

CYPRUS NEGOTIATIONS:
SEARCHING FOR A FEDERAL SETTLEMENT IN A DIVIDED SOCIETY
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1. Introduction

The island of Cyprus in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea has been divided on its territory and in the collective minds of the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities (making up its society at the ratio of 80:18) since the intercommunal hostilities which broke out in December 1963, three-and-a-half years after it gained its independence from Britain under a bicomunal, power-sharing constitution. On 20 July 1974, following a military *coup d'etat* by the Greek Cypriot National Guard against the President of the Cyprus Republic Archbishop Makarios, Turkey invaded the island, brought the northern region under its military control, caused the flight of terrified Greek Cypriots inhabiting the land and collected the Turkish Cypriot community in the north where, nine years later, its leader Rauf Denktash declared the 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus'. In fact in February 1977 Makarios, Denktash and the then UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim met together in Cyprus and agreed to search for a new settlement to the Cyprus problem in the form of a bicomunal (and effectively bizonal or biregional) federation, through a negotiating process under UN auspices. In the following decades some 10 series of negotiations were undertaken by successive leaders of the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities without success, despite encouragement and advice from the United Nations, other international bodies and major powers. Cyprus remains today divided between a Turkish north and a Greek south, each with its own ethnic community, government and state apparatus (despite a small but increasingly sophisticated bicomunal movement of 'reconciliationists'). Life in the north and in the south goes on at a regular pace, with its little pleasures, its little achievements, its hopes, its anxieties and difficulties, and the constant reminders issued by politicians and the media that 'we' have suffered injustice by 'them', and if 'they' are brought to their senses by the international

community and abandon their unjust and unreasonable demands and yield to the claims of justice, the protracted negotiating process can succeed and create a win-win situation for both communities. Of course it is always the 'other' side which is at fault, and each side maintains a body of politicians and civil servants, supported by ethno-nationalistic media, one of whose main aims is to obstruct the 'other' side's efforts to gain international recognition for its cause and to advance its own interests. Against this background, it is no wonder that the negotiations for a federal settlement to embrace the whole country and society under a common constitution and government have proved ineffective and they provide no good prospects for success.

Why don't the parties abandon the talks as a method for solving the problem, if it is ineffective? In fact at various times in the past one or other of the two sides did leave or excused itself from the negotiations hoping that the other side would be forced to make some unilateral concessions to encourage the resumption of talks, but such tactics always failed. Since war between the two sides appears to be out of the question, it is now generally recognized that no side will gain anything from the other side except as part of a negotiated package deal. The UN Security Council has long urged the parties to negotiate in good will and a spirit of give-and-take for a federal settlement and in recent years the European Union has done the same; and neither side wants to appear intransigent and recalcitrant. Thus, abandoning the negotiations does not appear to be an advantageous option for either side; so, they go on and on without ever reaching agreement.

Why, it may be asked, don't the negotiators modify to an appropriate extent their main objectives or moderate their demands in order to accommodate some at least of the objectives and demands of the other side? It is plain that a negotiated settlement is inevitably a compromise settlement, and a compromise is more likely to be achieved if both sides demand less and yield more. After all, is all justice and reason on one's own side, and may the other side not also have a just and reasonable claim which requires sympathetic consideration and accommodation in the settlement?

This question is more significant than may appear at first sight. It may be said immediately, in anticipation of a more detailed discussion in section 2, that each side's objectives in the negotiations cannot be easily given up, moderated or watered

down during the bargaining, as they are shaped by the political beliefs, desires, anxieties, ethical ideas and fears of by its own people, the very people the negotiator represents. Many of these evident beliefs, desires etc are underpinned by a deeper level of irrational beliefs, obsessive desires, illusions, prejudices, self-deceptions and so on, which may themselves be symptomatic of unconscious attempts by the people to cope with their traumas, memories of pain and humiliation, vulnerabilities, ill understood anxieties, conflicting wishes and aspirations, the need to suppress feelings of guilt and to justify their self-regard and life-hopes. Thus, in the negotiations for a Cyprus settlement the Greek Cypriot leader and President of the Cyprus Republic Demetris Christofias reflects in his conduct not just a set of well considered policies and tactical decisions framed by himself and his advisers and intended to secure for Greek Cypriots certain objectives which he regards as right and fair, but he also reflects a complex and tangled set of rational and irrational political and ethical beliefs, desires, illusions, hopes and worries which form part of the collective mind of the community, permeate political life and influence the formulation of the objectives themselves. To put the point bluntly, his objectives in the negotiations are shaped by the political and ethical beliefs and desires of the large majority of Greek Cypriots. In a similar way, the Turkish Cypriot leader Dervis Eroglu (and at an earlier stage the previous leader Mehmet Ali Talat) reflects in his conduct not just policies intended to secure his own objectives, but also a different set of political and ethical beliefs and desires – rational and irrational – which form part of the collective mind of the Turkish Cypriot community and Turkey, and which are in many ways mirror images of those of Greek Cypriots. Indeed, the continuing leadership of Christofias and Eroglu and their respective democratic legitimacy depends on keeping faith with their respective election commitments to promote and secure the interests and rights of their own communities. In that case it is hard to see how the two leaders, with all the good will in the world, can moderate their objectives which reflect the beliefs and desires – rational and irrational – of their communities without risking accusations of sell-out, personal rejection and humiliation in any future referenda.

I suggest that the unconscious or barely conscious collective political beliefs, desires, anxieties, aspirations etc experienced by most Greek and Turkish Cypriots can be usefully likened to a syndrome of mental abnormalities which are studied by psychiatry and abnormal psychology under the name of dementia. What I refer to is

the complex of disorders, usually found in the most extreme forms in a geriatric population, such as illusory beliefs, distorted judgments, unrealistic expectations, selective memories and selective amnesia, and the development of two or more personalities within the same individual, e.g. one gentle and one aggressive. The dementia of the Greek Cypriot community and the dementia of the Turkish Cypriot community jointly form the social psychological environment of irrational political and ethical beliefs and desires in which successive rounds of intercommunal negotiations for a federal settlement have taken place for the past generation, and failed dismally. This overall social psychological context of the negotiations may be called, tongue-in-cheek, *dementia Cypria*.

The main question in this essay is: what are the prospects of success of the current round of the Christofias-Eroglu negotiations, conducted as they are under the influence and constraints of *dementia Cypria*? To answer the question I must now fill in some details in my sketchy account of the objectives which each side adopts in the negotiations and later explain the structure and sources of irrational beliefs and desires of each community in the divided society of Cyprus which underlies and helps shape the objectives.

2. Community traumas and negotiating objectives

It has often be observed by foreign scholars and diplomats that the two Cypriot communities in their vast majorities, give very different explanations of the character of the Cyprus problem, how it came about, and what would be a just and ‘viable’ settlement of it; and further, the two communities dismiss with disdain each other’s accounts as untrue, insincere and self-serving. As I have already hinted and I shall explain further, each of the communities harbours a huge trauma for which it blames the injustices committed by the other side, and it wants to secure at the negotiating table concessions from the other side to remove, as far as possible, the injustices. Each side conceives of its objectives in terms of what it regards as just, and so the negotiation agenda attracts demands based on ethical considerations. Any negotiated settlement, *if* it is ever achieved, will have to reflect in varying degrees the ethical beliefs of the two sides, as well as other things like international law and European Union rules.

Let us look at some details. The Greek Cypriots in their large majority believe that the central core of the problem – the ‘essence of the problem’ as they often say – is the terrible wrong done to them by the ‘barbaric’ Turkish invasion of 20 July 1974 which resulted in probably more than 3,000 dead and 1,400 missing persons, as well as other victims of inhuman mistreatment and widespread rape. The continuing occupation of the northern part of the island by the Turkish army, in blatant breach of international law and morality, is for Greek Cypriots a continuing trauma and humiliation, with numerous adverse practical consequences for the rights and interests of the Greek Cypriot community, such as the displacement of some 180,000 Greek Cypriots from their homes and properties in the north, the *de facto* partitioning of the island, the illegal immigration of tens of thousands of people from Turkey intended to change the demographic composition of the island, and so on. The meaning which ‘1974’ has been interpreted and formalized by politicians and political commentators as a long list of injustices voiced like a mantra whenever there is an opportunity, taught to children, and solemnly mentioned in political meetings and national occasions dominated by the image of Cyprus split along the so-called Green Line and accompanied by the caption “Den Xecho – Do not forget”. For the Greek Cypriots, therefore, a settlement to the Cyprus problem – a just settlement – involves righting that wrong, reversing the injustices, undoing as far as possible the results of what they regard as the illegal Turkish invasion and its consequences, and healing the trauma. This includes the withdrawal of all Turkish troops and settlers, the ending of partition, the return of the refugees to their homes and properties, the discovery of the fate of the missing persons, and the restoration of the independence and territorial integrity of the Republic of Cyprus, the human rights of the Cypriot people, and the setting up of effective guarantees for the security of Cyprus which do not involve Turkey, or at least which do not give it the right to carry out unilateral intervention. The deep trauma suffered by the people has convinced them that they are entitled to remedial action by the other side under the authority of the international community.

Naturally Greek Cypriots cannot say – even though some may be thinking – that they would like to revert to the situation as it existed in the ten-and-a-half years before the Turkish invasion, since that was not unproblematic. From December 1963 to the Turkish invasion, an all-Greek government, formed by a president who had been

elected by the Greek Cypriot community, ruled Cyprus without the participation and consent of the Turkish Cypriot community, and without compliance to certain central provisions of the 1960 constitution which had been designed to protect the political and economic interests of the Turkish Cypriot community. A just settlement will have to include a new constitutional order accepted by both communities. It is hard to know what the mass of ordinary Greek Cypriots consider to be the form and composition of the government of Cyprus under an *ideally* just settlement. It would probably be an elected government based on the support of the majority of citizens, guaranteeing individual rights to everyone and limited autonomy to the Turkish Cypriot community on religious and educational matters. Some Greek Cypriots probably think that in future the mandatory participation of Turkish Cypriots in the government and the other institutions of the state is a necessary evil, but others may think it is positively desirable, as long as Turkish Cypriot officials will not exceed the 18 or 20 per cent mark of the total state personnel, and further they will not have the powers to veto the decisions of the representatives of the Greek Cypriot majority. Although a few Greek Cypriots believe their side should demand a unitary state, most understand that this is not realistic politics, and that the only credible form of government for a unified Cyprus is a bicommunal, bizonal federation. The truth of the matter, though, is that Greek Cypriots generally do not feel unhappy about the absence of Turkish Cypriots in the government, parliament, civil service, police force and other institutions of the republic. After all, most Greek Cypriots have no memories of the time when the Republic of Cyprus had a Turkish Vice President endowed with certain veto powers, Turkish ministers, and Turkish civil servants and policemen at a proportion of about 30 per cent. Just as no Greek Cypriots have ever suggested publicly that their government had lost its democratic legitimacy and moral authority to govern the whole of Cyprus and all Cypriots following the events of December 1963 (the events which many politicians and the media persist in describing as “the Turkish insurrection against the state” – see below), there are no Greek Cypriots who believe that unless and until Turkish Cypriot elected representatives and officials join the institutions of the republic, the republic will continue to suffer from a serious deficit in democratic legitimacy.

On the other side of the territorial and social divide, the Turkish Cypriot community in their large majority, take the view – which is also the standard view of Turkey’s

officialdom and the media – that the Cyprus problem did not begin in 1974, but it existed at least as far back as the intercommunal fighting of which broke out in December 1963, when Greek Cypriots, failing to intimidate them into accepting changes to the bicomunal constitutional order as a prelude to bring about enosis, attacked them with groups of armed irregulars. Turkish Cypriots, in their thousands, were forced to leave their homes in isolated or mixed villages and move in fear of their safety to enclaves defended by a few hundreds of Turkish troops and their own poorly armed irregulars, mainly in an area extending from North Nicosia to the Pentadaktylos mountains, covering just 3 per cent of the island's area. They slept in tents or sub-standard dwellings, few had jobs or anything useful to do, and they were provided for by the Red Crescent and watched over by the UN Peacekeeping Force, and for many years the Greek Cypriot forces had them surrounded and controlled all traffic of people and goods into their enclaves (for example, no cement and building materials were allowed in, in case they were used in the construction of fortification). The Turkish community's experience of living as second-class citizens in enclaves left a deep trauma and had a formative influence on the collective mind of all those who went through it.

Not that this is their only grievance. On the Turkish Cypriot view of things, the Turkish Cypriot Vice President, his ministers, members of parliament, civil servants, policemen and other state officers and employees were 'ousted' from the posts by the Greek Cypriots, and Greek Cypriots officials became by default the masters and functionaries of the Republic of Cyprus. Indeed, one of the deepest grievances which Turkish Cypriots have harboured ever since December 1963 is that they have had to exist without a recognized state, without an international accepted government which was capable of speaking for them in the family of nations as an equal member, and their isolation has been entirely due to the machinations of 'the so-called Republic of Cyprus'. Commemorations of the meaning of the 1963 events have been marked by political meetings and rituals which include the declaration 'We will not forget'. References to the period 1963-74 are used by Turkish Cypriots to talk about their trauma and indicate their entitlement to a future free from humiliation and domination by Greek Cypriots. Thus there is no way of returning to the situation as it existed before the Turkish 'peace operation' of 1974, or indeed before 1963, and they will not agree to start withdrawing Turkish troops unless a new and very particular

constitutional order – a federal union consisting of two distinct states, one for each community – is created through negotiations and endorsed by international agreements. Under a truly just settlement, the Turkish Cypriots will remain, as they have been from 1974, entirely free from any possible Greek Cypriot attack or intimidation, and this requires the maintenance of Turkish guarantees for their security. In any federation (or preferably confederation) they are willing to take part in, they would have to have political equality with the Greek Cypriot community, which is taken to mean effective share in all institutions of the federation.

For any grievance of one community there is a counter-grievance of the other. The Greek Cypriots do not forget that in August 1964 their newly formed and barely trained National Guard together with elements of the Greek Army were attacked by the Turkish Air Force with machine-guns and incendiary bombs when they tried to eliminate a Turkish Cypriot enclave in the Kokkina (Erenkoy) along the sea in the Tylliria region used for supplies from Turkey causing about 40 dead and 300 wounded. That incident taught the Greek Cypriots two bitter lessons: that if the Turkish Cypriots were pushed too hard, Turkey would intervene with violence, and if it did, Greece might not be willing or able to send its own Air Force to help. The President of Cyprus, Archbishop Makarios, issued at the time a statement indicating that “If Turkey comes to save Turkish Cypriots, it will not find any Turkish Cypriots to save”. The Cyprus government had issued a similar statement in December 1963, when Turkey threatened to intervene in support of the Turkish Cypriots.

Again, when the Greek Cypriots talk about the Turkish invasion of July 1974 and list their catalogue of horrors, the Turkish Cypriots express their own hurt about the attacks mounted in August 1974 by armed Greek Cypriot irregulars against civilians, including women and children, at the villages of Tochni, Aloa, Maratha and Sandalaris. Archbishop Makarios was not in Cyprus in August 1974, but his statements may have guided a number of Greek Cypriot gunmen. Both communities want to recall, and never forget, certain events of victimhood, but not events of their aggression.

Given the Turkish Cypriot view of the Cyprus problem, the Greek Cypriots are not hopeful they can reach a fair and just settlement with the Turkish Cypriots. Indeed,

Greek Cypriots believe that ideally they should not have to negotiate for their restoration of their rights and rightful interests with the Turkish Cypriot leader (the ‘occupation leader’ as the media often call him, who is supported and managed by the Turkish government), but rather the international community should apply painful sanctions on Turkey – the true culprit – to force it to release its grip on occupied north Cyprus and withdraw its forces and settlers, leaving the constitutional and other matters to be settled between their government and the Turkish Cypriot community (and if that came to pass, why should the Greek side, free from *force majeure*, ever agree to a federation, which is regarded as a ‘painful concession’?). Similarly the Turkish Cypriots do not really want to enter into negotiations with the deniers of their rights and former oppressors, especially as such negotiations will involve their yielding currently populated territory in the north in exchange of international legitimation to which they believe they are entitled, anyway. However, the international community, or the most influential countries which have policies on Cyprus, are not willing to lean heavily on any one side, but they encourage them to seek a compromise settlement for the good of both communities, relations between Greece and Turkey, and the Eastern Mediterranean region too, which could well do with one less international anomaly. Therefore, with constant prompting from the United Nations and the European Union the two communities have tried again and again to go forward together towards a joint future in a bizonal federal republic to embrace the whole of Cypriot society. The trouble is that the Greek Cypriots want to go forward to a future which resembles, as far as possible, the past of a Greek-dominated, virtually unitary Cyprus; and the Turkish Cypriots want to go forward to a future which resembles, as far as possible, the *de facto* two-state present.

Once the two communities appreciate that they will not get even part of what they desire and believe they are entitled to – the effective remedies of their losses – unless they enter into negotiations aimed at a federal settlement package, the political classes and opinion leaders start articulating these beliefs and desires into distinct ‘demands’ which the community leaders will further refine, couch them in terms of international and constitutional law, and put them forward on the negotiating table as the just and reasonable objectives of their respective sides. Given that both communities see the negotiations as the sphere where matters of importance may be promoted, each community’s politicians and opinion leaders get to work to raise passions and moral

fervour. Thus the community leaders and policy-makers cannot formulate and push their demands without reference to the community beliefs and desires that form the background to the negotiations. No political leader wants to be regarded by its own community as being insufficiently tough in promoting the rights and interests it believes to belong to it, or being soft on its adversary.

Given the Greek Cypriot conception of the Cyprus problem (the Turkish invasion and occupation) and its solution (forward to the past), successive presidents have put forward a set of Greek Cypriot demands (**GCDs**) which may be formalized and set out in rough order of importance as follows:

GCD1: The departure of all Turkish troops.

GCD2: The withdrawal of mainland Turkish settlers.

GCD3: The effective implementation of the right of Greek Cypriots refugees to return to their homes and properties under conditions of safety.

GCD4: The effective implementation of the rights of all Greek Cypriots (or, as it is sometimes stated, the rights of all Cypriots whatever their ethnic origin) to move, reside and enjoy the use of property throughout the island.

GCD5: The creation of a new bicomunal, bizonal, federal constitution for the existing Republic of Cyprus – the internationally recognized state that was established in 1960 and has continued to exist – under which a strong federal state should extend its authority over the whole of the territory and embrace all Cypriots under a government in which Greek Cypriot officials should predominate and which should speak for all Cypriots in European and international fora.

GCD6: The setting up of a new system of credible international guarantees to ensure the independence, territorial integrity and security of the federal republic, guarantees which should not give Turkey the right of intervention under any circumstances.

It could be said, here, that despite all the things which the Greek Cypriots lost in 1974, the community is by no means destitute or lacking in significant political and economic resources. The Greek Cypriots still possess three vital and cherished assets (GCAs) :

GCA1: Greek Cypriots control the internationally recognized Republic of Cyprus, a modern and successful state which is member of the UN, the EU and many other international organisations, which has political, diplomatic and economic relations with many other states and organisations, and which has a voice and the ability to argue for its interests in the international arena. They are not willing to surrender their control of the Republic to the Turkish Cypriot community – for all the vague talk about ‘political equality’ – nor are they willing to see the Republic of Cyprus dissolved and replaced by an entirely new bicomunal and composite state.

GCA2: Greek Cypriots have had a strong economy – a striking testimony to their diligence and entrepreneurial talents – mainly based on tourism and legal and financial services. Despite the international banking and financial crisis which developed during the first year of Christofias’s term of office in 2008 and the resumption of intercommunal negotiations after a long gap, still supports a relatively high standard of living and social welfare for most Greek Cypriots. Many Greek Cypriots would be not be happy to share their wealth with the Turkish Cypriot community, if that means accepting a lower standard of living for themselves, or use it to pay compensation to Greek Cypriot refugees for the permanent loss of their properties in the north. (This issue – the cost of a settlement – was raised and discussed extensively, if confusedly, by Greek Cypriots in the period leading up the referendums of 24 April 2004.)

GCA3: The Republic of Cyprus became a full member of the European Union, after several years of accession negotiations, on 1 May 2004. The strength of the Greek Cypriot economy, the Republic’s capacity to introduce and implement all the reforms required by the EU, and the diplomatic skills of the politicians and officials of the state and their allies in Greece were constantly tested, especially in view of vehement opposition and threats from Turkey – which had its own EU aspirations – and scepticism from a number of important EU members. The Greek Cypriots believed,

and Turks feared, that the Republic could use its enhanced diplomatic clout to persuade the EU to extract dramatic concessions from Turkey in return for being allowed to start its own accession negotiations with the EU in December 2004. The EU did not oblige the Greek Cypriots – neither did Greece for that matter – but nevertheless they succeeded in creating a vague linkage between Turkey’s progress in its negotiations and progress towards a Cyprus settlement. If this linkage did not exist, Europe would have heard even less about the Cyprus problem. It may be added that on 1 January 2008 the Republic of Cyprus joined the Eurozone, which counts as a further achievement of the vigour of the Greek Cypriot economy.

As regards the Turkish Cypriots, when they reflect on their present condition and compare it with their sufferings and deprivations in the pre-1974 period, they realize they have a number of vital assets (TCAs) which they do not want to lose, but on the contrary to preserve as far as possible ‘forward to the two-state present’). These assets may be formalized as follows:

TCA1: A continuous stretch of territory in the north of Cyprus containing ports and airports which is, in some sense, ‘their’ land, the homeland of the Turkish Cypriot community and also a large group of Turkish settlers, some well-integrated, others not. The community will never go back to being a set of pools of Turkish villages and hamlets spread all over Cyprus, which could pass as a minority in a Greek Cyprus. There will always be a Northern Cyprus for Turkish Cypriots, and any Greek Cypriots who may be allowed into their former homes and properties following an agreement will have to be a minority which would not be able to exercise influence the institutions of Northern Cyprus, including its economy.

TCA2: The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (or TRNC) is an organized state, if not a particularly successful one. It has a president who is respected by the community and well regarded by outsiders; it has an effective government, a parliament and a legal system, courts, police, National Guard, administration; it organizes public utilities, social services, health services, schools and universities, festivals and other institutions. This is not, of course, recognized officially by any government other than Turkey’s, but it is not ignored either. In fact, after decades of official isolation, the existence of the TRNC was recognized by the 34-state Standing

Conference of the Organisation of Islamic States (OIS) as the ‘Turkish Cypriot State’, and this is significant for Turkish Cypriots. Denktash, Talat and more recently Eroglu had meetings with American and European statesmen, as well senior UN officials. Turkish Cypriots just don’t believe that their elected leaders and the political processes which have elevated them to high office are not respected by foreign statesmen. If there is a federal settlement, Turkish Cypriots believe that the TRNC is going to be, in practice if not officially, one of the founding states of the Cyprus federal republic.

TCA3: The community is not economically self-supporting – it cannot survive without substantial economic assistance from Turkey; but nevertheless, it is believed that the natural beauty and resources of Northern Cyprus and its enterprising people will provide the foundations of a thriving economy based on tourism, if and when a political settlement occurs.

TCA4: Since 1974, Turkish Cypriots no longer fear any aggressive or humiliating actions by Greek Cypriots, even though Greek Cypriots are deeply aggrieved from the losses of 1974 and theoretically they have a motive to attack their community. The reason is that Northern Cyprus is controlled by the Turkish armed forces and the Turkish Cypriot National Guard which Greek Cypriots would never contemplate attacking, since Turkey will use its forces to crush any Greek Cypriot attackers. Turkish Cypriots are entirely safe, and they believe this is due to the presence of Turkish troops and the willingness of Turkey to use what they believe to be their right of intervention under the legally unimpeachable Treaty of Guarantee of 1960. The Turkish Cypriots and Turkey insist that Turkish guarantees for the security of the North should stay in place to serve for ever as a deterrent for Greek Cypriot hotheads.

Turkish Cypriots are determined to preserve in any negotiated settlement the main gains created by 1974, in effect a safe and viable ethnic state. They may be willing to give up some territory to the Greek Cypriots for the sake of a negotiated federal settlement, but what is left to them will be Northern Cyprus. Despite these assets, however, they lack two important things, and for them this is a matter of resentment. Given that they are not officially recognized by the UN and the EU, and so, unlike the Republic of Cyprus, they cannot participate in any international organization like

other independent states (with the exception of OIC and, as mere observers, in a number of other bodies), and so they feel isolated and spurned. Second, their own living standards are not as high as they could be and they look with envy at the affluent and sophisticated society of their Greek Cypriot neighbours in the South. These considerations give rise to two Turkish Cypriots demands (**TCDs**), which Turkish Cypriot officials have transformed into formal negotiating objectives:

TCD1: Any settlement should involve an equal partnership in a new, internationally recognized bizonal (in effect two-state) federal republic. Since the Turkish Cypriots do not believe they are going to be recognized on their own as an independent state, they want *faute de mieux* to end their isolation and the uncertainties of their domestic legal system by joining Greek Cypriots in setting up a federation or preferably a confederation – a ‘common state’ under a ‘rotating presidency’ – in which they will participate effectively on the basis of political equality. Through the federation, Turkish Cypriots can gain access to the institutions of international life, present their views on international affairs, and create relations which can enhance their capabilities for community welfare.

TCD2: Create arrangements by which they can mobilize their natural resources and develop their economy by means of financial and technical assistance from foreign governments and international bodies, and unimpeded trade and tourist expansion. (Indeed, some Greek Cypriots, including former Presidents Vassiliou and Clerides, have encouraged Turkish Cypriots to believe that a settlement will bring both communities high levels of prosperity. It remains, however, a fact that most Greek Cypriots do not want to make economic sacrifices for the Turkish Cypriots, especially if an expanding Turkish Cypriot tourist sector may damage tourism in the south.)

There is, further, a third Turkish Cypriot demand, which expresses primarily the interests of Turkey, but also those of the Turkish Cypriot community.

TCD3: The federal republic will provide strong, clear and unequivocal support to Turkey’s application to join the EU a full member.

If we define the negotiating position of each community as the combination of demands for advantageous changes and insistence on preserving vital assets, then quite obviously the set of objectives consisting of **{GCD1-6 B the preservation of GCA1-3}** is incompatible with the set of objectives consisting of **{the preservation of TCA1-4 & TCD1-3}**. No negotiation outcome can possibly satisfy fully both negotiating positions.

However, a careful look at individual items in each of the two sets of objectives would show that not every item on one set is contradicted by an item on the other set. For example, **GCD2**, the withdrawal of mainland Turkish settlers does not seem to antagonize any generally valued asset of the Turkish Cypriots. Indeed, a considerable number of Turkish Cypriots are not afraid to say that they would like recent settlers and seasonal workers to go back to Turkey, as their presence undermines the Turkish Cypriot identity and culture. However, the Turkish Cypriot authorities are most unlikely to agree that mainland Turks who have lived with them for decades, received TRNC citizenship, laid down roots, found Turkish Cypriot spouses or produced children in Northern Cyprus will be forcibly repatriated. But under the UN Plan presented by the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, put to a referendum by the two communities on 24 April 2004 and accepted by the Turkish Cypriots, some 50,000 mainlanders were set to return to Turkey. President Christofias has conceded in 2009 that as many as 50,000 Turkish-born mainlanders (out of an estimated 150,000 people) now living in Northern Cyprus can remain in Cyprus after the settlement. Again, Greek Cypriot politicians have no grave reservations about the United Cyprus Republic (or whatever it is going to be its title) lending support to Turkey's EU accession process, on the express condition that Turkey fulfils its obligations under any negotiated agreement that may be reached and respects the sovereignty of the federation.

However, **GCD6** – a new system of credible international guarantees which excludes unilateral right of intervention by Turkey, whatever the reason – is in blatant conflict with **TCA4**. The Greek Cypriots have long argued that a demilitarised Cyprus where security conditions are monitored by an upgraded UN Peacekeeping Force is sufficient guarantee for Turkish and Greek Cypriots. Turkish Cypriots have always maintained that “nobody dies for you”, and if they are ever attacked by Greek Cypriot

irregulars thinking they will get away with it, none of the foreign countries which may now be arguing for the nullification of Turkish guarantees is going to send their own soldiers to fight the attackers; only Turkey will. In any case, Turkey itself has a preponderant say in matters of security – in effect the use of its armed forces – and Turkish officials often say that Turkey will not agree to the cancellation of its guarantee rights. Glafkos Clerides, negotiating for the Greek Cypriots when he was president, accepted the inevitable preservation of **TCA4**, at least in essentials. Most Greek Cypriots didn't and still don't. How can the Greek Cypriot admit they ever harmed or they could conceivably harm Turkish Cypriots? How can the Turkish Cypriots withdraw their claim that in 1963-64 and subsequently, including during the summer of 1974, Greek Cypriots attacked them? How could Turkey admit that it could possibly abuse its guarantor rights? It is far from easy to see how Christofias and Eroglu can reach a compromise on this matter. Certain beliefs deeply entrenched in the collective minds of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots make compromise very difficult to achieve.

The incompatibility of Greek and Turkish Cypriot negotiating objectives does not by itself mean that the current process of negotiations is doomed to failure. It only means that if there is a negotiated settlement, no side will get or keep all it wants, since the other side will not agree. Where there is bargaining, one side may abandon entirely one objective on condition that the other side abandons entirely one of its objectives. Again, one side may indicate it will accept a partial satisfaction of its objective (e.g. Greek Cypriot refugees will not be able to take possession of their properties if they are not going to live permanently in the north) on condition that the other side will withdraw one of its own objectives or indicate it will accept a partial sacrifice of one of its assets (e.g. the Turkish side may agree that the northern territory will include a special administrative area for Greek Cypriots in north-eastern peninsula of Karpasia and a similar region to embrace the four Maronite villages in the north-west). The need for give-and-take is, in a way, mere common sense. What has to be appreciated, though, is that given that both sides express their demands in ethical terms, i.e. in terms of what its rights and just interests require, to the extent that the negotiator of one side fails to get satisfaction for some of his demands and wishes, he will feel – or his own community, which may not understand the pressures and intricacies of negotiation, may feel – that an *injustice* has been perpetrated.

Even if Christofias and Eroglu may be personally inclined to make substantial concessions to each other's side in the negotiations for the sake of a settlement which they believe to be in the overall and long-term interest of the communities they represent, they will have to consider that any agreement they may reach will not be put to effect and so no community will actually obtain any advantages unless and until the settlement is approved by the two communities in separate and parallel referenda. In that case, it would be up to every individual voter to decide if the settlement package is an improvement on his own or his community's situation over the maintenance of the *status quo*. The voter may well have to consider some such question as the following:

(A) When I consider the proposed package settlement in its complexity, do the elements which we have been deprived of until now and we can now obtain (and which represent the fulfilment of our demands in full or in part) *outweigh* in value and importance the various assets currently in our possession which we will have to give up (entirely or in part)?

To answer this question, a Greek Cypriot voter will have to reflect on and compare two states of affairs. Now his community has assets {CGA1-3} which he values greatly, but it lacks and wants all the things demanded in {GCD1-6}. If we symbolize by the letters **SP** the settlement package which takes from each community certain assets and at the same time satisfies some of its demands, then we can represent the Greek Cypriot referendum voter's interpretation of question (A) as: **Is SP better or more likely to advance my interests than {CGA 1-2}? (GCA3, i.e. EU membership, will not have to be given up, since the Turkish Cypriots too want Cyprus to remain a member-state of the Union.)** By contrast, a Turkish Cypriot voter will consider the value of assets {TCA1-4} and think about the objectives his side has set up in the negotiations, and he will ask himself: **Is SP better or more likely to advance my interests than {TCA1-4}?**

It should be appreciated that the question of which combination of elements is deemed better and which is deemed worse by a particular Greek or Turkish Cypriot, and the process by which he assesses his community's assets and advantages, its

deprivations and needs, and any settlement package that may emerge, is relative to the particular system of beliefs, desires, ethical values, fears and aspirations which he (and often his party or group of like-minded individuals which influences his ideas) subscribes to. This mental outlook is itself determined by an unconscious or barely conscious set of ideas which dominate the collective Greek Cypriot or Turkish Cypriot mind, and which I will discuss in the next section.

But there are other considerations which weigh with voters, and which complicate their thinking processes. One such consideration has to do with how far one trusts the other side to honour its side of any bargain. Mistrust by each community about the good will and reliability of the other side is endemic. For example, during the period of campaign for the referendum of 24 April 2004, many Greek Cypriots argued that the Greek Cypriot side was being asked to give up a number of important things to the other side immediately – things like the exclusive control of the Cyprus government, since a co-presidency would have to be created, to be replaced soon by an elected bicomunal Presidential Council – whereas the Turkish side would not be expected to give up what the Greek side demanded until a period between some months and many years; and even then there would be no guarantee that the Turkish side would not break faith. Would it be a smart move for the controllers of the Republic of Cyprus to give up or share their principal asset in exchange of a promissory note to be redeemed in stages over a long period of time, assuming that Turkey shows honesty and good faith? This argument seems to have carried conviction with many in the Greek Cypriot community.

A second consideration was probably more effective in persuading most Greek Cypriots to vote No. The Republic of Cyprus was set to become member of the European Union on 1 May 2004 at a time when Turkey was hoping to start accession talks with Brussels, and many Greek Cypriots believed it would make good sense to turn down the UN (or Annan) Plan with its many onerous and humiliating provisions and start a new process of negotiations with Turkey itself afterwards. Turkey needed to curry favour with the EU, and Cyprus hoped to rally support from most EU member states for a better and fairer package deal based on ‘European specifications’! Some of the best known Greek Cypriot political figures, including former presidents Vassiliou and Clerides, did not think this view was realistic. But a

second question surely needed to be considered, and needs to be considered again if Christofias and Eroglu ever reach agreement on a certain settlement package **SP**. The question is this:

(B) Is there a realistic prospect that if we reject the **SP** and the Cyprus problem remains for the foreseeable future unsolved, in due course circumstances will change in our favour (for example, our side will receive increased diplomatic, political and military assistance and support, or the other side will be weakened) and we will be able to negotiate a different package which represents a more advantageous balance between the fulfilment of our demands and the abandonment of our assets?

The answer to question (B) is not self-evident. Greek Cypriot politicians and many people remain hopeful that the EU will not forget the rights and just interests of their community, if and when Turkey looks set to become a member. But some Turkish Cypriots are also hopeful that if Turkey comes out well out of the next review or the EU gets impatient with the antics of some Greek Cypriot politicians, the European Commission in Brussels may renew its call for ending the ‘isolation’ of Northern Cyprus by permitting direct trade and air links with EU countries, in which case Greek Cypriot self-confidence will suffer a blow and reduce their demands on the Turkish Cypriot side to facilitate a settlement before things get even worse for them.

Thus we can propose a simple model, incorporating a simple notion of rationality, for voting in separate and parallel referenda for a new Cyprus settlement package. We can say that a Greek or Turkish Cypriot voter who identifies with the interests of his own community, its demands and its assets, rather than of all Cypriots in both communities, will try to answer on the basis of limited and unreliable information at his disposal questions (A) and (B).

- If the answer to question (A) is Yes and to question (B) is No, he will vote in favour of **SP**.
- If the answer to question (A) is Yes and to question (B) is Yes, he will vote against **SP**.

- If the answer to question (A) is No and to question (B) is No, he will vote against **SP**.
- If the answer to question (A) is No and to question (B) is Yes, he will vote against **SP**.

The model suggests that a referendum voter will only vote in favour of a settlement if he judges that the settlement package provides him and his community with the most advantageous result he could realistically expect for the lowest sacrifice of his assets, and that this optimal balance of advantage over disadvantage will *not* be improved by any favourable developments in future. There is, however, another possibility which complicates rational calculation: a voter may judge that a settlement package is unfavourable, and that his side's assets will be degraded in future and lose such value as they now possess. What does he then do? It is difficult to work out the reactions of our hypothetical agent. It very much depends on the character, personality and values of the individual. If you are Marshall Petain in June 1940, you negotiate a bad deal for your country with the victorious forces of Nazi Germany to avoid a worse fate when your army is defeated; on the other hand, if you are General de Gaulle, you reject a humiliating agreement with the enemy and hope for a favourable change in circumstances.

But the lesson from the preceding reflections is that any settlement package which is worked out by Christofias and Eroglu (with Turkey's approval) must be judged to be the optimal deal by most voters in the Greek Cypriot community and most voters in the Turkish Cypriot community at a given time and in the foreseeable future. We need to think of the situation in terms of a double optimum model which incorporates a judgment about future developments. It is always a matter of speculation how circumstances will change in the medium term, let alone the long term, but it cannot be entirely certain how well any agreed settlement package will work out in practice, even if voters in both communities may be inclined to see it as the optimal deal. Will voters be willing to give up the certainties of the assets they know and cherish for the uncertainties of a complicated partnership with what many Greek Cypriots and many Turkish Cypriots regard the other community as adversaries?

The double optimum model just outlined is based on the assumption that in the negotiations for a Cyprus settlement, the advantage secured by one side is a loss or sacrifice for the other. The reason why UN and EU officials, as well as some Greek Cypriot politicians like former Presidents Vassiliou and Clerides, urge Cypriots not to look at the negotiations as a zero-sum game is that many Cypriots in both communities adopt a point of view from which the negotiations do appear to be just that. The assumption, couched in ethical terms, is every much part of the common thinking of most Greek and Turkish Cypriots. To put it bluntly, each community wants to take – or perhaps take *back* – from the other community what it believes belongs to itself by right, but it is reluctant to give the other community more than the bare minimum of the assets it owns again by right. Many people in both communities think and say: “Why should we have to give them what is ours, what we have built up with our abilities, honest toil and hard sacrifices? So they can be enticed to return to us what also belongs to us, but they usurped by the use of force?” This recalcitrant attitude which fills with despair well-meaning international mediators, as well as small groups of Greek and Turkish Cypriots who attach vital importance to the development of intercommunal rapprochement and reconciliation needs to be properly appreciated.

3. The Manichean conception of Greek-Turkish historical conflicts and the creation of *Dementia Cypria*

The preceding section has indicated that each of the two Cypriot communities harbours deep traumas caused by events and circumstances in their recent history which have shaped their inner lives and perceptions, and which they believe were caused over time by the other side’s aggressive and unjust actions (where for the Greek Cypriots the ‘other side’ is both Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots or maybe, in more nuanced vocabulary, Turkish Cypriot ‘fanatics’, while for the Turkish Cypriots are the Greek Cypriots who wanted to turn Cyprus into a Greek island). A sense of ‘we-are-the-victims-of-their-aggression’ has helped define for each of the two communities both its own identity (the ‘victim’) and also the other side (the ‘aggressor’), and consequently they both appear to be expressing sincere conviction when they express their moral indignation in endless and mostly mindless blame of

the other side, and in competing and equally one-sided claims in the propaganda effort, the diplomatic arena and at the negotiation table.

At this point, I shall adopt and adapt the view of the contemporary British philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre to the effect that what gives unity to a human life is the unity of a narrative embodied in that life, a life with goals whose realization calls for certain virtues. By analogy I want to suggest that what gives unity to the life of a Greek or Turkish Cypriot person, a unity that includes a sense of membership of the Greek or Turkish Cypriot community respectively, is the existence of a certain narrative which is embodied in the community's public life and institutions, a narrative within which individual Greek and Turkish Cypriot fit their personal narratives at various significant moments. For example, thinking of oneself as a Greek or Turkish Cypriot and using for daily purposes the Greek or Turkish languages are points where the personal identity is subsumed under the communal or public identity. More interestingly, thinking of oneself as a 'good' Greek or Turkish Cypriot involves identifying with the goals which are immanent in the narrative embodied in one's community and believing oneself to have, and when required to exercise, the virtues called for by these goals. When my community is involved in a struggle against an adversary, I must identify with the struggle and display a fighting spirit, or the spirit of active resistance required by the struggle.

But I want to go further – and this next point has been made by several scholars of Greek and Turkish Cypriot nationalism. During the first half-century of British rule, an increasing number of Greek and Turkish Cypriots came to conceive of their communal or public identity, through expanding literacy and education in the Greek or Turkish language and culture, as part of Greek and Turkish national identity *sans phrase*. Thus most Greek and Turkish Cypriots came to subsume their individual life's narrative under the community narrative, which itself had been derived and was constantly replenished from a certain comprehensive way of telling the story of the Greeks and Turkish nations in the two mainlands. The aims which the nations achieved and the rights they realized through the application of virtuous effort, talent and sacrifice are national achievements, which cast a positive light on the ways individuals in Greece, Turkey and the two Cypriot communities think about their communal identities. On the contrary, the frustration of national aims, the assault on

national dignity, the denial of national rights, humiliations and other negative experiences are conceived and narrated as national traumas, which again reflect tragically on an individual's and a community's senses of self-identity. (To use a simple example from another historical context, consider how missile attacks by Hamas on Israeli population centres angers Jews living thousands of miles away, and how Israeli attacks on Gaza offend Palestinians, and indeed Arabs everywhere.)

The Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities conceptualise their respective traumas and grievances from 1963, 1974 and subsequently – directly remembered or acquired at second hand through school books, media, films etc – in terms of a larger 'national' historical narrative, or perhaps better, the partial and inaccurate quasi-historical narrative employed by people in Greece and Turkey, respectively, when they talk about the course of their relations since the Greek revolution against the Ottoman Empire in 1821-1829, if not the 'fall' or 'conquest' of Constantinople by the Ottomans in 1453. I do not want to suggest that the average Greek or Turk has a deep interest in the history of his nation, but school books produced in Greece and Turkey contain a smattering of information about the traumas and humiliations, as well as the achievements and the glories of the Greek or the Turkish people, and this information, partial and biased as it is, is supplemented and 'confirmed' for the average person by popular books, newspaper articles, school plays, films, TV programmes, video clips on the internet, speeches delivered on patriotic occasions and so on which present aspects of the tension-ridden evolution of one's nation in its relations to the other. These books and other texts, as well as the other media of transmission of vague and fragmentary historical beliefs and ideas have been used for generations by Greek and Turkish Cypriot children on the island. Thus a series of past glories and achievements, and traumas and humiliations become registered in the national narrative onto which new generations 'place' their own positive and negative experiences.

Thus most of the Greek Cypriots learned something about relations between Greeks and Turks within the Ottoman Empire, the clashes between Greek freedom fighters and soldiers of the Sultan during the Greek revolution (Greeks won, the Sultan had to recognize Greek independence in 1829); and later in 1896 in Macedonia (Turks won, Greeks lost); 1897 in Crete (Greeks effectively won, Turkish minority suffered many deaths); the Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913 (Greeks won and took Thessaloniki and

most of Macedonia, Turks lost); in 1916-18 in World War I (the Entente Powers on whose side Greece fought won, Greeks took much of Thrace, the Ottoman government was humiliated, though young Lieutenant-Colonel Mustafa Kemal gained fame and prestige as the defender of Gallipoli on the Dardanelles). On 15 May 1919 the Hellenic irredentist vision reached its climax when the Greek army arrived in Smyrna (sometimes school books add that it was acting under the authority of the Entente Powers, so that Britain and France can take some blame for what happened later) to protect the Greek communities in Western Asia Minor from Ottoman forces (and for other Anglo-French interests too) and they were received by the Greek population as liberators. Greek forces showed respect for the rights of the Turkish population, or so history books claim. But – and this is the difficult part for Greeks to appreciate – one people’s liberators are another people’s invaders, and Turkish nationalist forces were galvanized under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal to wage determined resistance against the Greek army. The Greek army was forced to withdraw in disarray in August 1922, and soon afterwards ‘infidel’ Smyrna was attacked, looted and burned down by Turkish nationalist forces, while Ionian Greeks fled in terror to Greece and in some cases to Cyprus in a state of shock, bringing with them traumatic accounts of destruction, loss, atrocity, fear and death. Similar losses had taken place as a result of the systematic expulsion of Greek communities on Turkey’s Black Sea coast in 1914-22. The Greek Parliament established a few years ago 19 May as the Day of Remembrance of the Pontian Greek Genocide in Anatolia, and 14 September as the Day of Remembrance of Asia Minor Disaster. (Incidentally, 19 May 1919 is marked by the Turks as the symbolic start of the Turkish War of Liberation, as that was the day when Mustafa Kemal landed in Samsun on Turkey’s Black Sea shores to organize national resistance in the heartland of Anatolia against Greek and Western encroachment.) Greek have to ‘remember’ and narrate in a certain way things that happened well before they were born, and they have to feel indignation at those occasions when Turks humiliated them. In the Greek national narrative, Turks are represented by the image of ‘the Turk’ as a dark force which sought by naked power and cruel practices to keep the Greek nation in chains. (Interestingly, there is no day of remembrance for the Greek victims of atrocities committed by German, Italian and Bulgarian troops which actually occupied Greece in 1941-44.)

The Greek quasi-historical national narrative presents the Greeks throughout as virtuous, civilised, enterprising, brave, generous people, always fighting for freedom of the nation and the Orthodox faith, who deserved their glorious victories and the staged expansion of its national territory, but unfortunately suffered a number of defeats worthy of glory, which resulted in great pain and humiliation in the hands of the Turks. The narrative itself, not unnaturally, contains a rich vocabulary used to enhance to moral and cultural standing of the Greek nation, and belittle or diminish that of the nation's adversaries.

And how do the Turkish national narrative present the wars between Greeks and Turks? Naturally enough, the Turkish national narrative of the history of Turkish-Greek relations is pretty close to a mirror-image of the Greek national narrative. According to this, the Greeks had been constantly seeking to expand their land at the expense of the Turks, and committed atrocities against Turkish populations in conquered areas, most prominently in the Smyrna area in 1919-22, until they were expelled by Turkish nationalist forces. On national occasions Turks remember, display pictures and re-enact in public meetings, the theatre, cinema and newspaper the times of their national traumas and national glories, just like the Greeks do the same for their own traumas and glories. Photographs, paintings and statues or busts of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk can be found in every public building and school in Turkey and Northern Cyprus, and some of these show the founder and first president of modern Turkey in military uniform. This is a reminder that Ataturk served his people and achieved glory by organizing armed resistance against the Greeks and other invading forces in 1919, as he had organized earlier, during the British-French-ANZAC invasion of the Dardanelles of 1915-16, the Ottoman defences in Gallipoli. The idea of Ataturk as the leader of national resistance and saviour of his country from the humiliation of the Treaty of Sevres is very important for Turks and Turkish Cypriots, but it does not meet with much understanding by Greeks, which see Kemalism as an aggressive and barbaric movement. Right on top of Pentadaktylos Mountains in Northern Cyprus, over the Nicosia-Kyrenia road, there is a huge two-dimensional metal figure of a man bending forward and looking out. This is puzzling to most Greek Cypriots and foreign visitors who travel along the road. Most Turkish Cypriots, however, know that this figure is a kind of schematic representation of

Ataturk as he appears in a 1916 photograph standing at a viewing point on top of a promontory overlooking Gallipoli and directing the Ottoman defences.

These two potted quasi-historical narratives of Greek-Turkish relations during one hundred years of intermittent wars and other periods of tension from the Greek revolution to the Turkish War of Liberation, the former believed by Greeks and Greek Cypriots, the latter by Turks and Turkish Cypriots, provide two broad frameworks of ideas which Greek and Turkish people respectively have been taught for successive generations. Both narratives contain simplistic or distorted events of glory and trauma for the nation. One's own nation is always virtuous, brave and freedom-loving; the other nation is unjust, cruel and oppressive. Since 'we' always have justice on our side, when 'we' achieve victory, it is because we display military honour, courage and virtue. In that case, 'they' deserve 'their' defeat, 'they' get their comeuppance. When 'they' defeat us, 'we' are the victims of a brutal assault by barbarians, but 'we' are determined to suffer 'our' trauma in dignity, and before long 'we' will recover from 'our' wounds and 'we' are determined to renew our efforts to get justice and obtain 'our' rights, for 'we' shall never give up and in due course decent and freedom-loving people will come over to our side and support us. In times of defeat, the certainty of 'our' just position is not less necessary than in times of victory.

The quasi-historical narratives of the two 'mother' nations had already been established in the political consciousness of Greek and Turkish Cypriots in the 1950s, when the National Organisation of Cypriot fighters, better known by its Greek initials EOKA, led a national liberation struggle against British colonial rule and in support of the enosis or union of Cyprus with Greece. This development provoked vigorous reaction from the Turkish Cypriot community who were opposed to "replacing a colonial master for a worse one", and – more significantly – it provoked a determined opposition in Turkey, which now demanded *taksim*, the partitioning of Cyprus between Turkey and Greece. Turkish riots attacked Greek houses and shops in Istanbul and Smyrna, and most of the Greek community in Istanbul – supposedly protected by the Treaty of Lausanne – were forced to flee. The colonial government of Cyprus set up an Auxiliary Police Force composed mainly of Turkish Cypriots to fight Greek Cypriot militants and rioters. The intercommunal tension was heightened in 1958 when agents of the Turkish government set up within the Turkish Cypriot

community an underground militant organisation known by its initials TMT to protect Turkish Cypriots, attack Greek Cypriots and demand the partition (or *taksim*) of the island between Turkey and Greece. That year a number of Greek and Turkish Cypriots were killed in intercommunal clashes, and properties were attacked and burned in acts of vandalism and revenge. Both communities felt aggrieved and hostile at each other.

Historians have taken scant interest in the way the clashes between Greek and Turkish Cypriot militants in the mid-1950s shaped the ideas and the political careers of the Greek and Turkish nationalists. In fact, following the Zurich and London Agreements of February 1959 on the basis of which the Republic of Cyprus was established in 1960 under a bicomunal, power-sharing constitution and Greek-Turkish-British guarantees, these nationalists filled most of the senior positions in the government, the parliament, the police and the civil service of the republic. Many of these leading citizens owed their salaries, careers and hopes of promotion, their prestige, their perquisites, and their authority in their communities to the fact that they had been members of EOKA and fought for *enosis*, or they had been members of TMT or worked for *taksim*. The forces of Greek and Turkish nationalism among the two communities with their Manichean implications undermined faith in the new state, and the nationalists who now dominated the government, the parliament and the civil service had little wish to work together on the basis of the constitution. Greek Cypriot politicians pushed things ‘courageously’ to a crisis and Turkish Cypriot politicians prepared their ‘brave’ resistance. Both sides organized underground irregular forces of ‘patriots’, and a chance incident in Nicosia on a cold night in December 1963, when two Turkish Cypriot civilians were killed by Greek Cypriot policemen and one policeman was injured sparked intercommunal fighting which brought down the bicomunal constitution in bloodshed. Turkish Cypriot government officials, parliamentarians, civil servants and policemen withdrew into defended enclaves leaving the official republic into Greek hands, and Greek hands grasped eagerly the steering wheel of the ship of state. The breakdown of the constitutional order ushered a period of communal separation and animosity from which the island has never recovered. The fabric of Cypriot society was torn, and the two communities followed different paths under leaders for whom reconciliation was not particularly desired, or in any case it was not a high priority. Ten years of humiliation in the hands of the

more powerful Greek Cypriot community have left their mark on those Turkish Cypriots who suffered. Greek Cypriot people, their leaders and spokesmen anyway, never expressed any regrets for their treatment of the Turkish Cypriots. Indeed, the ten years of Turkish Cypriot misery coincided with the most satisfying ten years for Greek Cypriot politicians, since for the first and last time in history they ruled almost the whole of the island. The end of Turkish misery coincided with the trauma and misery of the Turkish invasion, when some 180,000 Greek Cypriots were forced to leave their homes in the north and sought refuge in what became the ‘free areas’ of the Republic of Cyprus in the south. Just like the child very often lives in the man and woman for ever and the development of the infantile mind shapes very considerably the intellectual and emotional capacities of the mature adult, so the early traumas of the young Cypriot state have shaped the collective minds of the two communities and the tragic and in many ways pitiable Cyprus.

When Greek and Turkish Cypriots experienced their respective traumas under the conceptual scheme of their respective quasi-historical national narratives, they also adopted from these narratives the relevant forms of explanation (“why are we in conflict with them?”), and also what might be called, by analogy with the various kinds of individual trauma and distress studied by psychodynamic psychology, a number of habitual methods or ‘strategies’ for coping with them or alleviating them. These are strategies which are suggested or sanctioned by the narratives themselves, and which make the narratives of practical value, indeed for many people an indispensable form of self-support. How, then, do the two communities cope with traumas, hurt, tension, humiliation, misery, insecurity, loss of loved ones and collective victimhood, given that they both see the protracted conflicts in Manichean terms, viewed of course from opposite standpoints? In the next few paragraphs I shall attempt to outline an answer to this question – something in the nature of an explanatory model involving a degree of ‘idealisation’ – and trace its implications for the intercommunal negotiations for a Cyprus federal settlement to embrace both communities.

I begin with the common sense observation that when you suffer a trauma or contemplate the personal consequences of disaster, it is easier to tolerate the pain when you are convinced you acted honourably, justly and wisely, than that you acted

badly and foolishly and got your comeuppance. For example, political leaders who started or provoked wars and as a result heaped disasters on their peoples could never publicly admit their mistakes – think of the leaders of Austria-Hungary in 1914, Greek leaders in 1919, Hitler in 1939, Lyndon Johnson in 1964, Nasser in 1967, Saddam Hussein in his wars against Iran and Kuwait, George W. Bush in 2003... the list could be very long. When Greek or Turkish Cypriot leaders contemplate the traumas which their communities suffered at various times in recent history, they always blame with all the power of their rhetoric and the power of the propaganda at their disposal the other community, the adversary nation, the ‘Anglo-Americans’, the UN, the dark conspiracies in the councils of the EU etc, but never themselves; and those who believe them are first and foremost their traumatized communities. The strong tendency of the Greek and Turkish Cypriots, at least in their large majorities, to see the conflicts between them in extreme terms, in black and white, the struggle of all-Good against all-Evil, is supported by the quasi-historical narratives of the Greek and Turkish nations. This, as has been noted by a number of psychologists who examined the social psychological aspects of the Cyprus conflict, is analogous to the psychological phenomenon of splitting. In fact child psychologists observed that infants think of the world purely in extremes, but adults of immature personality who come under stress, tend to cope with their problems in light of the belief that whereas they are good and decent, innocent and blameless, they have been put upon or suffered injustice from a bad person. Thus, divorcing husbands and wives tend to blame the end of the marriage on the other party’s coldness, unreasonableness, infidelity, drinking etc, and a dismissed employee blames it all on the autocratic personality or insecurities of his employer. When a person tries to cope with hurt in some way which involves splitting and is told by third parties that he must take or share the blame for what happened, he gets upset. Both sides to the Cyprus problem have had to hear from foreign statesmen, diplomats and UN officials that they are not entirely innocent and blameless, and their stock reaction is to blame the third parties for hostile feelings towards them. This makes arbitration or the offer of good offices difficult to accept. Greek and Turkish Cypriot politicians and journalists from time to time blame their own diplomatic services for not carrying out effective ‘enlightenment’ to rebut the adversary’s black propaganda. It never occurs to them that their case may not be as strong and straightforward as they may have supposed.

Very often Greeks and Turkish Cypriots are reminded of despicable acts which their community carried out and they just deny them. What, Greek Cypriots harmed Turkish Cypriots in 1963-74, frightened them away from their homes in some 100 villages and usurped their properties? Impossible! What, Turkish Cypriots in 1963 forced Greek Cypriots out of their homes in mixed areas where the former predominated, such as Kermia in North-West Nicosia? No way! But there are all those people who were victims and remembered the details. No way, it's a lie! Sometimes people are lying through their teeth; but on other occasions they are genuinely in denial: they don't want to believe and they will not believe they had been unjust and cruel, no matter what evidence is brought before them. There are certainly many precedents in the quasi-historical narrative of the Greek and the Turkish nations when any suggestions of violent and oppressive behaviour towards groups belonging to the other nation are given short shrift despite ample historical evidence. The violent treatment meted out by the Greek armed forces or irregulars against the Turkish communities in the Peloponnese (1821), Crete (1897), Smyrna (1919-22), or the action of Turkish armed forces or militias against Greek communities on the Black Sea (1914-22), Smyrna (1922), or Istanbul (1955) are well-documented. When a Greek author writes about Greek atrocities against Turks in Smyrna (as happened in Spring 2009 when a Professor at Panteion University in Athens found the evidence undeniable), or when a Turkish writer admits Turkish atrocities against Greeks, or indeed Armenians, then he can expect the mindless wrath of nationalist media and public opinion. In a community of deniers, the courageous admitter of the facts is considered a traitor.

If, as I suggested, a community suffering from a trauma or distress absolutely needs for its own sanity and self-support to assert its own complete righteousness and innocence, it will deny and deny vehemently that it has ever done anything to bring its present calamity on itself. The community internalises the denial of guilt, acts and speaks as if it has done no wrong, so it demands that the adversary is blamed for the pain it is experiencing, and in due course it creates in its collective mind a state intermediate between knowing and not knowing that it has done wrong. This state of denial which, long before Freud gave it prominence in his account of the defence mechanism of the traumatized mind, was indicated by Friedrich Nietzsche by the remark: "I have done that", says my memory. 'I cannot have done that', says my

pride, and remains adamant. At last, memory yields.” Perhaps Nietzsche could well have added to one’s pride, one’s need to enhance his moral standing and belittle that of his adversary.

This neatly illustrates the familiar psychological phenomenon of projection where side A in a dispute attributes (sometimes sincerely) to side B hostile feelings and intentions which are similar or analogous to those which side A in fact has. To give another example, for many years after 1974 many Greek Cypriots believed and assured anyone who would listen that Turkey wanted to take over the whole of Cyprus, so naturally justified their own programmes of developing the defence capabilities of their National Guard and signing a Joint Defence Pact with Greece; and in the same period the Turkish Cypriot side accused the Greek Cypriots of making plans to bring about *enosis*, or alternatively the Hellenisation of the island, which justified its own decision to drag their feet on substantial negotiations for a Cyprus settlement until the Greek Cypriot side agreed to recognize Turkish Cypriot sovereignty as a prelude to a confederation.

It may be asked: Since Christofias and Eroglu are experienced politicians of some intelligence and ability, should they not have come to realize that they cannot agree on a federal settlement which would give each of the communities even 70 per cent of what they believe is their due, and so should they not be lowering their sights to 50 per cent? It is *just possible* that is what they inwardly want; but they are both captives of the Manichean ideas, rational and irrational beliefs, rational and irrational desires, pious hopes and unrealistic expectations of their communities, constantly fuelled by maximalistic claims of nationalist politicians and the media in their respective communities. Christofias must know full well that Turkish Cypriots suffered killings, atrocities and cruel treatment in 1963-74, and indeed in the wake of the invasion in the villages of Maratha, Aloa, Sandalaris, Tochni and elsewhere. Eroglu must be fully aware of witness accounts confirmed by independent corroboration of killings, atrocities and cruel treatment against Greek Cypriots in 1963, and especially in 1974. But can the two leaders ever acknowledge this to their own peoples and tell them that *they do not deserve* to get all they are demanding, as the other side also has its own just grievances and must secure its own rights and protection? Can Christofias and Eroglu stand together at the checkpoint at Ledra Palace Hotel on the Green Line

which saw scenes of battles in 1963 and 1974, hold hands as French President Francois Mitterand and West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl did on 23 September 1984 before the memorial of the fallen in the Battle of Verdun of 1916 and pledge ‘never again’? Could they retain their authority with their respective communities if they sought sanity in a world of collective *dementia*?

The compromise settlement of the Cyprus problem worked out in 1959-60 reinforced the existence of separate ‘ethnic’ leaderships which based their authority on their respective claims to advance the rights of their own communities. The violence of 1963-64 and 1974 brought about traumas and loss of rights for both communities, and they both yearn for justice *for themselves*, rather than a balanced political arrangement for Cyprus. For one reason or another, the view has prevailed in Cyprus, Greece, Turkey and the international community that the Cyprus problem now needs another attempt at a settlement through negotiations for a bizonal, bicomunal federation. The two communities are willing to negotiate, if only reluctantly, on the understanding that the projected settlement is going to be just and fair, as defined by the terms of the national narrative. But each of the national narratives incorporates rational and irrational beliefs, rational and irrational desires, twisted ideas of virtue and bravery, anxious concerns and so on, and as a result the social psychological conditions in each community, which together constitute the social psychological environment in which any negotiations take place, prevent or rule out the achievement of an agreed settlement which the majority of each community could endorse in separate referenda as sufficiently just and fair.

As was indicated, Christofias and Eroglu, no matter what they think privately, are bound by their commitments and democratic relations to their respective communities to be guided by their rational and irrational beliefs and desires, which are fundamentally incompatible. This is the kind of madness that keeps Cyprus in an *impasse* when the world moves forward to ever closer forms of cooperation: the Greek Cypriots want to move forward through negotiations to the unified past and the Turkish Cypriots want to move forward through negotiations to the separatist present. This is *dementia Cypria*.

Note: Some material in this essay first appeared in my article ‘*Dementia Cypria: On the Social Psychological Environment of the Intercommunal Negotiations*’ published in *The Cyprus Review*, Vol. 21, No. 1, Spring 2009. I wish to express my thanks to the editor of the journal for permission to re-use this material.