on them to spend the night and shopping in the north.<sup>21</sup> The Greek Cypriot administration does not also allow visits to the south by the TRNC citizens with Turkey's origin and Turkish citizens and tourists who enter the island from the north and prohibits overnight stay in the TRNC, although the Turkish Cypriot administration allows all Greeks, even from Greece, to pass to the north and stay in the north until the three nights.

After the opening of the border, some of the Turkish Cypriots applied to the Greek Cypriot government to take ID card of "RoC". <sup>22</sup> This came after the Greek Cypriot government announced good will measures toward the Turkish Cypriots (for the measures see *Kibris*, May

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> But opinion of one of the Greek Cypriot visitors shows a different picture: Byron L. David, a Greek Cypriot refugee, when he visited to his mother's house and property, writes that "My lack of emotion made me wonder about the meaning of "ownership" and "right of return." Ownership means more than a government document... I attended elementary school in Morphou, and have frequently visited the island for periods of up to two years. Now I felt that I was in a totally foreign place" (David, 2003).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> See *Hurriyet* (Istanbul daily), 9 June 2003; *Kibris*, 24 August 2003. Greek Cypriot officials threatened and prevented the Greek singer, Lefteris Pancazis, who went to the north to take stage in one of the hotels, and then he set back (*The Cyprus Weekly*, June 11-17, 2003). To discourage the visits to the north, the Greek Cypriot police confiscated goods purchased from the north, see *Politis* (southern Cyprus daily) (23 July 2003). For the Greek Cypriot weekly, *The Cyprus Weekly*, by condemning those sanctions on those who go to casinos in the north, it is a new form of war between Greek and Turkish Cypriot "goodfellas". Those who are the good patriots "could not bring themselves to recognize the pseudostate so they handed out pseudo-cheques and pseudo-currency to the casinos" (*The Cyprus Weekly*, 22-29 August 2003).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> By November 2003, around 100,000 people from the north have received one of official documents of RoC (8,253 taking Passport, 23.215 ID and 68,594 Birth Document) as announced by the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Greek administration (*Kibris*, 21 May 2003).

11, 2003). Denktas, president of the TRNC, evaluated this development in the way that it is their right as being at the same time the citizens of 1960 bicommunal Republic of Cyprus that he believes that it was ended with the violations of the Greek Cypriot leaders in 1963.

The Greek Cypriot leaders began to make some gestures in response to the northern administration's goodwill attempts. It made easy for the Turkish Cypriots to get the passport and ID of the ROC. In addition, releasing a new package of measures, it lifted some of the economic blockage measures on the TRNC by easing trade restrictions across the green line (*The Guardian*, May 1, 2003). In this period, as a result of partly this goodwill gesture but mainly the pressure of the EU, the Greek Cypriot officials began to allow the marriage of a Greek Cypriot with a Turkish. That was previously strictly forbidden; it was allowed only if Turk changes his/her religion and name (*Hurriyet*, June 12, 2003). Beside these, the Greek Cypriot government is making some preparations to teach Turkish at the secondary schools as an elective course (*Sabah* (Istanbul Daily), September 23, 2003).

Most of the Turkish Cypriots who visited their previous homes and properties in the south found demolished homes and impoverished lands, although the Greek Cypriots still have a big concern on their properties in the north (Simons, 2003). <sup>23</sup> Upon such kind of frustration, the Turkish Bayrak Radio and Television began to broadcast a program entitled *Kaybolan Hatiralar ve Gerçekler* (Lost Memories and Truths) by television. The program is about properties, memories, houses, mosques, historical places and graves the Turkish Cypriots left in the south when they passed to the "free" land. It shows how Turkish remnants in the south had been destroyed *via* pictures of Turkish residence places. Here the emphasis is placed on the loss

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> One of the Turkish Cypriot refugees, born in Limasol (second biggest town of the south), wrote a letter to *Kibris* daily about his observations in his visit: "I went through a perfect highway to Limasol... I found myself in a touristic and modern city, full of hotels, motels and touristic places throughout the beach. When I came to Ayandon where the Turkish Cypriots lived in the pre-1974 period, I did not find any of Turks' houses... As a main purpose of our trip, I came to Gazi Pasa Street; I realized that street names were not changed. In place of my home there is a empty field. It was demolished with other houses in that neighborhood" (Ersoz, *Kibris*, 31 August 2003).

of Turkish remnants to show that the southern part is not anymore a land for the Turkish Cypriots.

#### Conclusion

This article have sought the place of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalist strategies in processes of citizenship formation and their possible effects on the endeavors for solution in the island. The rigid version of Greek Cypriot nationalism has sought to Hellenize the island. Greek Cypriot leaders insist on their internationally recognized legal position, preventing to make any economic and political openings to the north. The basic issues for them are returning some lands to the owners and gaining sufficient freedom of decision without a Turkish Cypriot veto. Relying on the outmoded majority-minority logic, Greek Cypriot leaders have rejected the view that a constitution that allows the equal representation of communities or (federal) regions would not adjust political power to census calculations. On the other hand, Turkish Cypriot leaders continue to assert the necessity of gaining more autonomous status for Northern Cyprus. They stress the necessity of providing a full security for their presence in the island, self-government within the determined territories, an equal partner status as a constituting state within a united state. It is because rigid version of Turkish Cypriot nationalism relies on the strategies of survival in the island, their homeland.

The above-two perspectives are based on two distinct, but similar in content, processes of formation of identity for citizenship status. Each side after 1974 has constructed their own national history on the basis of a rigid version of nationalism through a centrally engineered process of nation-building which to some extent rely on past-lived experiences as well as cognitive categories. This is subject to the logic of enmity and hatred aimed at disintegrating the island, rather than reintegration. It is obvious that prejudiced and chauvinistic stories of Southern and Northern Cypriot states have paved the way for immature and undemocratic notions of citizenship. The problem in the divided island is not simply about a choice between

ethnocultural assimilation and civic multicultural integration that also inevitably depends on logic of minority-majority.

What are needed in the island now are processes of re-formulating citizenship status on the basis of constant dialogue and interaction between two ethno-national communities. It is highly probable that that will lead to the possibility of reformulation and coexistence of two antagonistic nationalisms under a loose federal or confederal state of two communities internationally recognized. This does not mean to put blame on nationalism itself that seems to continue to be a legitimizing force for two Cypriot communities in a near future. For that goal it is emphasized that the Turkish Cypriot government made a giant move by opening the borders, which might help to end the problem of trust in the island. The main effect of the recent border crossings on both sides border is to create awareness to live together again. It is a new epoch in which there is a possibility of emergence of "cross-boundary interaction and discourse" with the Other that may make each side's strict identity and its fundamentals "explicitly contingent, 'other-referential', and relativistic" (Cohen, 2000: 2). It seems to help in overcoming resentful memories of displacement, killing and massacre and the problem of mistrust, which until now rigid versions of nationalism in both sides have developed and deepened. It might be argued that the result will be the emergence of a suitable atmosphere for dialogical reintegration. What happened after EU enlargement process and opening the borders in Cyprus seems to be very close to the definition of integration that refers to a "process of complex social transformation characterized by the intensification of relations between independent sovereign states that gives rise to some kind of permanent structure of mutual cooperation" (Bekemans et al, 2000: 66). Beside integration from below, it is obvious that Cyprus' EU membership has a great potential to provide a form of "global/local governance duality" (Bekemans et al, 2000: 71) to avoid the return of ethnic conflict and violence.

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