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### A Turkish-Cypriot Perspective: Rauf Denktash and Nancy Crawshaw on Cyprus<sup>1</sup>

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## Introduction

The history of Cyprus is among one of the most well-researched and well-documented cases of any island in the world. Given its geographic and strategic position as the third largest island in the Mediterranean Sea along the main routes between Europe and Asia, located west of Syria and south of Turkey, Cyprus has historically been controlled by several states seeking to gain a foothold for Middle East invasions. Being too small to defend themselves, Cypriots have grown accustomed to a history of living at the mercy of the dominant power in the area. As a result, the island has been bought and sold, transferred from one ruler to another, without the Cypriots ever being consulted.

While the history of Cyprus may be well-known and documented, the interpretations and implications of this history have been far from unified. Generally, for historical and geopolitical reasons, ethnic Greeks get a hearing in the West more easily than ethnic Turks do. Therefore – for the purpose of this paper – I hope to present a new perspective to the discourse that surrounds the island and the remarkable impact it has on world politics. Even the short historical summary that will be offered in this introduction, when viewed from the polarizing lenses of Greek or Turkish perspectives can be criticized as not offering the proper vantage point for the “Cyprus Problem.” However this paper seeks to introduce two authoritative viewpoints from which we can examine the less broadcast Turkish-Cypriot side of the story.

## A History of Conquerors

Greeks were the first to gain control of Cyprus in the thirteenth century B.C., and they continued to dominate the island until the Ottoman takeover of 1571, after which Turkish immigrants began to inhabit the island. During the weakening of the Ottoman Empire and in the wake of the Ottoman Empire’s war with Russia, the United Kingdom negotiated to become the protecting power over Cyprus. Great Britain officially gained sovereignty over the island in 1923 under the Treaty of Lausanne, and Cyprus became a British Crown Colony the following year.<sup>3</sup>

This history of domination has left an indelible impact on the island, most notably through the presence of two distinct communities of Greeks and Turks. Though

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<sup>3</sup> Bolukbasi, Suha. *Turkish-American Relations and Cyprus*. (New York: University of Virginia Press, 1988).

considering Cyprus their historical homes, these communities are too small to defend themselves and have looked to their respective homelands for protection against their occupiers. Historically these inhabitants have never been consulted by their rulers and have not developed a sense of Cypriot unity. In the wake of World War II and the disintegration of the British Empire, this historical pattern was followed when an independent Cypriot state was negotiated and conceived of by the former occupiers of the island, Britain, Greece, and Turkey.

The Republic of Cyprus was born in 1960 as a bi-communal republic, consisting of both Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities. The constitutional system broke down after inter-ethnic clashes in 1963, after which Turkish Cypriots no longer participated in the constitutional government. Between 1963 and 1974, the minority Turkish Cypriot community was frequently harassed by the majority Greeks, and acts of communal violence escalated. In 1974, conditions radically changed in Cyprus when the ruling military junta in Athens instigated a coup, in part to compensate for growing unpopularity at home. Turkey, as a guarantor power, responded by invading the island on July 20, 1974. Unsatisfied with the military gains achieved by the time a ceasefire was implemented; Turkish troops went on the offensive again in August 1974, resulting in the current territorial division of the island. Backed by the Turkish military, the Turkish Cypriots, representing only 18 percent of the population, ended up with around 37 percent of the island.<sup>4</sup>

These political instabilities and subsequent military actions instigated by outside powers fourteen years after Cyprus's "independence" effectively established the present-day territorial boundaries of the Republic of Cyprus and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Although the Turkish-controlled entity does not enjoy international recognition as a sovereign state, a military-enforced line of demarcation effectively divides the island, with United Nations peacekeepers maintaining the peace. Thirty-one years after the partitioning of Cyprus and forty-five years after the formation of an independent Cyprus, reunification among Greek and Turkish Cypriots under one government remains elusive.

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<sup>4</sup> Bolukbasi, 185.

## **The Cyprus Problem from a Turkish-Cypriot Perspective**

While the Turkish-Cypriot perspective on the Cyprus problem has received far less attention in the international arena than its Greek-Cypriot counterpart, this does not mean that it does not exist. In fact, there are two authoritative viewpoints from which the Turkish-Cypriot perspective can be constructed: One a native Cypriot who has for the last thirty years led and epitomized his people, as evidenced by his Turkish nickname *Babamız*, which means “our father.” The other perspective comes from a foreign citizen of a former colonizer who made her career out of analyzing and understanding the Cyprus problem. While she attempted to remain objective, many have accused her of being too sympathetic to the Turkish-Cypriot perspective.

Taken in combination, Mr. Rauf Denktash and Mrs. Nancy Crawshaw’s views represent an accurate and balanced assessment of the Turkish-Cypriot position, and a unique way from which to approach the Cyprus problem. While they diverge on their assessment of who is ultimately to blame for the present situation, their convergence on a number of other issues is striking, especially when viewed against the polarized background of the Greek-Cypriot views.

### **Denktash and Crawshaw**

One of the two authoritative voices mentioned earlier comes from Rauf Denktash, a distinguished lawyer and brilliant exponent of the Turkish-Cypriot case, both at home and abroad, who has worked tirelessly in the cause of his people for more than three decades. Formerly vice-president of Cyprus and today the outgoing president of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) after having served four consecutive five-year terms, he has negotiated on behalf of Turkish Cypriots in the years of abortive discussions under the auspices of the United Nations to reach a settlement with the Greek Cypriots on the basis of a federal system. Simultaneously blamed for being an intractable obstacle to Cypriot unity and praised for standing up for his oppressed people, Mr. Denktash is a controversial figure on the island. For better or for worse, Rauf Denktash has been the key figure in the Turkish community of Cyprus for more than 30 years and best represents the Turkish-Cypriot viewpoint on the conflict.

Mr. Denktash’s viewpoints have been explicitly stated in a series of speeches delivered before the United Nations and in his various publications. As a direct participant in most of the events in recent Cypriot history, he is a first-hand source

inevitably influenced by his own biases and prejudices, which has often led critics to dismiss his viewpoints as mere propaganda. However, if we were to simply dismiss Denktash's views in this way we would risk losing a valuable perspective on the continuing problems in Cyprus. While recent events on the Northern Cypriot side have indicated a gradual shift away from Mr. Denktash's hard-line approach to Cypriot unification talks, he still represents the historical consensus of Turkish Cypriots.

In contrast to Rauf Denktash's subjective, internal view, a more objective, external analysis of the Cyprus question is offered by Nancy Crawshaw. As a British citizen who worked and lived as a journalist, photographer, government consultant, and writer in Greece (1949-1959) and Cyprus (1955-1959), Crawshaw was also a first-hand witness to the events that helped inform Mr. Denktash and the Turkish-Cypriot's point of view. She regularly took extended trips to both Greece and Cyprus and was seen as a British expert on the international political issues regarding Cyprus. She wrote numerous articles for foreign policy periodicals, gave lectures and papers at academic conferences, and contributed sections to books on Cyprus and the *Encyclopedia Americana*. This standing as an expert was greatly bolstered in 1978 with the publication of her book *The Cyprus Revolt*, which focused on the period between World War II and the international agreement that created the independent Republic of Cyprus, and the struggle of the Greek-Cypriot population for union with Greece.<sup>5</sup>

Given the size of Cyprus, it is not surprising that Mr. Denktash and Mrs. Crawshaw knew each other and interacted on occasion with each other. However it is particularly interesting to note that Mr. Denktash asked Mrs. Crawshaw to edit his *The Cyprus Triangle 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*. As the foremost British scholar on Cyprus sympathetic to the Turks of the island, Mrs. Crawshaw was a natural choice. While their views are not identical, they shared a common understanding of the Turkish-Cypriot community that has too often been overlooked in the discussion of the Cyprus problem. Mrs. Crawshaw directly affected Denktash's writing through her editing, and Mr. Denktash undoubtedly influenced Crawshaw through his various public pronouncements and the interviews he granted her. Thus it is by taking these two authoritative voices together that the best picture of the Turkish-Cypriot perspective emerges.

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<sup>5</sup> This short biographical sketch comes from the introductory page of the Princeton Collection of the Nancy Crawshaw Archives, Princeton, NJ. Most of the archives are unfilled and undated, however wherever possible I have included the date and the context in the body of my writing to help the reader identify the source.

## Separation as the Root of the Problem

History for the Turkish-Cypriot begins in 1571 after the Ottoman Empire conquered Cyprus and began to colonize it with its own Turkish immigrants. It was from this historical starting point that Mr. Rauf Denktash began his first speech to the United Nations Assembly on February 28, 1964. Speaking not as an official representative of the Republic of Cyprus, but as an individual invited at the request of Turkey to share a different perspective than the Greek-Cypriot government officials, Mr. Denktash's primary objective was to describe what the root of the communal violence that had broken out on Cyprus could be attributed to. However he also sought to dispel the picture of that the Greek Cypriots had painted of Cyprus being a successfully mixed community, but rather portrayed Cyprus as a historical example of two separate communities co-existing with each other, but never having fully integrated.

*Turks and Greeks have lived in Cyprus together since 1571. They have so lived always as Greeks or Turks. They have each stuck to their separate culture, religion, tradition and national heritage. They are in effect Turkey and Greece projected into Cyprus for the Turkish and Greek populations respectively. Any attempts to make them anything but Greeks or Turks have met with strong opposition from these groups in Cyprus....As long as they enjoyed equality and justice, they lived together happily.<sup>6</sup>*

According to Denktash this inherent separation between the two groups can be attributed as the underlying reason for the problems inherent in a unified Republic of Cyprus. While these two groups were able to co-exist peacefully under the domain of an imperial force, they found it impossible to find the right balance to guarantee equality and justice on their own.

In Rauf Denktash's book *The Cyprus Triangle* the opening line explicitly states this belief in the following terms: "There is not, and there has never been, a Cypriot nation. That may be the misfortune of Cyprus and indeed the root cause of its problem, but it is a reality which has to be faced and understood by all concerned."<sup>7</sup> Thus lacking nationhood and deprived of what Denktash termed "a Cypriot national awareness"<sup>8</sup> the two national communities which had agreed to establish the bi-communal state in 1960 soon found themselves in political difficulties.

This view of Cyprus's problems being rooted along purely racial lines is something with which Nancy Crawshaw also dealt with in her work. However, unlike Mr. Denktash,

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<sup>6</sup> Moran, Michael. *Rauf Denktash at the United Nations: Speeches on Cyprus* (Huntingdon, UK: Eothen Press, 1997), 126.

<sup>7</sup> Denktash, Rauf R. *The Cyprus Triangle* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1982), 1. Hereafter Triangle.

<sup>8</sup> Triangle, 1.

Crawshaw saw a variety of factors that contributed to this complex separation that involved a broader reading of the peoples' history. Crawshaw placed a considerable amount of the blame on the British handling of Cyprus and in particular for its handling of education on the island. She noted in her writings that, "Education has helped to drive the communities apart."<sup>9</sup> She argued that as a result of the educational situation in Cyprus, elements of Greek nationalism and patriotism were fully assimilated by the Greeks of Cyprus through communal separation.

After 1878 the British administrators, not unlike the Ottomans before them, adopted the policy of leaving matters pertaining to Greek-Cypriot religion and education entirely in the hands of the Greek community's leaders. While this must have seemed a sensible, even a humane, decision on the part of a colonial government, in effect it meant leaving the intellectual development of the Greek Cypriots largely in the hands of the Orthodox Church, and thus permitted pan-nationalist sentiments, based directly on Greek mainland models, to grow unchecked.<sup>10</sup> Primary education on the island, which was free and compulsory, was taken over by the British government in 1932. But rather than attempt to change the existing system in which most Greek secondary schools remained under the control of the Ministry of Education in Athens and bound by a rigid classical curriculum with a strong nationalist bias, Britain chose to leave the system in place. Additionally, the Greek government paid the teachers pensions. These Greek schools, which charged low fees and granted many scholarships, relied heavily on the Greek Orthodox Church for extra funds. However it was not just the Greek Cypriots that relied so heavily upon their motherlands. While the Turkish Cypriots for many years had less freedom under the British than the Greeks in the management of their schools, they eventually came to be influenced by trends in Turkey. As a result, relatively small numbers of Greeks and Turks were educated together at such prestigious institutions as the English School in Nicosia and the American Academy in Larnaca.<sup>11</sup>

Denktash never explicitly addresses this educational barrier to greater societal interaction, but focuses the blame on the Greek Orthodox Church for promulgating a vision of Enosis (the policy of union with Greece). Strikingly, despite their backgrounds, both Denktash and Crawshaw agree on the culpability of the Church in pushing for

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<sup>9</sup> Crawshaw, Nancy. "Cyprus." In *Encyclopedia Americana*. (Danbury, CT: Grolier, 1985), 13-14. Hereafter Encyclopedia.

<sup>10</sup> Moran, 7.

<sup>11</sup> Encyclopedia, 13-14.

Enosis, which they view as a serious impediment to greater Cypriot unity. Crawshaw's description of this barrier and the different political roles for religious leaders that the two communities adhere to is very instructive in understanding the Turkish-Cypriot mindset.

*The barriers separating the communities are religious, political, and social. The Orthodox Church has always headed the nationalist struggle for Enosis, its Archbishop acting as the spiritual and political leader. The Moslem religious leader (Mufti) has no political mission.*<sup>12</sup>

Additionally, the Turkish Cypriots influenced by Kemal Ataturk, believed very strongly in the secular state and the separation of political and religious duties. As a result they naturally distrusted the Greek-Cypriot political structure that was influenced by the Church and the Archbishop's political activities.

Writing before both the official independence or partition of Cyprus, Crawshaw's articles and letters are filled with descriptions of how Greeks and Turks seldom meet socially except at official functions or at the homes of foreigners. Intermarriage, she claims, is strictly forbidden except upon religious conversion which rarely took place. This process of segregation and intentional separation was most obvious in mixed villages where the two communities living in proximity led separate existences in well-defined sectors. "The Mosque stands on the one side of the street, the Orthodox Church on the other."<sup>13</sup> Additionally, each community patronizes its own coffee shops, which in both Greek and Turkish cultures represents the center of social life, along with their respective clubs and co-operative societies. Writing with some irony Mrs. Crawshaw points out that, "In remote hamlets Greek may still be distinguished from Turk by differences in dress. But in the towns it is often difficult to tell them apart."<sup>14</sup>

### **The Push for "Enosis"**

In an interview taken in 1955 for one of her columns Nancy Crawshaw quotes a British official by the name of Mr. Lawrence Durrell as having said that, "There is an inherent intractability in the Cyprus problem which defeats any leader or outsider who becomes involved. Cyprus is everyman's Waterloo... This island has a curse on it."<sup>15</sup> This British official's pessimism describes the attitude of many outside observers of Cyprus;

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<sup>12</sup> Encyclopedia, 14.

<sup>13</sup> Encyclopedia, 14.

<sup>14</sup> Encyclopedia, 14.

<sup>15</sup> Princeton Nancy Crawshaw Archives 1955 notebook.

however Crawshaw did not buy this viewpoint of the conflict being inherently intractable or cursed. Rather in the same vein of thinking that influenced Rauf Denktash<sup>16</sup>, she saw the culpability lying with direct factors being promoted within the Greek population of the island. In the editing and manuscript stage of her book, Crawshaw describes the conflict as a racial crisis in the margins of her draft. “The movement for Enosis has dominated Greek Cypriot politics, leading to the acute racial crisis which brought Greece and Turkey within hours of war, three years after independence.”<sup>17</sup>

Crawshaw echoes Denktash’s refrain that Greek Cypriots are responsible for always agitating for union with Greece that would effectively enslave the Turks as a helpless minority. Using historical precedents (such as the story that on the day the first British governor landed in Cyprus the Greek Bishop of Kitium, Kyprianos, formally asked for the union of Cyprus with Greece) Denktash has always been suspicious of Greek motives. As a result, the Turkish-Cypriot leaders of the time and Denktash have continued to contend that Cyprus is not Greek, has never been part of Greece and therefore can never be given to Greece. Thus, as Denktash has repeatedly pointed out, the seeds of future inter-communal discord were sown in Cyprus through the idea of Enosis.<sup>18</sup>

Viewed along this line of reasoning it is easier to understand why Turkish Cypriots responded so viscerally to any suggestion of Enosis or plebiscites to determine the fate of Cyprus. For them Cyprus, upon gaining its independence, had become, and still is, not simply an independent state suffering from an extraordinarily intractable “ethnic” discord; at best, it was a properly constituted sovereign state for only three years between 1960-1963. As reiterated often by Denktash, “There was never a ‘nation’ of Cypriots, only two communities living side by side, each clinging to its own language, religion, and traditions; with almost no intermarriage, and each with strong ties with one of the two, traditionally hostile, ‘motherlands.’”<sup>19</sup> Accordingly, to the Turkish Cypriots partners of the bi-national state, the alternative to resistance to Enosis was submission to the will of the Greek Cypriots and the eventual acceptance of the colonization of Cyprus by Greece. Denktash

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<sup>16</sup> See Denktash’s *The Cyprus Triangle* for a fuller understanding of how he blamed the Greek-Cypriots for deliberately instilling Greek nationalism and Enosis within its community.

<sup>17</sup> Princeton Nancy Crawshaw Archives.

<sup>18</sup> Triangle, 19.

<sup>19</sup> Triangle, 17.

blames the 1955-1958 violence on the Greek-Cypriot attempt to achieve union with Greece and the Turkish-Cypriot objection to this.

Richard A. Patrick's work on Cyprus, which culminated in his book entitled *Political Geography and the Cyprus Conflict: 1963-1971*, is one of the few works that offers a sophisticated look at the role that terrorism and political violence played in furthering the goal of independence for Cyprus. In his book, Patrick argues that the diplomatic maneuvers that were ongoing between the British and the Cypriots was overtaken when on April 1, 1955, EOKA (i.e. National Organization of the Struggle for the Freedom of Cyprus), led by Colonel Grivas, set off its first bombs in Cyprus against British installations. A guerilla war then erupted in which the Turk Cypriots sided with the British and, as a result, EOKA marked the Turk Cypriot community as a secondary target.<sup>20</sup> To defend themselves and as a form of retaliation, the Turkish Cypriots formed their own armed underground group, known as the TMT (i.e. Turkish Resistance Organization).<sup>21</sup> Mr. Denktash's own involvement in this period has been well-documented although his connections to the TMT have never been fully researched. In his capacity as British crown prosecutor, Denktash prosecuted many of the EOKA members during this time until 1958. As a result, he was directly responsible for the many men who were found guilty and were executed by hanging, or imprisoned. During 1958, inter-communal enmity finally erupted into large scale rioting, terror killings and the evacuation of ethnic minorities from several villages.<sup>22</sup>

Lecturing on February 20, 1964, Mrs. Crawshaw warned that, "Economically Cyprus is one country. It would be disastrous if the crisis of hostility between Turks and Greeks forces it apart."<sup>23</sup> She went on to state that in normal times brawls and disputes are more common between rival factions of the Greek community, than between the two races. However, the new separatist trends she was seeing between the two communities on the island were pronounced in religion, language, education, and family customs. Crawshaw concluded with a foreboding message that, "The most dangerous facet of the present situation is the belligerent mood of the Greek Cypriots and their immense over-confidence and the knowledge that short of effective international intervention, or

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<sup>20</sup> For a better understanding of this guerilla war, EOKA and Colonel Grivas' tactics and aims see Grivas' own memoirs entitled *Guerrilla Warfare*.

<sup>21</sup> Patrick, Richard A. *Political Geography and the Cyprus Conflict: 1963-1971* (Waterloo, USA: University of Waterloo Press, 1976), 7.

<sup>22</sup> Patrick, 7.

<sup>23</sup> Princeton Nancy Crawshaw Archives.

invasion from Turkey, they could do what they liked to the Turks.”<sup>24</sup> This type of Greek-Cypriot attitude necessarily precipitated a Turkish-Cypriot response.

### **The Turkish-Cypriot Response**

Richard Patrick advances a unique argument about the Turkish-Cypriot community in which he argues that unlike the Greek Cypriots who had a proactive geopolitical goal of Enosis, the Turkish-Cypriot community’s geopolitical goals have been mainly defensive reactions to these demands. As outlined by Denktash, Turkish Cypriots fear that if Cyprus becomes a Greek province, their community would be oppressed, impoverished and eventually expelled from the island. This fear was nurtured by memories of the savage war between Greece and Turkey from 1919 to 1922. It also must be candidly admitted that the terrorism of the EOKA campaign prior to the 1960 settlement and events between December 1963 and November 1967, tended to support this view.<sup>25</sup>

Although the nucleus of the first Turkish-Cypriot political party was established in 1942, Patrick contends that it was not until 1955 that the Turk Cypriot community really became politically active as a reaction to the EOKA guerilla war. Within the next three years, a community political structure was developed as a result not only of efforts by Turk Cypriot leaders to oppose Enosis, but also because of encouragement from British and Turkish officials who were seeking to safeguard their countries’ strategic interests. In this way, outside actors have directly influenced the internal actors in a way which Denktash has been reluctant to ever acknowledge. The violence of the EOKA campaign and the battles since December 1963 has inevitably created Turkish-Cypriot martyrs, thereby encouraging Turk Cypriots to forge a sense of community self-awareness that they had not previously possessed.<sup>26</sup>

In response to this newly awakened self-awareness, the Turkish-Cypriot community at first sought the reunion of all Cyprus with Turkey in the same way that Greeks sought Enosis. This demand was clearly unrealistic, however, in light of the minority status of the Turkish-Cypriot community. Subsequently, taksim (i.e. partition) became the primary Turk Cypriot geopolitical goal. Turkish-Cypriot leaders were

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<sup>24</sup> Princeton Nancy Crawshaw Archives.

<sup>25</sup> Patrick, 29.

<sup>26</sup> Patrick, 29.

prepared to allow Greek Cypriots to join Greece providing Turk Cypriots could exercise the same prerogative by joining Turkey, a so-called situation of “double-Enosis”. The actual partition line was open to negotiation, but the most ambitious Turkish-Cypriot claims proposed the latitude line of 35 degrees north (i.e. Polis to Famagusta) as being appropriate. The demand for taksim, or double Enosis, was replaced, nevertheless, by an acceptance of an independent Cyprus, based on a partnership between the two communities according to a constitutional formula of functional and geographic federalism, primarily because the right of Turkish intervention to maintain the agreed status quo was guaranteed. The common thread of the various Turkish-Cypriot geopolitical goals is, and has been, to prevent Enosis. So long as Enosis was forestalled, a number of geopolitical alternatives for Cyprus became acceptable to the Turkish-Cypriot community.<sup>27</sup>

### **The Compromise Settlement**

The eventual settlement that resulted from the guerilla war waged by the EOKA and the calls for independence from the Greek Cypriots led to the London and Zurich agreements dates which created the independent Republic of Cyprus. However, when Cyprus became formally independent in 1960 its new status followed the traditional pattern outlined by Crawshaw of the inhabitants having very little say in the eventual outcome. The Cyprus settlement was thus the result of an elaborate series of arrangements not so much between the two Cypriot communities as between the guarantor powers. The Cyprus Constitution and the three Cyprus Treaties of 1959/60 already had an international dimension to them. Quite explicitly, they embodied, and sought to perpetuate, a number of international compromises: not only between the two communities but, first and foremost, between Great Britain, Greece, and Turkey. The principles of “guarantor powers,” in which each of these three states had the right to intervene if the constitutional system broke down, seemingly relegated the sovereignty of Cyprus to the whims of these outside actors. It is indeed arguable, as many Greek delegates complained during the UN debates, that the Greeks and Greek Cypriots did less well out of the London and Zurich agreements than the British and the Turks.<sup>28</sup> As Moran, who has studied these UN debates and analyzed both the Greek and Turkish-

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Moran, 72.

Cypriot speeches, has written, “The Greeks[-Cypriots] bitterly resented the fact that the Constitution gave the Turks[-Cypriots] advantages which were disproportionate to their members in the populations.”<sup>29</sup> However there is very little treatment of the Turkish-Cypriot geopolitical interest as being different than that of Turkey. Thus the best that can be said is what Crawshaw argued in a series of lectures and articles that the August 1960 agreement was a political rather than a just settlement.<sup>30</sup>

It is in light of such resentments and this ethnocentric view of Cypriot territory, that the Greek-Cypriot community’s attitude toward the Republic of Cyprus must be assessed. An independent Cypriot state, no matter what its form, can never be considered a sufficient or an ultimate geopolitical goal by Greek Cypriots as long as they regard themselves primarily as Greeks rather than Cypriots. They thus viewed the creation of the Republic of Cyprus, as the first step on the way to union with Greece, but not the final settlement. Thus the basic difference between the two sides can be found here from the Turkish-Cypriot perspective. The Greek Cypriots’ insistence on a “unitary state,” which they clearly wished to use as a means of achieving Enosis, was not compatible with the Turkish Cypriots insistence on “regional autonomy” in a Cyprus guaranteed against Enosis. These mutually exclusive aims have subsequently caused the current intractable situation in which both sides are determined to impose its own solution.<sup>31</sup>

Denktash viewed the 1960 agreements as the final settlement for Cyprus, and thus has continually returned to them as legal justification for any future talks or negotiations. He saw that the compromise settlement, on the basis of a bi-national state guaranteed against union of any kind and guaranteeing the partnership rights of the Turkish community, would either be cherished and honored, or destroyed. In his own words:

*The Greek Cypriot leaders chose to destroy this partnership state and sought to establish a purely Greek Cypriot administration by ejecting the Turkish Cypriot elements from the government. The 1963 onslaught on the Turkish Cypriot community was the inevitable result of the Greek Cypriots’ pursuit of the dream of Enosis.*<sup>32</sup>

Taking this logic one step further, Denktash also has subsequently claimed that the Turkish-Cypriot resistances between 1963-1974, far from being a rebellion, as the Greek Cypriots have claimed, and the Turkish “intervention” of 1974, as opposed to the

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<sup>29</sup> Moran, 11.

<sup>30</sup> Princeton Nancy Crawshaw Archives.

<sup>31</sup> Moran, 58.

<sup>32</sup> Triangle, 16.

“invasion” that the Greek Cypriots maintain it was, effectively prevented the implementation of Enosis. Denktash has welcomed Turkish involvement in Cyprus, but only as a counterweight to Greece and the Greek-Cypriot majority on the island. However rather than blaming the geo-strategic situation of Cyprus as the root of the problem, Denktash focuses the blame solely on the Greek-Cypriot side and particularly on its President, Archbishop Makarios, for its support of the policy of Enosis.

### **The Role of International Actors**

Similar to Denktash, Nancy Crawshaw saw the Greek Cypriots as being primarily responsible for destroying the compromise settlement. However she did not blame the Greek Cypriots for the resulting isolation of the Turkish Cypriots. In her work Crawshaw lamented the UN Security Council for passing its Resolution of March 4, 1964, in which it set forth the belief that the Government of Cyprus as established by the 1960 Agreements continued to exist. This resolution set the stage for the international recognition of the Greek-Cypriot government and made reference to them as the “Government of Cyprus,” a title which Makarios soon converted to mean the illegal administration composed of 100% Greek Cypriots with their declared aim of achieving the union of Cyprus with Greece. Therefore Crawshaw saw the coup that the Greek colonels instigated in 1974 as deposing not the legitimate Head of the Republic of Cyprus but a Greek-Cypriot leader who had destroyed the bi-communal partnership for the presidency of which he had been elected solely by the Greek Cypriots.<sup>33</sup>

Crawshaw echoed Denktash’s view that legitimate presidential authority existed as long as the Greek-Cypriot President (elected solely by the Greek Cypriots) sat together and shared power with his Turkish-Cypriot Vice-President (elected separately by Turkish Cypriots.) Thus by definition it is only when the two heads, the President and the Vice-President, acted conjointly that the legal exercise of presidential powers became possible. The executive power of the State, which was a functional federation based on the existence of two politically equal national communities, ensued from the President and Vice-President acting conjointly. All these facts and legal issues were ignored by the Security Council and Makarios when they passed the 1964 resolution.

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<sup>33</sup> Crawshaw, 3.

Crawshaw notes ironically in her work that Makarios while he was treated for eleven years as the President of Cyprus, because of his successful coup against the bi-communal Cypriot state in which he used international organizations such as the UN to secure his position, it was a coup from another international actor that caused his downfall. It was this illegitimate “president” which had been deposed by the Greek Junta and who was four days later on July 19, 1974, declaring at the Security Council in New York that Cyprus was being invaded by Greece.<sup>34</sup>

As a result of these views, which were directly contrary to the Greek-Cypriot point of view, many in this community began to accuse Crawshaw of being biased toward the Turkish-Cypriot side. In a particularly telling exchange of correspondences from the Wilton Park Conference organizer of May 22, 1986, Geoffrey Denton wrote to Mrs. Crawshaw: “We were particularly pleased to have someone with your great reputation as an objective observer, to participate with the two main protagonists in the session on Cyprus.”<sup>35</sup> To which Mrs. Crawshaw wrote back in response: “The Greeks and the Greek Cypriots were not pleased with what I had to say, so it is reassuring to have your comments on the questions of my objectivity.”<sup>36</sup>

In addition to her own writings in which Mrs. Crawshaw attempted to point out the inequity of the Turkish-Cypriot situation, she also became directly involved in helping Mr. Denktash on at least one occasion. In response to a request by Mr. Denktash to help edit his second edition of his book *The Cyprus Triangle*, Mrs. Crawshaw agreed and even wrote a preface that was never used. In this unused preface, which she kept in her own personal files, she describes the updated edition as covering the events...

*...which led to the Turkish Cypriot declaration of independence in 1983 and the background to the failure of the UN Secretary General's formulas for a negotiated settlement owing to their rejection by the Greek Cypriot leaders. The author's (Denktash) narrative is well documented by official papers and other authentic data. Written in a concise and lucid style 'The Cyprus Triangle' is essential reading for any serious study of the dispute and should do much to dispel the widespread misconception that the problem is an issue of Turkish aggression.*<sup>37</sup>

Crawshaw also sought to inform readers of her column in *The World Today* of the culpability of the British in the failed Cyprus settlement. Writing in a book review of

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Princeton Nancy Crawshaw Archives, ‘Wilton Park Conference Letters’, May 22, 1986.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Princeton Nancy Crawshaw Archives.

*Burdened with Cyprus: the British Connection*<sup>38</sup> Nancy Crawshaw claimed that, “Partition was never an objective of British policy; but it came to be considered as an ‘eventual option’ to be exercised only if all else failed.”<sup>39</sup> Despite this fact the belief that Britain plotted with Turkey in 1958 to bring about the division of the island is deeply rooted in Greek-Cypriot opinion. The notion of collusion between military observers from Britain that armed intervention by Britain was not practicable either in 1964 or 1974 also permeates these narratives. Crawshaw in this book review on Britain’s involvement in Cyprus deplores the British government’s failure to uphold the Zurich Constitution in 1964 and its acquiescence in the Greek-Cypriot claim that their administration is the legal government of Cyprus. Crawshaw goes on to agree with the author in arguing that there were at the time, “...obvious political measures which should have been taken by Britain.”<sup>40</sup>

It is an open debate whether there has been any legitimate government at all since 1964. The Zurich Agreements provided for a bi-communal system which gave the Turkish Cypriots equal powers with the Greek Cypriots at certain levels of government. It can therefore be reasonably argued that Britain, by recognizing a government from which the Turkish Cypriots are excluded, is itself in breach of the Treaty of Guarantee. The policy of favoring the Greek Cypriots adopted by successive British governments since 1964, and executed even more stringently after the Turkish-Cypriot declaration of independence in 1983, was motivated, in the words of Crawshaw, by political expediency “...rather than by a strict assessment of the rights and wrongs of the dispute.”<sup>41</sup>

As Crawshaw argued in *The Cyprus Revolt* it is hardly disputable that throughout the modern – and probably the whole – history of Cyprus, the more devastating internal events have invariably been connected with external events with prevailing purposes and machinations of larger powers, regional or supranational. In 1964 the connection was with a series of events; first and foremost relations between Greece and Turkey. However there are other global events that Crawshaw acknowledges that Denktash has never truly dealt with like the British – and subsequently American and hence NATO – interests in the area; with Makarios’ newly-found role as a much respected figure in the non-aligned movement; and, not least, with Russian concerns that Cyprus should become truly

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<sup>38</sup> Reddaway, John. *Burdened with Cyprus: the British Connection* London: Rustem/Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1987.

<sup>39</sup> Princeton Nancy Crawshaw Archives.

<sup>40</sup> Princeton Nancy Crawshaw Archives.

<sup>41</sup> Princeton Nancy Crawshaw Archives.

independent of its NATO guarantors, one of whom already had military bases on the island and the capacity to spy, electronically, on the Soviet Union.<sup>42</sup>

Scholars who followed the backstage activities at the UN in early 1964 have attempted to show the extent to which the Cyprus problem, as it has regularly erupted since World War II, has always involved more than a power struggle between the two Cypriot communities. In one of the accounts written by Michael Moran he rhetorically asks: “If the expression ‘The Cyprus problem’ had referred merely to an inter-communal conflict in Cyprus itself, would anyone, outside the Eastern Mediterranean region, have ever heard of it?”<sup>43</sup> He goes on to say that Denktash’s speeches before the UN have generally had little effect because, through no fault of his own, he was not addressing the issues which really concerned the major players in the UN General Assembly or particularly the Security Council.

Denktash’s approach seems both simplistic and narrowly focused on merely the Cyprus conflict in an internal and not an international context.

*We, the Turkish Cypriots, did not have to concern ourselves with major international interests. For us the fundamental issues of the Cyprus problem were our security and how to live in a dignified way under the rule of law, which is the right of all free people. We had gone through the bitter experiences of 1955-58 and our people were still suffering from the events of 1963-1974.*<sup>44</sup>

Interestingly these lines never made it into Mr. Denktash’s final manuscript for *The Cyprus Triangle*. In the draft version in which these lines were written, Mrs. Crawshaw marked across these lines and scribbled in the margins, “This is very repetitive I suggest cutting it and moving to your conclusion.” Denktash, whether because of geopolitical considerations or pressure from Turkey, has never extended his analysis of the internal Cypriot to a broader international level, choosing rather to focus the blame solely on the Greek-Cypriot side and particularly on its President, Archbishop Makarios.

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<sup>42</sup> Crawshaw, Nancy. *The Cyprus Revolt* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1978).

<sup>43</sup> Moran, 106.

<sup>44</sup> Triangle, 16.

## The Role of Makarios

Even during the three years that Cyprus arguably functioned as an independent state, Denktash, as could be expected, never trusted the Greek-Cypriot President Archbishop Makarios. In his speech delivered before the UN General Assembly 186 Resolution, which granted that the Greek-Cypriot government was to be the sole government of Cyprus despite the realities on the ground, Denktash argued vigorously that Makarios was working for Enosis and nothing else. “Archbishop Makarios having agreed to the independent Republic solely for the purpose of using this Republic as a spring-board for Enosis his administration could do nothing but serve his purpose.”<sup>45</sup> Unlike Crawshaw who saw the tension between Makarios, Colonel Grivas, and the Greek leadership, Denktash blamed Makarios, as the representative of a Greek-Cypriot monolithic bloc.

Denktash, consistent with the Turkish-Cypriot view, viewed Makarios as being too lenient and passive to the point of complacency during the unrest that Grivas unleashed from 1963-1974. Through this lens, Makarios instead of dealing firmly with EOKA and other underground organizations, tried to appease them. He appealed to them to dissolve themselves, and even granted an amnesty to convicted terrorists. Crawshaw’s view of the Makarios-Grivas feud gives the impression that Makarios was working for permanent independence through the intercommunal talks and that Grivas was trying to stop him. This is in contrast to Denktash who claims that this is an erroneous impression and that in fact both men were pursuing the same goal of Enosis, but had different ideas about how to achieve it.<sup>46</sup> In response to the death of Makarios, Denktash has been quoted as saying: “Now, looking back at the battles he (Makarios) waged for this purpose from the day he took the ‘Enosis oath’ until the day of his death twenty-seven years later, one finds that these struggles have brought nothing but violence, bloodshed and untold human misery to the island and serious threats to the peace of the region.”<sup>47</sup>

From the beginning of the ill-fated republic Denktash has continually pointed out the inconsistencies of the President of the Cyprus Republic calling for a stronger unitary Cypriot state, while at the same time making statements, such as, “My ambition is to unite Cyprus integrally with Greece, and then the borders of Greece will extend to the shores

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<sup>45</sup> Princeton Nancy Crawshaw Archives, Denktash’s Speech of 28 February 1964.

<sup>46</sup> Triangle, 62.

<sup>47</sup> Moran, 85.

of North Africa.”<sup>48</sup> In another of Crawshaw’s revisions for Denktash’s book, she struck out the following lines:

*I warned that we could not go on tolerating the duplicity of the Greek Cypriots, who at local level were negotiating, or pretending to negotiate, a federal solution, while working at international level for resolutions which were unrealistic and detrimental to our interest [non-aligned movement]...The Greek Cypriot negotiator could hardly be discussing a federal system with us when at the same time his leader was pressing for the adoption of resolutions which would give him a mandate to do whatever he liked with Cyprus as its sole legitimate representative.*<sup>49</sup>

Believing that Denktash was overstepping his bounds with these harsh words, which were also repetitive of other sections of his book, Crawshaw suggested that these lines be deleted. Examination of this choice by Crawshaw enables a greater understanding of the divergence in viewpoints on Makarios between Crawshaw and Denktash. While Denktash saw Makarios as solely to blame, Crawshaw attributed much of his inconsistencies to the international system and in particular to the way in which the non-aligned movement had been so successfully hijacked by the Greek Cypriots.

### **A Future Settlement**

In explaining the reasoning that followed his drastic decision to declare the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) in 1983, Mr. Denktash writes in his book,

*As years went by and one-sided resolutions contrary to the interests of the Turkish Cypriots and Turkey piled up, I became more and more convinced that nothing but a solemn declaration of statehood, combined with intensive efforts to achieve recognition, would move the Greek Cypriot side towards federalism.*<sup>50</sup>

Thus his reasoning runs contrary to the popular view that this step was initiated to permanently partition the island into the existing realities on the ground. In fact Denktash went even further when he argued that even if these steps did not move the Greek Cypriots in direction of federalism, at least the Turkish people of Cyprus would be on the road leading to recognition. “We would not just be stagnating in a political limbo as we had done from 1975 to 1983, and getting nowhere at all.”<sup>51</sup>

As a result of the successful Greek-Cypriot policy of internationalization, the Turkish-Cypriot community felt that its only hope of being seen and heard by the world

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<sup>48</sup> Triangle, 16.

<sup>49</sup> Denktash, Rauf R. *The Cyprus Triangle 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1986), 11. Hereafter Triangle 2<sup>nd</sup>.

<sup>50</sup> Triangle 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed., 107.

<sup>51</sup> Triangle 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed., 107.

was to take the dramatic step of declaring independence. Denktash's speeches before the UN and his writings have emphasized the suffering of the Turkish Cypriots since 1963 until 1983 and brought to the attention of the world that they have been deprived of all their rights by the Greek Cypriots.

Invoking the United States' Declaration of Independence in his address before the UN Security Council, Mr. Denktash also argued that, "...we were treated as outlaws and as long as we stayed dormant in our present position this state of affairs would continue. The world had to see that we existed."<sup>52</sup> To Denktash recognition was of secondary importance. What was important was to get on the road to recognition. Thus the key for Denktash is a federal settlement that could only be achieved between two equal communities declaring their respective statehood, but willingly and legitimately coming together to work out their differences.

Foreshadowing the events to come, Mrs. Crawshaw delivered a lecture in 1965 to the Royal British Naval Academy in which she laid out her analysis of the future of Cyprus. She argued that the objective of the two communities at the time could not be reconciled. Crawshaw went on to state that as the result of the Christmas massacres of 1963 in Nicosia and subsequent events the Turks were only prepared to consider a settlement which gave them greater physical security. This meant at least the consolidation of the Turkish communities into larger groups, if not the physical partition of the island into two separate spheres of influence. The Greek Cypriots, on the other hand, were determined to resist any form of settlement based on territorial separation or population transfers. They were also at variance with diplomats searching at the time for a peaceful settlement. She concluded that, "The concentration of all the Turks in one area would create the territorial and administrative pre-requisites for partition, in the event of some future political crisis. The minority, moreover, can more easily be kept under control so long as it is dispersed in comparatively small groups."<sup>53</sup>

In the wake of the eventual Turkish intervention and the partition of Cyprus into the TRNC and the Greek Cypriot Republic, Crawshaw saw the need for equal treatment for both states. Since these events and the overthrow of the 1960 settlement the Turkish Cypriots and Mr. Denktash have been faced with one of the hardest tasks in the whole range of international affairs. In the words of Crawshaw: "How to get the world to

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Princeton Nancy Crawshaw Archives.

change its mind after it has got hold of the wrong end of the stick and clung on to it year after year?"<sup>54</sup> It is the nature of governments and international organizations that they should be reluctant to admit that they have been in the wrong or even to think it is possible they may have been mistaken. For both Denktash and Crawshaw that is the simple truth about the position which the world at large has taken up with regard to Cyprus from 1964 onwards.

As Mrs. Crawshaw argues in her conclusion of a revised text of *The Cyprus Revolt*,

*The Turks were left with no alternative but to take the next step in the exercise of their right to self-determination ... At the time they declared their independence, the Turkish Cypriot People proclaimed to the entire world that their action would not at all hinder the solution of the Cyprus problem within the framework of a federation. They stated that they did not intend to unite with any other state, but that the door was open for the Greek Cypriots to join them within a federation as equal partners.*<sup>55</sup>

This possibility of a federation has been raised consistently in Cyprus, but has never looked particularly promising. However, convergence does exist in some issue areas; for example, Archbishop Makarios and Rauf Denktash agreed during their 1977 talks on the principle of federalism as a means of administrating the state. However without an equal understanding of the Turkish-Cypriot perspective there can never be a truly final settlement in Cyprus.

## Conclusion

For at least forty-two years both Greek and Turkish Cypriots have heard only one side of the Cyprus story. How can there be a truly united Cyprus with such partiality and bias exhibited in the discourse on the subject? Denktash concluded one of his original draft chapters for *The Cyprus Triangle* with an attack on the...

*...distorted facts and disinformation, they [Greek Cypriots] have come to know the Turkish Cypriots as enemies, and the division of the island into two parts as the*

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<sup>54</sup> Princeton Nancy Crawshaw Archives.

<sup>55</sup> Princeton Nancy Crawshaw Archives.

*deliberate result of a Turkish plan. That is why their approach to the Cyprus problem is not balanced and that is why they fail to understand the Turkish Cypriot point of view, and until they do, they will continue to believe that they have been grossly wronged when it is their side which has caused all [my emphasis] the trouble in Cyprus.*<sup>56</sup>

It is rarely fair to place *all* the blame on any one group, and Mrs. Crawshaw was wise to suggest that Mr. Denktash change his ending.

It is only fitting that Denktash's eventual conclusion now reads, "In the meantime, Turkey and Greece are trying to settle their various bi-lateral differences. Cyprus continues to be the fulcrum on which the Turkey-Cyprus-Greece triangle is delicately balanced."<sup>57</sup> It is this Cypriot fulcrum and the international context that surrounds it which Denktash acknowledges that both he and Mrs. Crawshaw have attempted to explain to the world. For a truly equitable and just solution to be reached on an island that has suffered for so much of its history, both the Turkish and Greek Cypriot points of view must be understood and seen in their proper context. While mainland Greek-Turkish relations continue to warm, their strategic interests in Cyprus have not had the same effect on their respective communities. The Turkish-Cypriot perspective presented in this paper continues to be sorely lacking in the discourse on Cyprus. Greater research must be done in understanding where Greek and Turkish Cypriot interests converge, but this can only be done when it is accepted that at least two divergent perspectives exist on the island and both must be given an equal airing so that a solution to the long simmering dispute in Cyprus can finally be found. One can only hope that Cypriot history will take a turn for the best in the 21<sup>st</sup> century in which the inhabitants of Cyprus will have a real chance at deciding their own collective fate in a fair and equitable way for all involved.

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<sup>56</sup> Princeton Nancy Crawshaw Archives, Denktash's rough draft of *The Cyprus Triangle*, 106.

<sup>57</sup> *Triangle* 2<sup>nd</sup>, 108.

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