



Working Papers Series  
in  
EU Border Conflicts Studies

# **EU and the Cyprus Conflict**

**Perceptions of the border and Europe in the Cyprus conflict**

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**INTERCOLLEGE**

**No. 18**  
**June 2005**

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## **Introduction: Aims of the Report**

The current report aims to provide an overview of the perceptions of the Cyprus conflict, the border and the European Union (EU) currently prevalent on the island as well as an assessment of the changes to which such perceptions have been subject over recent years. This report is the product of research undertaken on this topic primarily over six months from July 2004 to January 2005. However, it also includes data collected during previous phases of the project that illuminate this particular aspect of the analysis. The report is the third prepared for the Cyprus case study under the EUBORDERCONF project scheme, which aims to examine the role of the European Union (EU) in transforming zones of conflict into zones of cooperation. Within this scheme, the current report attempts to examine how this transformation has been conceptualised in Cyprus, with reference in particular to ‘the public sphere’, in order to enable comparison between this case study and other case studies examined under the project (Ireland, Greece / Turkey, Israel / Palestine, and Europe’s North). At the same time it provides material for comparison of the perceptions in Cyprus of key concepts related to this transformation, with analyses of the similar perceptions of Cyprus within European institutions.

This report follows on from the analysis of the EU’s impact on the Cyprus conflict as presented in the social science literature (Demetriou, 2004a) and the analysis of EU impact as presented by political actors in Cyprus (Demetriou, 2004b). These are available respectively as working papers no.5 and no. 9 of the EUBORDERCONF working paper series. These papers include background material on the conflict and the theoretical framework employed for analysis in this project, which will be referred to here but not detailed. In specific, the former paper provides an outline of the major stages in the Cyprus conflict and major events in the development of Cyprus – EU relations over the last 30 years. The latter paper details a four-tier classification of political actors’ views about the ways in which the EU impacted on the development of the conflict; this classificatory framework is taken as the project’s overall framework of comparative analysis and while its application in the case of Cyprus is analysed in working paper no.9, further detailed information about its development is to be found in Diez, Stetter and Albert (2004). This classification will be taken as the basis for the analysis undertaken in this paper. However, the classificatory approach itself will not constitute the main part of this paper. Rather, the aim here will be to provide information that supplements the analysis already offered in working paper no.9 so as to further the understanding of how different pathways of EU impact on the conflict determine and are determined by perceptions on the ground of both the EU and the conflict itself (including perceptions of the border also). For this reason, the theoretical approach adopted in this paper is mainly that of discourse analysis. The results obtained through this approach will subsequently be used to elucidate the relation between changes in perceptions and pathways of impact.

The current report is thus divided into three main parts. In the first an overview is provided of the ways in which the EU has been perceived to have had an impact on the Cyprus problem by political scientists and by political actors over the last two decades. In the second part, an analysis of most prominent discourses on the island around the project’s three main concepts (‘EU’, ‘border’, and ‘conflict’) and the changes to which they have been subject over the same period of time will be undertaken. In the conclusion, the changes identified in the second part will be related

to the project's overall theoretical framework with a view to analysing the ways in which the EU can impact on border conflicts through, while, or despite, changing public perceptions. In this context, 'public' will be taken to mean perceptions articulated in the public domain -primarily through mass media and public political institutions, such as schools.

## **Background to institutional relations with the EU**

### *Overview*

An analysis of the perceptions of the 'border' and 'the EU' in Cyprus should take account of the institutional relations between the EU and the two sides of the island. This is not only because these relations influence the formation of such concepts in a straight-forward top-down way, but also because it is largely with reference to these relations, whether official or perceived, that both of these concepts, as well as the various conceptualisations of the 'conflict', are articulated on both sides of the dividing line. For this reason, this section will summarise background information necessary for following the analysis of later sections, which has already been presented in previous working papers, but with the emphasis placed on tracing the development of these institutional relations.

At the point of writing (January 2005), it appears that with the completion of the accession to the EU of the Republic of Cyprus, which took place during the latest phase of enlargement, on May 1<sup>st</sup> 2004, the process of integration has been completed. Yet, the developments in the politics of the conflict that accession catalysed suggests that this 'finalisation' of the accession process opened more questions about Cyprus' relations (both political and institutional) with the EU than it closed. The most important of these changes were undoubtedly the referenda that took place simultaneously on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2004 in both the north and the south parts of the island and sought the people's approval of the implementation of a UN-proposed plan to end the division of the island and bring on a solution to the Cyprus conflict. Their result was a surprising (in comparison with scenaria discussed over previous years) 65% acceptance in the north and 76% rejection in the south. The other important change that took place with the finalisation of the accession process was the opening of the Green Line to (Cypriot and later European) crossers on both sides on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2003, which also came as a surprise a week after the signing of the EU Accession Treaty.

Yet as argued elsewhere (Demetriou, 2004c) the surprising factor of both these events is not so much indicative of their inexplicability, as it is of the expectations prior to them. Cyprus' institutional relations with the EU are inextricably linked with these expectations. Furthermore, the questions now opened about these relations also refer to directly to the expectations of Cypriots (politicians and 'the public') and EU policy-makers alike about the future of the Cyprus problem and the future of Cyprus in the EU.

In this sense, the two events mentioned above can be seen as pivotal moments around which changes in the perceptions of the conflict, the border, and the EU occurred. Therefore, they are extremely important reference points in the analysis of cultural change in Cyprus, which is the focus of this paper. But the fact that they occurred at critical points in the development of institutional relations between Cyprus and the

EU suggests that the relation between the two needs to be closely examined. This paper will argue that this relation is neither simple nor direct. In the last two years the political debate in Cyprus has been much more focussed on the conflict than on the EU (the inescapable link between the two notwithstanding). The “opening of the gates” (as most often referred to in both sides of the island) as a topic of discussion is to be found in undeniably higher frequency than is the signing of the EU Accession Treaty that preceded it, and so are the referenda in comparison to the Republic’s accession that succeeded them. This would suggest that while the Accession of Cyprus to the EU was sought in order to ‘catalyse’ developments that would bring about a solution to the conflict (see following section), it was, at the end of the process, overshadowed by these developments, despite the fact that their end result was not a solution. In this respect, it could be argued that in fact the theorists of catalysis chose a perfect metaphor: the process was speeded up, the catalyst remained unaffected by the process, and the end result did not substantially differ from its slow-process alternative. To push the analogy to its limits, the quest now seems to lie in changing the substrate, enzyme, or both.

The process of such change has already occurred and is located largely in the sphere of institutional relations. Upon the accession of the Republic of Cyprus to the EU, the *acquis communautaire* (henceforth ‘the *acquis*’) was suspended in the northern part of the island. However, given the acceptance of the UN plan by voters in the north, the EU was called upon to solve the conundrum of how to avoid castigating, in the language of many observers, the side that sought reconciliation (a fundamental EU principle) by shutting it out of its enlargement round, and rewarding the side that rejected this reconciliation with accession. While a series of measures aiming at officialising, to the extent allowed by international and European law, channels of communication and institutional relations with politicians and other representatives in the northern part of the island, are being sought, relations between the Republic of Cyprus and Brussels-based EU representatives seem to be souring by the day and to extend little beyond the official institutional relations dictated by EU rules. This situation, however, is presented in differing ways within Cyprus and conceptualised on the basis of these multifarious presentations.

This situation provides both the political and theoretical context of the current report. For this reason, the examples chosen to illustrate the long-term effects of the EU on the Cyprus conflict will draw on debates which in the past year have surfaced both within and outside Cyprus and which have utilised, developed, and changed, the rhetorical schemas within which previous debates had been formulated. The arguments herein will be based on the foregoing view of recent events and the questions posed to illuminate the process of cultural change with respect to the conflict will be posed in retrospect with the hindsight of these developments. However, before delving further into this analysis, a brief summary of the previous work on which this paper is based will be given.

#### *Past Analyses of Cyprus - EU relations*

While the above claim might sound facile, the fact that interpretations of past events are inevitably undertaken in the light of those that followed them<sup>1</sup> is often unstated in

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<sup>1</sup> This statement is made in reference to a vast literature on social history and social memory in which the works of Hobsbawm (1992) and Connerton (1989) have respectively been influential.

the literature on the Cyprus conflict. As a result, the vast majority of political analyses on the topic are produced and consumed in the present, with the overarching questions being oriented towards short-term future policies. This means that once the timeframe in which the developments foreseen in these works has passed, they are of little analytic value. Instead, I have argued (Demetriou 2004a) that such works are important archival resources because they help trace the discourses that shaped Cyprus-EU relations over the years. This is all the more important for the purposes of this paper because it is precisely the development of these discourses that enables the analysis of cultural change. For this reason, a summary of the main arguments in this literature will be given here. References to these arguments will be made throughout the rest of the paper, since the aim of the second section will be to analyse cultural change by supplementing this material (arising from the review of the academic literature) with material collected in institutions other than the academy where the developments in the representations of the concepts of 'border', 'conflict' and 'the EU' can be traced.

With regards to the EU, the most important point to note is the overarching link of the prospects of membership to the solution of the problem, which has dominated representations of the EU in the academic literature since the appearance of these discussions in the early 1990s (Nicolaidis, 1990; Papaneophytou, 1994). In working paper no.7, the various ways in which this relation has been thought to be shaped were outlined (Demetriou, 2004a). As claimed in the working paper that followed it (Demetriou 2004b), this relation was presented as progressing along all four of the project's identified pathways to a greater or lesser extent. Overall, the EU's impact on the conflict has been increasing over the last two decades and while the EEC / EC / EU played virtually no role in the conflict up to 1972, its impact on it after this date has been steadily increasing alongside the continuing involvement of other 'external' actors in the conflict such as Greece, Turkey, Britain, the US, and the UN. Thus, 'the EU' seems to have from the outset been represented as an external actor who could influence (positively or negatively) the conflict and increasingly to have been represented in a comparative relation to other external actors. This view is in line with traditional political analyses of the Cyprus conflict that have placed it in the context of 'realpolitik' (whether conspiratorial or not) and have in the process victimised the people on the island but also denied them agency in the development of the conflict<sup>2</sup>.

Thus I have argued that the EU's impact on the conflict has been perceived in the social science literature as mostly being direct, even though the analytical perspectives reviewed often explicitly traced more than one pathways of involvement. Most analyses employing the 'carrot and stick' approach related Cyprus' membership to the solution of the problem via Turkey's application for membership (Ayres, 1996; Hutchence and Georgiades, 1999; Richmond, 1999). Others saw it as more relevant to the EU's approach towards the Turkish-Cypriot political leadership (Papaneophytou, 1994; Mendelson, 2001; Stephen 1997). Assessments as to whether this direct impact would have overall positive effects on the resolution of the conflict were positive (Papaneophytou, 1994; Theophanous, 2000), negative (Mendelson, 2001; Stephen, 1997), or cautious, outlining both possibilities (Richmond, 1999).

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<sup>2</sup> A classification of the literature along these lines is undertaken in the said working paper (Demetriou, 2004a), while a critique from within the discipline of the neofunctionalism employed in some of these approaches is offered by Diez (forthcoming).

Yet other analyses emphasised the connective impact as the most fruitful for attaining positive results (Nicolaidis, 1990; Mavratsas, 1998). In fact it is rather surprising that the literature on the EU seems to have little to say about this particular pathway of influencing the conflict. And it is most surprising in light of the equally substantial literature on 'bi-communalism', which has been the key strategy of impacting on the conflict via the connective pathway (Hadjipavlou, 2000; Anastasiou, 2002; Markides, 2001). Perhaps the reason for this lack of connection between the two bodies of literature is that 'bi-communalism' was in fact a strategy of intervention largely developed and carried out by US-based organizations, such as the Fulbright Commission and USAID, and later on with UNOPS and UNDP (through which the EU has also funded bi-communal activities). Thus as a field of impact it had already been taken up long before the EU became involved in Cyprus, with the result that the efforts expended by the EU on connecting the two communities not only came relatively late to attract the attention of analysts, but also paled in comparison with the long-established and much more impressive and research-wise wealthy US-funded work. It is this disjunction of the literature on the conflict that I think also accounts for the fact that the great amount of literature that deals with the concepts most relevant to the analysis of the connective impact, i.e. the 'border', is to be found in the analyses of bi-communalism rather than those of the EU (Hocknell, 1998; Markides, 2001; Demetriades, 1998).

The enabling impact, on the other hand, was found to be the least well analysed. This in itself is perhaps telling since such analyses employ representations of the 'other side' as the basis for their arguments. In turn, these arguments are highly subjective and often nationalist, since they depend on the analyst's stance (in fact mostly Greek-Cypriot-supporting); e.g. arguing that EU membership would enable the leadership in Turkish to legitimate its consent to an agreement on Cyprus that would otherwise be seen as 'selling Cyprus' (Hutchence and Georgiades, 1999) or that EU membership of a re-united Cyprus would enable the Turkish-Cypriot leadership to legitimate its partial abandoning of the policy that places emphasis on the guarantee of security that the Turkish army currently provides (Theophanous, 1995).

Finally, the constructive impact seems to be the focus of more critical analyses, in their majority undertaken by Greek-Cypriot researchers, who saw in the impending accession of the Republic an opportunity to address more fundamental problems that underpinned Greek-Cypriot nationalist discourse and also Greek- and Turkish-Cypriot relations. Thus, some kind of constructive impact was imagined as one of possibilities through which the EU would impact on the conflict, because, one of the most convincing arguments went, this would foster a more pluralistic, democratic, and tolerant society, through the broadening of civil society, which in itself will be conducive to bringing about the solution of the Cyprus problem (Peristianis, 1998). The disengagement of Greek-Cypriot politics from traditional party clientalistic structures was also seen as one of the ways in which this process can occur (Mavratsas, 1998). The expansion of civil society was also envisioned to enable the formation of interest groups that would be able to form trans-cultural links on the island and trans-national ones outside it, within the context of the European Union and beyond (Agathangelou, 1997). Less optimistic analyses argued that some hierarchical structures and the oppression that attends them within supra-national states can increase with the change in economic and immigration patterns that

Cyprus' closer ties with the EU entail (Vassiliadou, 2002). For the purposes of the current paper, these analyses of what can be called the 'constructive' impact, are most valuable because they employ a sustained analysis of political discourse and the shifts it has undergone, or is expected to undergo, which is exactly what is being examined here. Furthermore, it is in this strand of analyses that one finds in-depth explorations of the concepts that are of immediate interest to the current paper ('EU', 'border', and 'conflict'). These analyses will thus be referred to in the section of the paper that analyses these concepts and their relation to the EU's impact on the conflict. As background to the process of institutionalisation of these concepts, I will now turn to the structural relations between Cyprus' EU accession process and the state institutions on the island.

#### *EU accession and its impact on institutions*

When the Republic of Cyprus initially entered into association with the EEC in 1973, it was already a run by a government in which Turkish-Cypriots did not participate. By the time of its application for EEC membership in 1990, the war of 1974 had divided the island had taken place, the state in the north had undergone a formative stage to emerge in 1983 as the unrecognised (under international law) Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (henceforth TRNC), and despite a prevailing official discourse on both sides of the island that the final solution to the political problem was attainable in a future state (of federation or confederation) governmental institutions were set up and run on both sides of the island in such ways as to cater for members of the Greek-Cypriot community in the south and the Turkish-Cypriot one in the north in exclusion of each other respectively. Therefore, Cyprus' relations with the EU seem to have been from the start essentially exclusionary of Turkish-Cypriots.

And yet, it seems to have been this very concern to incorporate both communities in the workings of a future common state that would operate within the EU that drove both the Republic's application for membership, and the EU's acceptance of this application and entry into negotiations. On the one hand, since the late 1980s, when the Republic's prospective EU membership began to be discussed, the main argument used to legitimise it was that EU membership would exert positive pressure on the two sides, and particularly the Turkish-Cypriot leadership, to agree to a solution. In fact, in a letter lobbying the EU's Ministers of Foreign Affairs in 1994, to support the EU's start of accession negotiations with Cyprus, the man credited with formulating the 'catalysis' discourse, Nicos Kranidiotis, then vice-minister of Foreign Affairs in Greece, explicitly stated that

“the examination of Cyprus' request for accession offers the EU its only opportunity to help the Secretary General of the UN in his efforts to find a solution through negotiations...[to this effect] a clear and unequivocal message stating to all concerned that the EU is willing to begin accession negotiations with Cyprus on a specific date, could change the negative attitude of the Turkish side and act as an important pressure lever for a solution to be found and an end to 20 year's of disappointment to ensue” (1999: 209-210, my translation).

In this sense then, the EU's role as a 'catalyst' to the solution of the Cyprus problem was from the beginning explicitly perceived as a highly political one, whereby the EU, beside the Greek-Cypriots, would act to put pressure on the Turkish and the Turkish-Cypriot leaderships. Greece's role in this matter, as advocate of the Republic within the EU, is also clear in this letter. But at the same time, the clearly sided



decision that Ministers are called upon to take here, is argued for on the basis of 'justice' in the sense that at a juncture when inter-communal negotiations were breaking down because of the intransigence of the Turkish-Cypriot side, a refusal to consider Cyprus as a candidate country because of the political problem would be tantamount to encouraging such intransigence. This argument in effect made the EU's reluctance to become politically involved in Cyprus obsolete because it stated that avoidance of such involvement was impossible from the moment Cyprus itself applied for membership –in short, the choice was not whether, but on whose side to become involved.

Cyprus' suitability for membership was thus indeed decided in 1995, a few months after the letter was sent, and negotiations began in 1998. The decision to open negotiations was taken at the European Council meeting in Luxemburg in 1997. Crucially, however, at each stage of the negotiations official EU statements underlined again and again the Union's aspirations for a final solution to the problem to be found and for the whole island to eventually become a member. At the Helsinki meeting in 1999, this was formulated in the clearest terms to that point, when it was stressed that the Union preferred a solution to be reached before accession and that at the time of accession Cyprus be a united country, but that as long as the failure to reach such a solution did not fall onto the shoulders of the Greek-Cypriot side, Cyprus could accede before a solution. At the same time, Turkey's membership was going to be considered. This was in fact the perfect illustration of the 'catalysis' theory: having been both given 'carrots' the two community leaderships on the island agreed to another round of UN-brokered negotiations, that envisioned the conclusion of Cyprus' EU accession negotiations in December 2002 as the date for a solution to be agreed.

It is precisely at this point that the 'constructive' aspect of the EU's impact can be said to have become most clearly demonstrable, as civil society in the northern part of the island started a campaign in support of a solution and entry of the whole island into the EU, in opposition to the official position of their leadership. With the appearance of this rift between 'the people's will' and that of their representatives, another deadline became visible, that of April 2003, when the Republic would formally sign the Accession Treaty, by which time it was thought that the pressure against the leadership in the north might yield results. However, with another round of talks collapsing in February 2003 these hopes were dashed.

The Republic of Cyprus signed the Accession Treaty on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2003. A week later, in an unprecedented move, the Turkish-Cypriot leadership decided to open up the crossing points on the Green Line, which up to that point had remained closed to almost all traffic. In December 2003 a new leadership was elected in the north, headed by the up to then oppositionist left-wing party leader, Mehmet Ali Talat. The negotiation process was revived and in February 2004 a new timeframe was agreed upon according to which a final agreement would be reached by March and put to a popular vote on both sides of the island simultaneously before Cyprus' accession to the EU. After the rejection of the re-unification plan in the south in April, special measures were adopted by the EU regulating its relations with the north, starting with the policing of the Green line and extending to trade, funding, and official representation.

What can be seen from this schematic history of Cyprus –EU relations is that by far

the most important changes to the dynamics of the conflict occurred in the last three years. It is also evident that these changes were intimately related to the Republic's accession process. But what is mostly of interest, I would argue, is that the realisation of these changes involved the introduction of new actors in the political scene. This also introduced new arguments, new ways of formulating old discourses and new articulations of the concepts under consideration in this paper. It is therefore against this background that the analysis of the following section, of the discursive shifts related to these concepts during this period, rests.

## **Analysis of the changing perceptions of the conflict and the EU**

### *Overview*

This section will outline the changes that have taken place within Cyprus in relation to the Republic's accession to the EU and which have had an impact on the prospects of a solution to the political problem. For reasons outlined in the previous section, the timeframe of this analysis will concentrate on the last three years. The analysis will focus on changes in public perceptions of those concepts that have been most fundamental in the discourse around the conflict. While in this sense, conceptualisations of 'the other' seem to be by far the most significant in this process, the treatment of this concept here will be dispersed throughout the different subsections, precisely because its treatment in isolation would be, if not impossible, at least distracting to the overall concerns of the analysis. Thus, despite the fact that the problem of isolating any of the focal concepts remains, the analysis will centre on the changes in the conceptualisation of the 'EU', including closely-related concepts such as 'Europe', 'European-ness', the 'border', and as above, closely-related concepts such as 'the Green Line', 'separation', and 'communication', and 'conflict', wherein concepts such as 'solution', 'human rights', and 'freedom' are also included. Furthermore, overarching concepts such as 'justice' will also be explored throughout.

The data presented in this section of the paper has been mainly collected in the most recent phases of the project<sup>3</sup>, but also includes data collected earlier, where this is relevant to the discussion. Thus, the focus of the analysis will be media reports, and interviews with 'informants' in the ethnographic sense, spatial organisation and symbolism, parliamentary and other documents and educational material such as school history textbooks. Data from interviews with officials, presented in the previous working paper, will only occasionally be referred to here.

The analysis in this section will then form the basis of the concluding observations in the following section, where an assessment of the EU's impact on changing perceptions about the conflict in Cyprus, will be undertaken.

### *Perceptions of the 'border'*

Since its coming into existence, the Green Line in Cyprus has stood for the separation of the Greek- and Turkish- Cypriot communities. Whereas the separation had in fact been consolidated throughout the years of British colonial rule (Attalides, 1979) the division was formalised with the separation of the major towns into communal quarters in 1958, after intense campaign by the Turkish-Cypriot leadership (Markides,

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<sup>3</sup> This of course, does not impact on the diachronic scope of the analysis, since the reference is to the **collection** not the **production** of this data –e.g. the parliamentary debates referred to later, have taken place in the last two decades, but have been collected in this phase of the project.

2001). The division of municipalities was then enshrined in the 1960 Constitution. With the start of the inter-communal strife in December 1963, the division line in Nicosia was fixed by a 1964 UN Security Council Resolution that also established UNFICYP, the UN security forces mandated to guard the peace on the island, and who are still present there (Mirbagheri, 1998). The division of the island into a Turkish-Cypriot north and a Greek-Cypriot south similarly has roots in the various peace plans proposed by mediators in the two decades preceding 1974, the most discussed of which is perhaps the Acheson plan, proposed in 1964, which envisioned a division between the Karpaz peninsula, which would be under Turkish control and the rest of the island, under Greek-Cypriot control, where Turkish-Cypriots would enjoy minority rights (O'Malley and Craig, 2001: 113-114). It was on the basis of these ultimately rejected plans that the current position of the Green Line was established, when the Turkish military marched to this Line during the war of 1974 before halting the offensive to enable peace talks to continue. As the peace talks are intermittently on-going at the time of writing, the Green Line is still considered, in terms of international law, a ceasefire line. This status is also the official position of the Greek-Cypriot side (Chrysostomides, 2000; interview 1, December 2003). However, it is during this period of stalemate of the last 30 years that the popular perceptions of the border on each side were re-formulated in different ways, and it is to these perceptions that the analysis now turns.

Throughout the period from 1974 to 2003, the Green Line was closed so that all communication between the north and south parts of the island was virtually impossible. No direct phone line connection existed, postal services were not available and physical crossing of the line was prohibited. The Green Line was, and still is, manned by military personnel, from the Turkish and Turkish-Cypriot forces on the northern side, the Greek-Cypriot forces on the southern, and UNFICYP on the Line itself. Thus, whereas in many areas, and particularly rural, the Line itself is not clearly marked, this three-tier formation of military posts is visible on the hills along the Line and inside Nicosia, which is the only town in Cyprus through which the Line runs (Cockburn, 2004; Papadakis, 1994; Gumpert and Drucker, 1999). This situation has over the last three decades given rise to particular discourses about the division, in which Nicosia appears in spatial terms as the chief symbol of the division. Since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, Nicosia has been presented by the Greek-Cypriot side, and later on by the bi-communal peace movement as well, as 'the last divided capital in Europe'. This phrase was used to encapsulate the injustice of this division, within a wider discursive frame according to which 'justice' was the key to the solution of the Cyprus problem. This perception of 'justice' in the official Greek-Cypriot discourse meant achieving a solution that was based on international law, which in turn meant a solution based on the recognition of the Greek-Cypriot leadership as the only legitimate government on the island and the refusal to recognise any form of autonomy for the 'illegal' TRNC<sup>4</sup>.

This link between a Greek-Cypriot perception of 'justice' and the division is clear in the semantics of the layout of the military post at the end of Ledra Street, one of Nicosia's most famous streets. Within the last decade this post has become a popular tourist attraction, where visitors to the capital are invited to climb the steps that lead to

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<sup>4</sup> For a historical perspective on Greek-Cypriot understandings of 'justice' in political terms, see Bryant (2001).

the post, where a soldier on duty will lend them his binoculars so that they can view the ‘other’, ‘inaccessible’ part, of the town (Bollens, 2002). What is actually visible over that blue-and-white-striped wall (strongly reminiscent of the Greek flag) is an overgrown field, symbolic of the dereliction throughout the years of separation, beyond which rises another wall that similarly stops access from the northern side of the same street. Following this experience of actually viewing the abruptness of the division and the irregularity it creates to the ‘natural’ urban spatial flow (‘a street that just stops’ in the words of visitors interviewed), the visitor is then invited to view a photo exhibition at the foot of the exit stairs, where the ‘injustice’ suffered by the Greek-Cypriot people as a result of the Turkish invasion is documented. This includes photos of the destruction during the war, the refugee camps set up in the months following the war, the capture of Greek-Cypriots by the Turkish army, etc. According to foreign visitors, this is a highly emotive experience, in the words of some ‘the first time they really understood what the problem was about’, or alternatively, ‘the first time they understood the injustice of the division’. Thus, in connecting the concepts of ‘division’ and ‘injustice’, this feature also links the ‘Cyprus problem’ to the Greek-Cypriot discourse about its solution.

At the same time, the depiction of Nicosia as ‘the last divided capital in Europe’ also implied, at least until 2004, a processual view of the conflict and Cyprus’ location in the world because it referred to the idea of a Europe as representative of the ‘western’, ‘modernised’, and ‘developed’ world in which conflict and division had been overcome. If Cyprus was to claim a place in that world, therefore, it should similarly aspire to the dissolution of such dividing lines or otherwise be relegated to an anomalous position within Europe, or worse, a position within the ‘backward’ world outside it. Given these implications then, it is not surprising that this phrase was prominent throughout the process of accession, both within and outside the island. It can thus be argued that the symbolism of the southern side of the border has been, and still is, primarily about creating the conceptual links between Greek-Cypriot official understandings of ‘division’ and Greek-Cypriot official understandings of what a future ‘solution’ should be. Furthermore, it can also be argued that these conceptual links marked on the border are primarily addressed to the international community: much like tourists are invited to experience ‘injustice’ at the post on Ledra Street, the international political community represented by the UN and the EU is invited to endorse Greek-Cypriot positions on how the conflict is to be solved.

Similar links are also made on the northern side of the border, yet with crucially different referents. The walls that mark the Green Line on the northern side often depict images of the Turkish army intervening in 1974 to save Turkish-Cypriots (in the form of soldiers, Turkish flags, or victorious blood-spilling). These are accompanied or substituted for phrases referring to this intervention and the reasons for it, such as the order ‘not to forget the massacres’ (*katliamları unutma*) and Atatürk sayings such as ‘what joy to be Turk’ (*ne mutlu Türküm diyene*) and ‘soil in the name of which there are dead is homeland’ (*toprak eğer uğurunda ölen varsa vatanıdır*)<sup>5</sup>. By comparison then, the symbolism on the northern side of the Line is focussed on establishing it as a territorial border that defines the limits of an independent state, the statehood of which is protected and maintained by the Turkish army. Thus the conceptual links made on this side of the Line are between ‘border’,

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<sup>5</sup> On the concepts of blood and soil in Turkish-Cypriot nationalist discourse see Bryant (2002).

‘statehood’ and the ‘Turkish army’. The idea of ‘division’ that should be overcome is, notably, de-emphasised. Furthermore, the receptor of these concepts seems to be the TRNC citizenry rather than the international community. Turkish-Cypriot interviewees indeed seemed to be very aware of such images communicating ideas specifically to them, in ways that Greek-Cypriots do not respond to the border imagery in the south: statues celebrating the liberation of Turkish-Cypriots by the Turkish army, whether in border areas or not, are often mockingly greeted by passers-by with expressions of ‘thanks’ (*şükran*).

Thus on the level of official discourse the symbolism of the border in the north bypasses ideas about division, and therefore, also ideas about a solution that would reconstitute the island as a single political entity. In fact, it is precisely this dissolution of the Turkish-Cypriot community as a separate political entity that formed the basis of arguments against the Republic’s EU application by the Turkish-Cypriot leadership in the early 1990s. In contradistinction to the Greek-Cypriot position, the Turkish-Cypriot one was that the separation of the two sides, effected thanks to the intervention of the Turkish army, guaranteed the safety of the Turkish-Cypriots and was to be maintained, attempts to overcome it (e.g. by the EU through inaugurating the accession process) being viewed as partial in favour of the Greek-Cypriot side and thus hostile towards the Turkish-Cypriot positions (Demetriou, 2004a). And yet, even though the official representations of the border excluded such links to the EU, the links they did establish between the concepts of ‘border’ and the ‘Turkish army’ were utilised in the pre-accession period by the Turkish-Cypriot opposition, who in its articulation of a pro-EU position saw the ‘border’ as isolating Turkish-Cypriots from the international community and the Turkish army as the guarantors of this isolation. Thus, in the formation of the Turkish-Cypriot opposition discourse, the Line came to symbolise ‘separation’ not simply of the two communities, but of the north from the rest of the world, the EU becoming the answer to this problem, and the Turkish army its cause.

In short, the concept of the ‘border’ was of major significance to the articulation of the discourses concerning Cyprus’ membership of the EU. Furthermore, it was the links drawn between this and other concepts related to the perception of the ‘conflict’, about which further analysis will follow, that enabled these specific kinds of articulation. In addition, I will now also argue that it was primarily the ‘closed’ state of the border that shaped these discourses. In order to explore this, I will now examine how this impenetrability of the border became paramount in the ways in which it was perceived. In order to do this, I will review the few yet important exceptions that existed to the communication bar across the Line outlined above.

The largest group allowed to cross the border with relative ease during the years of separation were foreign nationals. Non-Cypriot tourists for example, were allowed to cross from the south to the north, provided they would not spend the night there. To ensure this, the Greek-Cypriot authorities at the Ledra Palace checkpoint in Nicosia (the only point at which access to the north was possible) noted the details of the crossers and checked them off upon their return, a policy officially explained through the discourse of ‘security concerns’. This, however, was a measure in line with official Greek-Cypriot policy, which discouraged monetary exchanges in the north, because it viewed them as practices beneficial to the economy of the north and thus conducive to the continuing existence of the TRNC and hence the perpetuation of the

status quo. It was according to this policy that in 1992 a case was launched with the European Court of Justice, against the UK for importing goods from the northern part of the island. The case was eventually won two years later (ECJ, Case C-432/92) on the basis that such products were not checked and labelled by the authorities of the Republic and thus could not carry internationally recognised phytosanitary certificates. Therefore, the prohibition on tourists from spending money on hotel accommodation in the north can be seen as a policy through which outsiders (representatives of the ‘international community’), were co-opted into Greek-Cypriot perspectives on the conflict and thus into governmental policies regarding the treatment of the north prior to a solution. Yet it should be noted that more official representatives of the ‘international community’, such as foreign embassy personnel had relatively easier access to the north from the south –a total lack of restrictions was of course applied to UN personnel. At the same time, movement from the north to the south was totally prohibited on the basis that initial entry into the north (i.e. from airports or ports) constituted illegal entry to the island because in the Republic’s government’s perspective, it was effected by entry ‘through illegal ports’.

Within this framework, it is also important to examine the process through which Cypriots were able to cross the border. Such movement was allowed in specific circumstances, to Cypriots who had previously filed applications to their respective authorities for permissions to cross in either direction for specific purposes. In practice, this usually applied to bi-communal meetings, i.e. of individuals involved in bi-communal pro-rapprochement projects that were in their majority facilitated through international mediators such as the UN or foreign embassies. Thus, such applications were in practice filed by foreign officials with the process of approval being facilitated by the relevant UN office in Cyprus. Such approvals were normally granted by Greek-Cypriot authorities, but were much more severely scrutinised and often rejected by their Turkish-Cypriot counterparts. In fact, working paper 9 (Demetriou, 2004b) explored how such rejection was used by Turkish-Cypriot authorities as a retaliation policy at times when the ‘international community’ was perceived to pursue a Greek-Cypriot-oriented approach in its conflict mediation efforts (a pertinent example being the EU decision to begin accession negotiations with the Republic). In this respect, it can be argued that it was not the existence of the border as such, but its crossing by the locals (Greek- and Turkish- Cypriots) that brought the ‘international community’ into focus as receptors of their policies for the authorities in the north –while for the ones in the south the ‘international community’ was perceived as constantly present.

In more general terms, it can also be seen that perceptions of the ‘border’ by both authorities were inextricably tied to perceptions about the ‘conflict’ and the future ‘solution’. These links became much clearer upon the opening of the border in April 2003, when the authorities in the north decided to relax the restrictions on crossing that they had since then applied. Reactions to this decision have been explored elsewhere (Demetriou, 2004c). What I intend to do here is merely to outline the continuities and changes that this relaxation entailed for the perceptions of the ‘border’ and related concepts through a review of the policies instituted by the two sides in relation to crossings.

It is firstly important to note that when the decision to relax movement restrictions across the Line was initially announced it was accompanied by a minimal set of rules

–movement was essentially free on either side and overnight stay was not allowed. However, this restriction was changed within the first few weeks and overnight stay extended to a maximum of three nights. In this respect, the most important change that took place with the decision to relax movement restrictions was that the rules relating to the treatment of the border were being set by the northern side. As the Greek-Cypriot side never officially recognised the border as anything but a ceasefire line, when the opening took place, it essentially lost much of the control it had up to then had over who crossed and for what reasons. Thus retaining the discourse of ‘security concerns’ and the ‘inappropriateness of supporting the economy of the north’, it continued to discourage overnight stays in the north. Similarly, retaining the discourse of ‘illegality of entry through unrecognised ports’ it denied entry into the south from the north to non-Turkish-Cypriots –which primarily meant migrants from Turkey and other foreigners who had entered through the airport in the north.

In this respect, it can be argued that while the signing of the EU accession treaty by the Republic, which had taken place a week before movement restrictions across the border were lifted, provided the impetus for this unprecedented decision of the Turkish-Cypriot side to unilaterally implement crucial changes to the status quo, subsequent policies for regulating movement across the border shifted the focus of EU involvement in Cyprus from the status of observer to a more involved approach. Such policies were primarily the regulation of trade, which was put into effect a year later and the lifting of the prohibition of movement from the north to the south for non-visa-nationals, who despite entering the island through ‘illegal ports’, were, since the Republic’s accession in May 2004, free to cross to the south. In short, the implementation of the Green Line Regulation, discussed elsewhere (Demetriou, 2004d), can be cited as evidence of a change in the EU’s approach to the conflict (this was argued in the previous working paper). In this sense, it is also evidence of how this shift in approach has also affected the ways in which the ‘border’ was perceived by either side, making these perceptions more directly linked to the EU’s role as a mediator in the conflict than had previously been the case. In order to explore this further, the next section will now turn to the development of perceptions about the ‘EU’.

#### *Perceptions of the ‘EU’*

In comparison with perceptions of the ‘border’, perceptions of the ‘EU’ (and in fact of the ‘conflict’ as well) have been much more explicitly stated by both governmental and civil societal authorities in both sides of the island. For this reason, such views are available in slightly different forms than the spatial symbolic ones and general rhetorical forms described in the previous section. For this reason, the next two sections will draw on different types of cultural material to outline perceptions of the ‘EU’ and the ‘conflict’. These will include interviews with civil society representatives, school books, and parliamentary discussion documents.

The first thing to note about perceptions of the ‘EU’ on both sides of the island is that these are often closely related, yet do not always completely overlap, with perceptions of ‘Europe’. Thus, for example, while Cyprus’ ‘European-ness’ was never questioned in official or public rhetoric on either side, since the late 1980s, when the prospect of Cyprus joining the EU was first discussed, negative views about whether it should join or not were aired on both sides. However, as more positive attitudes to the prospect of joining gained ground, the ‘EU’ as a concept became more and more

identical to the concept of ‘Europe’. This is reflected in the transcripts of Greek-Cypriot parliamentary debates, where it is noticeable that up to the Copenhagen Summit of December 2002, EU meetings did not constitute discussion points, yet after that date parliamentary discussions scheduled near EU meeting dates always included substantial presentations of well-rehearsed, often uncontroversial speeches about the benefits that membership to bring to the Republic.

In fact, in the south, official and media rhetoric has, in the last few years prior to accession, often referred to the EU as the “large European family” (*i megháli Evropaikí ikoghénia*) that Cyprus was scheduled to soon join. This reference has interestingly not been heard as often since the finalisation of accession in May 2004, but references to ‘the United Europe’ (*i Enoméni Evrópi*) are interchangeable with its formal name ‘the European Union’ (*i Evropaikí Énosi*). I would argue that these references in fact reflect the way in which accession to the EU was seen to relate to the Cyprus problem. Since the time when the idea of membership was widely endorsed (in the mid-1990s) by the political parties in the south, the main argument linking accession to the problem rested on the idea that membership of the EU would ‘catalyse’ a solution to the problem, the logic being, as mentioned in the background section, that the EU would seek a solution before Cyprus’ entry because it would not want a divided Cyprus in its midst and that it would seek it on the basis of ‘justice’ and ‘human rights’ that the EU was founded upon (but as mentioned in the previous section, understood in a rather ethnocentric way). The reference to the ‘large European family’ thus reflected the Greek-Cypriot expectation that what they would join was an organisation that was able to act as ‘protector’ of their ‘rights’ and their concept of ‘justice’. This reference also played on older nationalist discourses according to which Cyprus (understood as the Cyprus of the Greek-Cypriots) was presented as small and unprotected, a ‘little Cyprus’ (*i mikrí Kípros*) suffering from the unjust bullying of a Turkey with a large, strong and vicious army at its disposal. The ‘large European family’ was thus an answer to this large militant bully that spelled the end of ‘injustice’ against Greek-Cypriots. Furthermore, the phrase also reflected the idea that ‘Europe’ was in fact ‘family’, a world with which Cyprus had affinities, a world to which it had in fact always belonged –perhaps with a silent implication that this was world that Turkey was excluded from<sup>6</sup>. At the same time, it is significant that these familial ties were not in fact celebrated in domains other than the political. Thus, for example, while there are no cafés, bars or restaurants in Nicosia named after Europe, or European capitals, as one might expect to find in ‘East European’ capitals (Drakulic, 1996: 6-14), the most recent political party to be formed in order to contest the last European parliamentary elections was named after ‘Europe’: ‘*Evropaikí Dhimokratía*’ (European Democracy), a party founded after the referendum by DISY (see previous working papers) members who disagreed with the party’s pro-solution position.

In the north, the EU has similarly been associated with political prospects for a solution –in contrast to the south, however, the political party whose name was inspired by ‘Europe’ was also a party that equally explicitly supported a solution: the ‘Solution and EU party’ (*Çözüm ve AB Partisi*) was formed by one of the key organisers of demonstrations against the intransigent stance of the Turkish-Cypriot

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<sup>6</sup> This exclusion is I think reflected in Turkish discourses as well, where Europe is presented as a ‘club’ and sometimes a ‘Christian club’ which wants to keep Turkey out (but see Rumelili in this series for further elaboration of these discourses).



leadership in negotiation talks in 2002 and 2003, in order to contest the parliamentary elections of December 2003, where this leadership was overthrown. At the same time, and in comparison to the south, it is also interesting to note that 'Europe' has been associated in the north also with the concept of 'rights' but in a different way to the Greek-Cypriot understandings. There, the emphasis was instead on 'democratic rights' and particularly rights related to freedom of speech and political pluralism. Thus, one of the most outspoken newspapers against the regime in the north was originally called '*Avrupa*' (Europe) and when its offices were attacked it changed its name to '*Afrika*' (Africa) also in reflection of the editor's perception of northern Cyprus' identity: a region that aspired to belong to the 'developed' world, but which was plagued by institutions akin to the 'backwardness' of the third world. Thus, the meanings associated with the concept of 'Europe' in the north referred directly to the opposition's political support for EU membership and their struggle against the regime. In the eve of elections in December 2003, the party that eventually secured the majority of votes ran a campaign based on the slogan '*Avrupa göründü*' (Europe is within sight). Despite the differences, a similar discourse was used, and continues to be used in the south. It is used especially by the opposition media, who often liken 'this otherwise European' state to a 'banana plantation' (*bananía*), which also utilises images of Africa and South America –especially when their critique is focussed around corruption, clientalism, etc.

It can thus be said that in the period immediately preceding the Republic's accession to the EU, discourses on 'Europe' were abundant in the political rhetoric on both sides of the island. Furthermore, in these discourses 'Europe' was generally presented in a positive light. Yet it can also be seen that this positive perceptions harked back to different ideas about what EU membership would mean in political terms for the two sides. While the central concepts that these expectations turned on were in both cases the same, i.e. concepts of 'rights', 'democracy', 'justice', these were nevertheless perceived differently. In the Greek-Cypriot case, the understanding was that 'rights' and 'justice' were fundamental principles that underlay the function of the EU and that these would be applied to Cyprus once membership was achieved in a way that would counteract the 'injustices' that Turkey had perpetrated through the invasion. However, in the Turkish-Cypriot case, the 'rights' and 'democracy' that would be brought to the island via its membership of the EU had more to do with internal Turkish-Cypriot politics, in the sense that membership was expected to bring an end to the problems that had plagued the north for the last few decades –namely isolation from the rest of the world. Before that could take place however, northern Cyprus was expected to 'Europeanise' by itself, in the sense that in order to make membership possible for the north, the opposition had to gain a voice, come into power, and oust the conservative regime.

It could thus be said that overall, these perceptions of the EU suggest that its impact on the conflict was perceived to be primarily political –hence the usage of the relevant discourses exclusively in the arena of politics. In this sense, these perceptions seem place emphasis on the compulsory pathway, where for example the Greek-Cypriot considered the EU an instrument to use against Turkey in their struggle for justice. At the same time the perceptions of Europe as a guarantor of democracy and progress seem to point to expectations that it would impact on the problem in a more indirect way –in the north by enabling the opposition to gain a voice and to gain power (enabling pathway of impact). Following the demonstrations in the north, and the

opening of the border, these discourses persisted, but with expectations on EU impact shifting more to the wider societal level. As the process entered in final phase in 2003, the emphasis on 'Europeanisation' focussed more and more on the concept of 'European values', both on the nationalist and pro-solution camps on both sides (the nationalist camp in the north having in fact avoided any references and explication of the concept of 'Europe' apart from agreement with the Turkish view of the EU as 'club' which excluded Turkey). Thus the possibilities of impact on the conflict came to be perceived as more relevant to the wider societal level. Throughout the discussions of the Annan Plan, the EU was perceived as a guarantor of rights and principles and their backing of the plan was expected to enable the leadership, especially the Greek-Cypriot one, to 'sell' the plan to its voters. At the same time, it was expected, especially according to Turkish-Cypriot discourses that once in the EU, conflict between the two communities would be meaningless, because the EU would somehow act as arbitrator in the event. This could be thought to adhere to the connective pathway of influence –however, the emphasis in this perception was that by enabling the opening of northern Cyprus to the world, entry to the EU would in fact enable Turkish-Cypriots to by-pass dependence on Greek-Cypriots for this access to the world (thus dis-connective at the same time).

Undoubtedly, 'Europe' has been used in discourse on Cyprus to signify a vast number of concepts. As it would be impossible to point to all the possible perceptions associated with this signifier on the island, I have here tried to highlight the most significant associations, i.e. its relation to the concepts of 'democracy', 'rights', 'values' and 'justice'. It should also be pointed out, however, that just as these concepts are hazy and flexible, the meaning of the 'EU' itself has rarely been an issue of wider public discussion. By this, I mean that there is an interesting lack of information on both sides of the island as to what the key EU institutions are, what they each do and what kind of powers the member states have, collectively and individually. In fact, it is indicative that on the eve of the June 2004 EU parliamentary elections, one of the candidates who was in fact eventually elected as an MEP, was castigated by the opposition media in the south for not knowing which countries are members of the EU, after he counted Norway as an EU member state. Of course such lack of information is also a matter for media discussion in other EU states such as the UK, yet what is interesting in the Cyprus case is that in a country where so much of political rhetoric is focussed on the EU (and where such rhetoric is never Euro-sceptic), what the 'EU' actually is has never been discussed. This effectively means that the limits of the debate about how the EU can impact on the conflict have not been set within the framework of actually existing EU mechanisms and institutions. This in turn makes it possible to view the EU as impacting on the conflict in a variety of different ways. The heated debate that took place in the south prior to the 2004 Brussels Summit, regarding the question whether the Republic as an EU member state should veto the decision to set a date for accession negotiations with Turkey could be cited as an example of the arguments spurred by this limitless perception of how the EU can impact on the conflict. Even though it must have been clear to many politicians on the island that using the right to veto in situations like this would appear as an attempt to usurp common democratic institutions for nationalist ends, this debate was encouraged resulting in the nationalist perception that the Republic had failed to make full use of EU institutions for its own benefit.

In connection to this, it should also be said that in the aftermath of accession and the

referendum that preceded it, more negative ideas about what the EU represents have begun to be expressed in public discourses on both sides of the island. In the south, references to the EU have begun to shift from the positive inclusive perception of a 'large European family' to more pragmatic perceptions of the EU as separate from Cyprus and Greek-Cypriot political aims. Thus, references to 'the Europeans' (*Evropéi*), or even 'our European partners' (*i Evropéi etéri mas*) are now used for politicians and publics who are seen to favour political positions on the conflict that diverge from Greek-Cypriot nationalist aspirations, and who are often depicted as pressurising the government of the Republic to accept a solution it considers 'unjust', i.e. one based on the fifth version of the Annan Plan. Furthermore, this conflict between Greek-Cypriot and European aspirations is also vocalised in discourses that relate to internal politics as well –as for example in various occasions following accession when groups of farmers staged protests accusing the government that it had not negotiated favourable terms for them in relation to EU subsidies. In the north, the failure of Cyprus to enter as a unified state into the EU as well as the failure of the EU to take substantial steps to address the problem of isolation (e.g. through making funds pledged for the north directly available to Turkish-Cypriots) have resulted in a heightened sense of public disillusionment about the ability of the EU to effectively and positively impact on the conflict. Thus, the phrase '*Avrupalı olduk*' (we have become European) is frequently voiced in a highly cynical way in discussions about the positive changes that were expected but have not taken place in the north.

In this context, I believe that an examination of the concept of 'the conflict' in relation to the other two concepts examined above is also in order and it is for this reason that the following section turns to such an examination.

#### *Perceptions of the 'conflict'*

Even though some indication on how the 'conflict' has been perceived on both sides throughout the years has already been given in previous working papers and preceding sections, what I want to do here is explore a number of points which have not previously been raised in relation to this issue. This will later enable more general comments on the development of the different concepts through time to be made and conclusions to be drawn.

The first point to note about perceptions of the 'conflict' is that the term itself is often rather vague. The Greek-Cypriot terminology is interesting in this respect because it normally designates the 'conflict' in the form of the adjective as simply '*to Kipriakó*' ('the Cypriot'), with the noun often left implicit. Where a noun is used, however, it is invariably in the phrase 'the Cyprus problem' (*to Kipriakó próvlima*), with the word for 'conflict' (*dhiamáhi, síngrusi*) almost never used. In Turkish-Cypriot terminology, the term used is similarly 'the Cyprus problem' (*Kıbrıs sorunu*). This designation of the 'Cyprus problem' is thus used to refer to the issue at the political level, where 'the problem' is implicitly understood to be an issue for political negotiation between the leaderships of the two sides.

It is significant, in this respect that this generic reference to 'the problem' is abandoned in references to more temporally specific aspects of it. Thus, 'conflict' is in fact used in reference to the inter-communal strife of 1963-1969, where the official designation of the period is 'the inter-communal conflicts', or rather 'conflict episodes' (*i dhiakinotikés dhiamáhes / síngrúsisis*), which are also sometimes termed

‘intra-communal conflict episodes (*endhokinotikés singrúsis*) presumably in reference to the British colonial rule, in an attempt to depict them as an internal conflict (to a singular ‘Cypriot community’) in contradistinction to the Greek-Cypriot EOKA conflict with the British colonial rule. In this sense, the shift from ‘intra-communal’ to ‘inter-communal’ can be seen as a reflection of time-specific views on the conflict, where the first addresses the context of a historiography that sees in the EOKA struggle the beginning and also the essence of the ‘Cyprus problem’ within which the Greek- / Turkish- Cypriot conflict is downplayed as an internal affair, while the second mirrors the English terminology (‘inter-communal strife’) and addresses a context in which the conflict between the two communities is the major constituent of ‘the problem’.

In relation to this, it is also interesting that in popular Greek-Cypriot parlance this period is commonly referred to as ‘the troubles’ (*i fasaries*), which seems to suggest a view of those times as problematic but not collectively traumatic. In contradistinction, the Turkish-Cypriot terms used are specific to the particular events of 1963, when most of the Turkish-Cypriots were killed. Thus the references are commonly to ‘*Kanlı Noel*’ (Bloody Christmas), or ‘the events of ’63’ (‘63 *olaylar*). This would suggest a more particularised and fragmented view of history, where the killings of 1963 became a definitional moment of the problems that ensued –it is also noteworthy in this context that the second period of inter-communal strife, 1967-68 is not defined by a particular term in this way.

On the contrary, the war of 1974 is designated in a variety of ways, each of which has very specific political connotations. On the official level, the Greek- and Turkish-Cypriot perspectives are mutually constituted in opposition to each other. Thus, while for the former, this is an ‘invasion’ by Turkey, which according to Greek-Cypriot rhetoric was unlawful and outright unjust, the Turkish-Cypriot official rhetoric maintains that this was an ‘intervention’ carried out in the way prescribed by the Treaty of Guarantee of the Republic’s 1960 Constitution. While the case could be made that the landing of Turkish troops on the northern side of the island and their takeover of territory was an invasion, which at the same time was the exercise of the right to intervene in order to guarantee the “security of the Republic of Cyprus, and also the state of affairs established by the Basic Articles of its Constitution” (article 2 of the Treaty), it is interesting that the two definitions consider each other mutually exclusive, i.e. it could either be described as ‘invasion’, or ‘intervention’ but not both. This not only transposes the political conflict onto a rhetorical one, but also designates the war of 1974 as the key event upon which all discourse about the conflict and about its future resolution is based.

This point has notoriously taken over both political and academic debate beyond Cyprus, to the extent that mention of either term to describe what took place is tantamount to partiality on either side. In this respect, it is interesting to note that out of the 11 UN Security Council resolutions passed on the issue of Cyprus in 1974, 10 have been passed after July and refer directly to the events of the day, yet in only the first of them (Resolution 365 [1974]) is reference made to “foreign military intervention” (the end of which it demands) and in none of them is reference to ‘invasion’ made. Instead, terms like “fighting” are used (Resolutions 354 [1974]) and 357 [1974]), “violence and bloodshed” (Resolution 358 [1974]), and “military operations” (Resolution 360 [1974]). As a result of this politicisation of the term,

references that aspire to be objective normally subscribe to a similar distancing from both terms, referring instead to ‘the events of 1974’ or simply to ‘1974’, sometimes also making use of the phrase ‘the war of 1974’.

In fact in this and previous papers, I have used this latter term, not only as a means of distancing (and much less in order to claim a ‘truthful’ term) but also in reflection of a term that in fact many Greek- and Turkish- Cypriots use in less official discourse. It is indeed interesting that in relation to the terminological differences between the popular discourse in the two communities regarding previous periods, Greek-Cypriots often speak of the times ‘in the war’ (*mes’ ston pólemo*) and Turkish-Cypriots similarly speak of the ‘times in the war’ (*savaşında*). I would therefore argue that this similarity suggests that the war is, in terms of collective memory, a similarly significant event to both communities (which in fact is also what the divergence of official rhetoric on it suggests).<sup>7</sup>

Given the political significance of definitions used for the war, and the emphasis placed on such definitions when they are used by international bodies, it is important to note that the EU has thus far appeared to adhere closely to UN terminology. Thus, the Commission’s website hosts a country profile that describes the events as “a military intervention” instigated by the Greek-junta-inspired coup to counteract which Turkey ‘landed troops’ on the island which resulted in its “de facto partition” (<http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/cyprus/index.htm>). Similarly, in the Commission’s regular reports published on Cyprus between 1998 and 2003 while accession negotiations were taking place, one reference was made to the “1974 Turkish military intervention” (1999 Report: 13) and from then on to the “events of 1974” and “conflict of 1974” (2000 Report: 16, 29; 2001 Report: 31; 2002 Report: 23, 38). This choice of terms is another example of how official perceptions of the ‘conflict’ have not only opposed each other but also co-opted outside discourses into this rhetorical conflict. While use of terms that could be taken as politically loaded was made in the first report of 1998, it appears that this signification of siding with one particular group was not intentional and more value-free terms have been used from then on. I would further argue that this shift is indicative of a shift in the status of the EU with respect to the conflict from that of an outsider to a more informed position of objectivity but nevertheless a position **within** the rhetorical conflict.

Yet, just as outside actors like the EU and the UN may have shifted their use of language in their involvement in Cyprus, it seems that that involvement has also impacted on the Cypriot discourses about the conflict. As mentioned above, the Greek-Cypriot parliamentary debates became more and more concerned with the EU’s impact the closer the Republic got to accession. It is worth noting that when the Gali Set of Ideas was tabled in 1992, discussions of it only occasionally referred to the EC as an alternative forum for promoting Greek-Cypriot positions (VI.I. [7/5/1992]: 2505, 2552<sup>8</sup>), while the bulk of them focussed on expressing nationalist objections to

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<sup>7</sup> There is in addition much to say about views of the coup, especially within the Greek-Cypriot community, and about the Turkish-point-of-view articulations of ‘the peace operation’. However, for lack of space I will not delve into this analysis here. The perceptions I have already analysed are thus to be taken as indicative of the patterns of official rhetoric which are oppositional to each other and less official, public discourse that reveals other kinds of differences between the two communities.

<sup>8</sup> The reference format for this debates reflects the format used by the Republic of Cyprus’ House of Representatives archival service, where VI.I refers to the first (I) volume of transcripts of the 6<sup>th</sup> (VI)

accepting that solution framework. At the same time, there were references in those meetings to European examples as models in terms of which the conflict could be viewed. Thus, Germany, Austria and Switzerland, along side the US and Australia were cited by one MP as examples of successful federal systems that proved that Cyprus should not be 'ashamed' of adopting one (VI.I. [8/5/1992]: 2664). In the same meeting another reference was also made to national decisions about the goal of a prospective solution that likened them to the Maastricht Treaty (VI.I. [8/5/1992]: 2680). While such discussions continued to be centred on the 'conflict' and its different aspects over the next few years, by 2002 the focus had shifted to issues of accession and the passing of laws that would allow the negotiations with the EU to run smoothly. These matters were almost automatically 'declared urgent' (VIII. II. [12/9/2002]) and in most instances the relevant laws were approved with minimal discussion. This is in stark contrast to the meetings held after the opening of the border, where matters relating to regulating the crossing of Turkish-Cypriots from the north (e.g. regarding driving licences) were not only hotly debated, but also debated in terms of both process and content with decisions repeatedly postponed (VIII.II. [8/5/2003]: 48). It can thus be argued that by this point, the EU, that had been viewed as a player that could catalyse changes in the progress towards a solution in the intervening years, had by this time come to be seen as an issue quite separate from internal changes in this respect. In short, I would argue that there was in fact a difference between the perceived changes in the Cyprus conflict towards a solution that the EU was expected to catalyse and the actual changes that took place in the final stages of accession and for which the Greek-Cypriot political leadership appeared not to have been prepared.

This comes in stark contrast to the preparedness for change that Turkish-Cypriot authorities showed, which is nowhere more visible than in the revision of the history schoolbooks that took place in 2003 with the books first coming into use in September 2004. This revision was an indirect effect of the EU, since it was instituted by the forces that called for change so that northern Cyprus could join the one, as soon as these forces came to power (this argument is further elaborated in the conclusion section). The books are for 12-, 13- and 14- year-olds studying in the first, second and third years of high school. The books are used in replacement of older history textbooks that promoted a nationalist perspective and closely adhered to the official discourses outlined above and in previous working papers (Serter, 1970). These are, it should be noted, the implicit guidelines according to which history schoolbooks used in the south still adhere to, despite the publication in August 2004 of a report by the national education committee that recommended among other things the revision of history teaching, the revision of teaching in general to acknowledge Turkish-Cypriots and the introduction of Turkish language teaching (<http://www.moec.gov.cy/metarithmisi/f4.htm>). According to the Committee that undertook the revision of the books, this was done as an attempt to teach the history that the Turkish Cypriot community has created on the island over the centuries to citizens who will grow to learn to think and question for themselves and contribute positively to the life of the community in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Kıbrıs Tarihi [KT] I: viii).

The first volume (KT I) deals with the prehistory and history of Cyprus up to the Ottoman conquest in 1571, the second volume (KT II) goes up to the WWII and the

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period of parliamentary meetings (where such periods can run years).

third volume (KT III) covers the period up to 2004 and includes the events of the referendum and the accession of the southern part as the Republic of Cyprus into the EU. The sources listed at the back of each include books by Turkish-Cypriots, foreigners and Greek-Cypriots (although citations of the last are not present in the third volume). What is most striking about the books on first glance is that they are user-friendly, in stark contrast to their Greek-Cypriot counterparts and Turkish-Cypriot predecessors. There is extensive use of visual material, including caricatures and cartoon-like sketches, and there are exercises guiding students to think about the wider context of local events –e.g. in a section dealing with British interests in Cyprus students are asked “through which routes did Great Britain trade with its colonies?” (KT II: 39). In these books, the ‘conflict’ does not overtake the presentation of the island’s history. The cultural differences between the communities are presented within the context of the institution of the millet system after the Ottoman conquest and in the frequent references that are made to social and cultural life at particular historical periods. Nevertheless, there is mention of the impact of the 1821 Independence war in Greece and the introduction of nationalism under the British ‘divide and rule’ doctrine and the introduction of separate Greek and Turkish educational systems. It is also noteworthy that the Turkish War of Independence is mentioned within the context of Cyprus rather than the other way round and outside a frame of national glorification (ibid: 68). More interestingly, the third volume places great emphasis on the context of the development of the Cyprus conflict within the aftermath of WWII and the onset of the Cold War and contains even more substantial sections on social life at the end of each section. The specific events that have been subject to political interpretation for so long, such as the formation of EOKA and TMT, the signing of the London-Zurich agreements and the inter-communal strife are extremely simply reported and contextualised within Cold War international relations and the interests of the US and the USSR. There are thus sections on the periods 1959-1960, 1964-1967, 1968-1974, and 1974 to the present day, i.e. 2004. But perhaps most surprising is the fact that the period from 1983 (the establishment of the TRNC) to 1998 is only one page long and mainly outlines the efforts of the UN to broker a solution on the island, with the next and final page outlining the efforts since Kofi Annan’s involvement in the proximity talks in 2002.

Overall then, the ideological background of the textbooks is one geared towards the goal of re-unification of the island (also explicitly stated in the Committee’s introductory vision statement referred to above). In this sense, the production and introduction of the books can be taken as the clearest example of the EU’s indirect impact on the conflict. The change of outlook on history that they seek to foster for the future generations of Turkish-Cypriots can be thought as an example, in terms of the theoretical framework, of how changes in the conflict induced by the prospect of EU accession can enable leaderships to institute such major changes in the educational system. At the same time, such changes aim to foster different types of identities, where the concepts of ‘peace’ and ‘reunification’ are paramount to the formation of national / communal identification. In these terms, the impact of the EU could be said to follow the ‘constructive’ pathway, as well as the ‘connective’ one, since the goal is to foster identities that will make it easier for the two communities to come together. In short, the introduction of these books shows the profound impact that the EU can have on border conflicts in terms of promoting a ‘change of scripts’.

At the same time, it confirms the argument made in the previous working paper, that

for such changes to be made, it is necessary for the main in the actors to be willing to institute the positive impact that the EU can provide. In this sense, it is interesting to compare these changes to those taking place within the Greek-Cypriot educational system, where the report referred to above was much more explicitly induced by the EU accession process. The report states that its goal is to make recommendations that respond to the changes within Greek-Cypriot society, which is now becoming a 'Euro-Cypriot society' and to review the prospects for modernising the educational system into the pluralist framework proscribed by the EU. However, the conclusions of the report point to a series of changes that are both substantial in terms of the content of the material that would need to be taught as well as formalistic in terms of the institutions that need to be put in place to oversee this process of change. It could therefore be safely concluded that these changes are envisioned in the much longer term, whereas the changes implemented in record time in the Turkish-Cypriot educational system concentrate on the goal of social change that might indeed take a generation to become rooted, but is envisioned to start straight away. In this sense, it could be argued that while EU institutions might indeed play a key role in spurring such transformation, the bureaucratic process under which the changes are subjected enables great delay in their implementation. Furthermore, for societies like Cyprus, in which the dynamics of the conflict are constantly and rapidly changing, such delays may be counterproductive, in the sense that by the time specific changes are researched, discussed, approved, and implemented, the educational requirements might already have changed. For example, the introduction of Turkish language classes in a future context where the island might or not have been re-unified but where a substantial part of the population might already speak other languages as native ones might be out of sync with social dynamics on the ground when eventually implemented, and when what might be necessary will be a more serious approach to compulsory Turkish language learning, alongside the introduction of other foreign languages.

In conclusion, I would argue that while perceptions of the 'conflict' are undoubtedly of great importance to understanding the EU's impact on it primarily because they clarify the differences between both official and wider societal discourses on what constitutes the conflict and how its solution could be reached, they are equally important in pointing ways in which such differences may be overcome. Thus, in relation to the rhetorical conflict over the classification of the 1974 events, the revision of Turkish-Cypriot history schoolbooks, points to the positive difference that the EU can indirectly make to wider societal perceptions.

### **Conclusion: Assessment of EU impact on changing perceptions**

In this paper, I have sought to analyse some of central concepts related to Cypriot perceptions of the 'border' and the 'EU' and to relate these to the wider context of perceptions of the 'conflict'. I have argued that in order to understand the base upon which relevant discourses on the island have been shaped, it is necessary to consider the links between these central concepts and perceptions of 'rights', 'justice', 'strife', 'democracy', 'pluralism', 'the international community' and 'European identity'. This was done chiefly through looking at documents (transcripts of parliamentary discussions, UN resolutions, EU reports) as well as educational material (history textbooks used in schools and reports on current and future educational policies). The



latter two are especially interesting to analyse at this point for two main reasons: beginning in September 2004, the authorities in the north have instituted a new policy for history teaching in schools, for which new Cyprus history textbooks were introduced. The content of these books places great emphasis on the co-existence of the two main communities on the island over the last few centuries and thus offer interesting material for examining the development of perceptions about the 'conflict'. Additionally, they also offer interesting perspectives on 'Europe' as a general concept, both in terms of their treatment of the involvement of current EU members Greece and the UK in the Cyprus problem, and as the 'EU' in later years. Secondly, the parliamentary materials collected on discussions related to the EU, offer extremely valuable insights into the different perspectives of politicians into these two concepts, that as will be argued, have often reflected wider societal perspectives as well. In addition to this material I have also drawn on wider public discourses which are available through the media, examination of people's views (civil society representatives and informants in the ethnographic sense), as well as in the symbolism of the landscape (mainly urban) that is made to reflect official perceptions.

On the basis of this analysis, it is evident that the process of Cyprus' EU accession had definitely had an impact on these ideas. Most importantly for the purposes of the project, it has had an impact on perceptions of identity of the two main players, i.e. Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots. Inevitably then, what this paper has sought to elucidate is the process through which a 'change of scripts' has occurred in Cyprus as an effect of EU accession. Thus, the analysis of this paper can be taken as essentially an analysis of the impact of Cyprus' EU accession process in terms of the 'connective' and 'constructive' pathways of involvement. The change in educational policies on the two sides is perhaps the clearest example of this 'change of scripts'. On the one hand, the revision of the Turkish-Cypriot history textbooks can be seen as the indirect effect of the realisation that older books that fostered nationalism could not respond to the needs of the authorities in their call for solution and re-unification of the island. This need was in turn another indirect effect of the process of accession because the change in government was only brought about through a growing dissatisfaction with the stalemate in the negotiations and the prospect of the north being left out of the accession process. On the other hand, the preparation of the report that recommended changes to the educational policies in the south could be viewed as a more direct effect of EU accession, since emphasis was placed on Cyprus' new 'European' identity.

With regards to perceptions about the EU's impact on the conflict I would further argue on the basis of this research that there seems to have been, in very general terms, movement in differing directions in terms of 'change of scripts'. In the north, initially rather negative perceptions of the EU's possible impact turned into overwhelmingly positive ones that were manifested in the demonstrations of 2002. In the south, largely positive perceptions of the EU as a catalyst for solution are gradually turning slightly more sceptical, as the role of the EU and the meanings associated with what is now termed a 'European solution to the problem' begin to change, especially following the referendum and the high-level UN-sponsored negotiations that preceded it. These changes in perceptions and the events in the conflict that can be thought as 'turning points' in this change are outlined in the schematic outline below, which also summarises the results of the analysis undertaken in the previous sections.

## **Executive Summary**

### *Overview*

This report has sought to present and analyse the changes in perceptions about the EU's impact on the conflict on the societal level. Following on from the previous working paper on the Cyprus case, where this impact was analysed with reference to the perceptions on the level of the political actors, in this paper, a discourse analytic approach has been employed, with emphasis on both official and public documents and interviews with civil society representatives and individuals.

In the first part of the report, an analysis of Cyprus' institutional relations to the EU was undertaken in order to provide the context in which the discourses presented later could be placed. The second part of the report then explored the key discourses around the concepts of 'border', 'EU' and 'conflict'. The overall results were summarised in the conclusion section.

Thus, the EU's involvement with Cyprus might be said to have impacted on the perceptions analysed in the following ways:

1. Through the requirement for policy changes in order to bring the Republic's policies in line with European ones, some of the perceptions have shifted: e.g. with the Green Line Regulation the government has had to slightly change its rhetoric about the 'border'. Since the opening of the border, perceptions about Turkish-Cypriots began to be more widely discussed, as also evidenced through the examination of parliamentary debates, even if these were accompanied with considerable reluctance. Moreover, the structure of the educational system has had to be scrutinised, as the report of the ministry of Education shows, even if substantial changes are yet to be implemented. These are in one sense, indirect influences of the EU, and would thus be classified as example of 'enabling' impact.
2. Examples of the 'enabling' pathway, on the other hand, are much more clearly visible, and as previous working papers argued, such impact has been more noticeable in the north. The revision of the history books in the north is a clear example of this.
3. One example of the 'connective' impact is the bi-communal activities mentioned with regards to the pre-2003 crossings of the border. More generally, a range of examples where the discourses of the two sides were brought closer together could also be cited. However, because of the structural changes involved in this shift, these will be classified under the 'constructive' impact.
4. In relation to the above, it should also be noted that there have also been examples where in fact the involvement of the EU has had a negative impact in this process, and where the shift has actually taken place in directions that have moved the discourses of the two sides further apart –as, for example, in the perceptions of what a 'European solution' to the problem might entail, especially as these are articulated after the referendum. It could be said that this is an example of enabling impact, where what is enabled is greater securitisation of the discourse.

The following schematic outline summarises these discursive shifts, as they occurred around key turning points in the history of the conflict and assesses both the positive and negative impact of the different pathways of involvement.

*Schematic Outline*

<b><i>Concept examined</i></b>	<b><i>Date</i></b>	<b><i>Event in Conflict</i></b>	<b><i>Focus of discourses prior to the event</i></b>	<b><i>Focus of discourses post-event</i></b>	<b><i>Assessment of EU impact</i></b>
‘border’	1963	Set-up of enclaves	Social separation along lines of ethnic identification	Manifestation of relations of oppression	N/A
	1974	Greece-inspired coup, war with Turkey	‘resolution’ aspired to settlement in territorial terms	‘resolution’ aspiring to overturning of status quo / ‘injustice’ as key concept of GC discourse on ‘resolution’	N/A
	2003	Opening of the border	‘border’ as main constituent of problem	Possibilities of resolution of conflict from bottom-up as opening seen as result of 2002 TC demonstrations	Connective (as opening an indirect result of accession) Enabling (change of power structures in north)
	2004	Referendum	Opening of border as part of development towards final solution	Stabilisation of current situation, disillusionment	Dis-connective / dis-constructive (normalisation of division with regulation of crossings, new policies on crossings solidify ethnic identification and exclusion) Dis-abling (delay in funding provided to the north fuels disillusionment with new leadership)
EU	1990	Application for accession	Uncertainty about role of EU in conflict	Hardening of pro-EU positions in south and anti-EU in north	Dis-constructive (discourses shaped in opposition to each other)
	1999	Helsinki decision (to accept Cyprus, even if	EU intervention seen as pro-GC against the ‘Turkey’ bully; link to GC discourses about	Connection of the two; possibilities of win-win ‘solution’	Enabling (turn to pro-Turkey discourses among GCs) Constructive (shift in oppositional identification)

	divided and consider Turkey's candidacy)	'just solution'		
2002	Demonstrations in north	Catalytic approach evident in Helsinki as 'compulsory' impact in realpolitik approaches	boost of TC opposition the main concern; visibility of TC opposition by GCs	Enabling (positive discourses about TCs) Constructive (shift in perceptions of TC identities: less stereotyped)
2003	Accession Treaty signed	Expectations of substantial change in status quo	Expectations frustrated	Dis-connective (Cyprus accedes as two parts: Republic and 'territories outside control of Republic')
2003	Opening of border	Reduced expectations of solution	Heightened expectations of solution	Constructive
2004	Referendum	Solution almost inevitable	Disillusionment; normalisation of division	Dis-constructive Dis-abling

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ISSN: 1743 – 1832 (print)  
1743 – 1840 (online)

EUBorderConf working papers are published within the context of the research project “The European Union and Border Conflicts: The Impact of Integration and Association” (EUBorderConf), funded by the European Union’s Fifth Framework Programme, with additional funds from the British Academy, and co-ordinated at the Department of Political Science and International Studies (POLISIS), The University of Birmingham. The series may be of interest to anyone engaged with contemporary debates on the EU and border conflicts, including academics, PhD students and people working in the field. For more information please contact Jevgenia Viktorova at [j.viktorova@bham.ac.uk](mailto:j.viktorova@bham.ac.uk), or visit [www.euborderconf.bham.ac.uk](http://www.euborderconf.bham.ac.uk).