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# THE ORIGINS OF GREEK CYPRIOT NATIONAL IDENTITY

by

Elena Koumna

A Thesis  
Submitted to the  
Faculty of The Graduate College  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the  
Degree of Master of Arts  
Department of Political Science

Western Michigan University  
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To all those who never stop seeking more knowledge

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Elena Koumna

## THE ORIGINS OF GREEK CYPRIOT NATIONAL IDENTITY

Elena Koumna, M. A.

Western Michigan University, 1998

Discussions of Greek Cypriot identity have conventionally been dominated by primordial arguments, contributing to the creation and maintenance of stereotypes and mythologies about the ethnic conflict between Greek and Turkish Cypriots. In order to examine the validity of the primordial thesis, modernist and constructionist approaches on nationalism and identity are considered (Gellner 1983; Hobsbawm 1990; Anderson 1991; Hroch 1985; Smith 1991). Nationalism and identity formation are analyzed in the context of “stages,” where the social composition of each stage and the degree of modernization are examined. The findings of the thesis largely support the hypotheses that pinpoint the articulation of Greek Cypriot national identity at the end of the 19th century. Thus, nationalism in Cyprus is a relatively recent phenomenon that developed unevenly, and in which a national elite played an important role in articulating identity and preparing the ground for the formation of the movement. Moreover, nationalism was closely associated with social change and modernization processes. Gellner and Hroch offered the most useful models for the examination of two key periods in Cypriot history. The Ottoman period closely corresponds to Gellner’s “pre-industrial” society in which conditions do not facilitate the development of nationalism and ethnic consciousness, while Hroch’s Phase B captures the importance of a new set of actors who actively seek to mobilize ethnic consciousness among the masses, a period in Cypriot history that corresponds roughly to the early British colonial period at the end of the last century.

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## CHAPTER I

### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The culmination of the Cyprus Republic in 1960 came to an end in 1974, with Turkey invading the island and occupying approximately 37 percent of the northern part. Since then, the negotiation efforts by the two sides to re-unify the island have not been fruitful and Cyprus remains divided. The consequences of this physical separation have been negative both at the political and the societal level. The continuing division and tension is reinforced by the hegemonic nationalist discourse in both sides that has portrayed the ethnic conflict between the two communities in a manner that justifies the physical separation, maintains the tension, and minimizes the efforts to reach an agreement.

In this discourse, expressed in the political process, the media and education, relations between Greeks and Turks have been mythologized to a great extent, with arguments of moral superiority and victimization dominating the discussion. A disproportionate significance is given to the primordial nation-state and to the existence of an essential and unchanging Greek identity. The history of the island and the explanation of the conflict is portrayed through a process of a historical narrative that is selective, filters out certain events while concentrating on others. In this narrative, not only are other forms of identity obscured but relationships within the same ethnic group are simplified and statements of authenticity of culture tend to undermine non-indigenous influence and harmonious co-existence. The issue of

oppression has been overtly emphasized at the expense of a sociological explanation of the conflict.

While arguments of primordialism are made on behalf of nationalist forces in both sides of the Green Line, the focus of this thesis will be on the relationships within the Greek Cypriot community. Thus, this thesis will examine the origins of Greek Cypriot nationalism and the nature of Greek Cypriot identity to determine the extent to which the above claims are a representation of reality.

The next section offers a brief history of Cyprus that highlights the main events which are useful for understanding the arguments presented in this thesis.

### Historical Background

Cyprus, a small island in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea, was conquered by various peoples during antiquity, including the Assyrians, Egyptians, Persians, and Romans. However, the arrival of the Achaeans-Mycenaeans to Cyprus around the 15th century B.C. constituted one of the most significant events since Greek culture has predominated on the island ever since. In 45 A.D., Apostles Barnabas and Paul establish Christianity on the island and gradually most Cypriots convert to Christianity. From the 4th to the 12th centuries A.D., Cyprus becomes part of the Byzantine Empire, and the island is faced with Arab raids in this period (7th–10th centuries A.D.). The Europeans (Richard the Lionhearted, Franks, Venetians, Genovese) conquer the island in the Middle Ages (1192–1571) with the Ottomans succeeding the Europeans (1571) and capturing the island until 1878. The coming of the Ottomans created a Turkish community on the island that has persisted into modern times. The Greek War of Independence (1821) against the Ottoman Empire

did not leave Cyprus unaffected. Cypriots play a role in the insurrection but pay a price for it. Archbishop Kyprianos (1810–1821) is executed along with other 470 lay and clergy members of the Greek elite by the Ottoman authorities. In 1878 the Ottomans cede the island to Britain while still maintaining official possession and receiving a moneyed tribute. The transition from Ottoman to British rule finds Cypriots striving for Union with Greece that had achieved independence in 1829. The national movement for self-determination and *enosis* (unification) takes more force as the 20th century approached. However, the British did not have any intention of freeing the island due to strategic considerations and in 1925, Cyprus officially becomes a Crown colony. After World War II, the Greek Cypriot movement for self-determination and unification with Greece becomes mass based and in 1955, an armed liberation struggle begins. Eventually, Cyprus becomes independent in 1960, with a constitution that was supposed to safeguard rights for both communities on the island. However, the constitution, a document that reflected the interests of the Great Powers rather than the needs and problems of the two communities results in administrative problems and creates a gridlock between Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot officials. Even though the goal for unification is by now abandoned by some administrators and politicians (from both sides) who saw the impracticality of such a solution, a new movement on behalf of Greek Cypriot nationalists is created that seeks to undermine the new Cypriot administration and to bring about unification with Greece, an unfulfilled goal for some. At the same time, Turkish paramilitary forces are created on the island to oppose unification. This situation results in nationalist forces from both sides committing atrocities against the population. In 1974, a coup d'état against President and Archbishop Makarios takes place on behalf

of Greek and Greek Cypriot nationalists. This triggers a Turkish invasion against Cyprus under the pretext of safeguarding the rights of its Turkish minority, an event that resulted in the occupation of 37% of the land (north) and thousands of dead, missing and refugees. The Turkish Cypriot administration north of the Green Line has declared the northern side as a separate state (Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus) and has imported thousands of Turkish settlers from Turkey to increase the legitimacy of that state. After twenty-three years of division, the two sides do not seem to be near a solution for the re-unification of the island. Negotiations over the years have proved to be fruitless. Recent events have contributed towards the deterioration of the relationships between the two communities. The deaths of two young Greek Cypriots in August 1996 during a peaceful demonstration in the UN buffer zone in Cyprus became an emotional event for Greek Cypriots and caused a lot of frustration and cynicism as to a future possibility for a viable solution. Continuing tension has been recently increased with the possibility of the Greek side acquiring Soviet missiles (S-300) to strengthen the island's defense. Moreover, nationalist leaders of the occupied north Cyprus threat to continue the process with mainland Turkey for the possible annexation of North Cyprus if the southern part is admitted to the EEC.

The next two sections provide a review of the literature and develop a theoretical framework within which the origins of nationalism, the development of a national movement and the nature of Greek Cypriot identity can be analyzed.

## Review of the Literature

### Definitions of Nations and Nationalism

Definitions of the nation have been traditionally divided among those who emphasize the “objective” criteria of a community as opposed to those who stress the “subjective” element. Stalin’s definition of the nation “as a historically evolved, stable community of language, territory, economic life and psychological makeup, manifested in a community of culture” represents the objectivist school (Stalin 1994, 20). On the other hand, a strong subjective statement has been made by Ernest Renan (1996), who perceived the nation as a “daily plebiscite” and the desire of a people to live together a crucial element.

Since then, social scientists have identified several problems with accepting either objective or subjective definitions of the nation. The objective school of thought has been criticized for its “static” definition of the nation, one that assumes lack of change and uniformity in group identity (Hobsbawm 1990). The difficulty in projecting such definitions lies in the fact that cultural boundaries in pre-national societies were not fixed. Therefore, instead of attempting to define a nation by its cultural criteria, one must examine “what culture does” in a community (Gellner 1983). The focus on a subjective will is also misleading because it stresses to the extreme the implications of voluntarism. Like Gellner, Hobsbawm avoids defining a nation *a priori*; rather, he decides to examine the nature of the concept and trace the way in which this changed to accommodate historical processes.

Ben-Israel (1992) does not perceive the subjective and objective definitions as problematic but as complementary. He argues that the definition of the nation springs

from both subjective and objective elements, even though these appear to be in varied proportions at any point in time and are responsible for distinguishing various national movements.

Another definition is that of Smith (1991). The central criteria here are the nation's territorial boundaries and specific homeland, a mass culture (inculcated through an educational system) and common historical myths and memories, a legal system with legal rights and duties for its members, and a common economy and mobility for all (Smith 1991, 14). Smith's definition is useful in the sense that it is the description of the ideal nation-state, one in which various ethnic groups are able to develop a national identity based on certain common historical myths, memories and experiences.

Despite the continuing debate on whether the focus of the nation should be on objective or subjective criteria, most social scientists agree that the subjective element or national consciousness is crucial in its definition. In this sense, Anderson's definition of the nation as an "imagined community" is also very useful. Members of this community view themselves as unique and deserving sovereignty.

It is an imagined political community—and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign. It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion. . . . The nation is imagined as limited because even the largest of them, encompassing perhaps a billion living human beings, has finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations. (Anderson 1990, 6–7)

What makes Anderson's definition powerful is its implicit argument that the act of "imagining" one's self as a member of a nation only became possible with the introduction of certain modernization processes (i.e., printing technologies) that brought large numbers of people together through a mental process.

Most definitions of nationalism agree that it is an ideology and /or a political movement (Eller 1997; Smith 1991; Ben-Israel 1992). Smith (1991) outlines the core elements of nationalist ideology:

The world is divided into nations, each with its own individuality, history and destiny.

The nation is the source of all political and social power, and loyalty to the nation overrides all other allegiances.

Human beings must identify with a nation if they want to be free and realize themselves.

Nations must be free and secure if peace and justice are to prevail in this world. (Smith 1991, 74)

The principle of sovereignty of the nation derived from this ideology is the central idea in the definitions of several social scientists (Gellner 1983; Hobsbawm 1990; Breuilly 1982). Moreover, the notion that the nation is viewed by its members as the most important category of identification is also important (Eller 1997). However, Smith argues that sovereignty is not essential or necessary in nationalist ideology; nationalism is not just about politics and acquiring power but must also be viewed as a form of culture and identity. Thus, nationalism can be political but could also be cultural, without the existence of a political program that seeks to achieve the nation.

Ben-Israel's description of the assumptions of nationalism <sup>15</sup> are most useful in demonstrating the power of the ideology to shift the discussion away from questions of sociological analysis and to place the "nation" above democratic debate. In this manner, undemocratic behavior is sanctioned:

The group is not accidental but possesses historical continuity and a common identity. The nation derives its rights not merely from the collective will of its participants but also from its very existence as a nation. Nationalism implies rights independent of the votes of the present members of that nation. (Ben-Israel 1992, 374)

Hroch's (1985) insightful sociological analysis of national movements in Eastern Europe alerts us to the fact that movements do not necessarily carry one specific ideology throughout their lifetime while the goals might differ from one stage to the other. Hroch argues that a movement does not have to be nationalistic (in a negative sense) since "nationalism was only one of many forms of national consciousness to emerge in the course of these movements" (Hroch 1996, 62). For this reason, Hroch chooses to talk about "national" as opposed to "nationalist" movements with specific goals.<sup>1</sup> These centered around developing a culture based on an indigenous language and its use in all aspects of the polity, acquiring civil and political rights (and ultimately independence), and "creating a complete social structure from out of the ethnic group" (Hroch 1996, 62).

### Theories of Nations and Nationalism

One of the questions that theories of nations and nationalism have attempted to answer is *when* and *how* these emerged. One response is the primordialist view, rooted in the writings of the German romantic intellectuals of the 18th and 19th centuries. Fichte and Herder saw the nation as a natural category and nationalism as the "awakening" of nations at a certain time. The concept has been given overt significance in the 20th century to explain the occurrence of nationalism in countries like Germany. Edward Shils (1957) has been credited with the development of the concept of primordial attachments and their implication for political action. The challenge of the nation-state by ethnic separatism in places like India in the 1950s

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<sup>1</sup>He defines a national movement as the "organized endeavors to achieve all the attributes of a fully-fledged nation" (62).



renewed the significance of the concept (Geertz 1963). It was assumed that the power of primordial attachments—assumed blood ties, race, language, region, religion and custom—have the power to disrupt the operations of the state and bring about ethnic conflict and even secession. For Geertz (1963), these attachments are perceived as having “an ineffable, and at times overpowering, coerciveness in and of themselves” (109). Primordial attachments are used by nationalists and others to claim the nation as historical and immemorial, and states and politics as being the product of these primordial ties (Smith 1996). A variant of primordialism is the perennialist view that supports the existence of nations during different epochs. In this case, “nations are being continually formed and dissolved, on the basis of pre-existing ethnic ties . . .” (Smith 1996, 446).

The primordialist and perennialist position has been challenged by the modernist view that emphasizes the newness of nations and nationalism. Earlier advocates of this view pointed out to the late 18th or early 19th century as the period that produced nationalism and Western and Central Europe as the region where it first emerged (Kohn 1944; Kedourie 1961; Hayes 1931). Moreover, modernists have produced various explanations that distinguish the earlier 18th century, western European nation-state from its later variant in Eastern Europe and other, non-western regions. For example, Kohn (1946) has distinguished between a western “rational and voluntaristic” model and a later “organic and authoritarian” type. Recent accounts prefer to view the earlier western nation-state as the liberal and Wilsonian type, and the 19th century type as the linguistic-historic nation (Hobsbawm 1990). Yet another position argues that there is no real dichotomy between an earlier “liberal” type and a later “historic” nation. Instead, all nation-states contain elements of the liberal and the

historic-linguistic nation, even though in different proportions at different points in time (Ben-Israel 1992).

There are different variants of the recent modernist position in terms of the extent to which nations and nationalism have been constructed. The instrumentalists for example have emphasized the construction of nations and nationalism (Tilly 1975; Breuilly 1982; Gellner 1983; Anderson 1991; Hobsbawm 1990). Closer examinations of ethnic identity and nation formation in Europe and the non-western world pointed out to the reinvention and construction of ethnic identity from above (Nagel 1984). Thus, it is argued that it is politics and the state that creates nations and nationalism and not culture in and of itself. Rather, culture is used as an instrument for the purposes of political construction.

Another variant of the modernist view is Smith (1991), who agrees with the others that nations and nationalism are recent phenomena. However, he disagrees with the constructionists that nations are created entirely from above. Instead, he emphasizes the fact that these have been reinvented and reconstructed and not invented. To support his argument he introduces the concept of “ethnies,” that is, durable cultural communities on the basis of which nations have been formed. In the process of nation-building, the ethnies have been reinvented or reconstructed. He points out that one must look into the mechanisms of reconstruction, that is, myths of common ethnic origin, cultural borrowing, religious reform, and the like and their use by the state or the intelligentsia to make claims for the nation. Smith argues that the origins of myths are found in a specific ethnic core that forms the basis of the later multi-ethnic nation-state.

Modernist scholars have also attempted to answer the question of *how* did nations and nationalism emerged. Earlier scholars emphasized the diffusion of nationalism through its imitation and borrowing from Europe (Kohn 1944; Kedourie 1961) or processes of “nation-building” and its features during the different phases (Seton-Watson 1965). Recent analyses have focused on certain permeable elements or conditions central to the emergence of nations and nationalism. For example, Deutch (1966) has pointed out to sociodemographic processes such as urbanization, mobility, literacy and communications as eroding traditional bonds and values amongst peoples and thus creating a homogenous society with a common national identity. While Deutch’s concepts of social mobility and communications are useful in explaining social transformation and the emergence of nationalism, the author’s assimilationist model has failed to account for the development of sub-nationalisms within the nation-state. Nevertheless, Deutch’s emphasis on socio-demographic processes raised very important questions in terms of its impact on national identity and nationalism and the agents of modernization. Gellner (1983) for example has located the emergence of nationalism in late 18th century Europe and its spread in other parts of the world during the 19th and 20th centuries. Industrialism is viewed as the necessary but not sufficient condition for nationalism to develop. In turn, the maintenance of an industrial society with a complex division of labor and high social mobility requires literate and skilled citizens. Thus, the state undertakes the massive project of educating its citizens to satisfy the needs of industrialism. Citizens are now socialized into a shared culture that teaches people to identify with the symbols of the bureaucratic state. Thus, nationalism is the expression of an advanced polity that has made culture its ally. Unlike Deutch who saw the media as disseminating nationalist

ideas, Gellner locates the importance of communications in the “language and style of transmission” (Gellner 1983, 127). The message sent is that “only he who can understand them, or can acquire such comprehension, is included in a moral and economic community, and that he who does not and cannot is excluded. What is actually said matters little” (Gellner 1983, 127).

Modernization processes are important in Hroch’s argument as well (Hroch 1985). However, he disagrees with Gellner who perceives industrialism as the condition for the emergence of nationalism due to empirical evidence that points out to the existence of national movements prior to the advent of industrial society. Instead, he looks into other “mediating effects” of market relations and industrialization, that is, the spread of literacy, social and geographical mobility, generational change, commercialization of agriculture and other institutions that produce a change in attitudes and perceptions of identity. He proposes three structural phases of a national movement, during which various institutions (i.e., the church) and social groups define its character and intensity.

Hobsbawm (1990) builds on the arguments presented by Gellner and Hroch. He also regards modernization processes such as economics, politics and technology as facilitating the emergence of nationalism. Like Hroch, he notes the importance of the “products” of modernization, that is, mass schooling, literacy and printing as agents of transmission of the symbols of national identity.

For Anderson (1991) also, one of the most important conditions for the emergence of the nation and nationalism is the development of printing technologies. Gutenberg’s invention and its mass production as well as its derivatives, that is the novel and the newspaper gave a new meaning to linguistic diversity and made it

possible for communities to “imagine” themselves in a new way. Thus, “what made the new communities imaginable, was a half-fortuitous, but explosive, interaction between a system of production and productive relations (capitalism), a technology of communications (print), and the fatality of human linguistic diversity” (Anderson 1991, 42).

The notion that nations and nationalism have been created “from above” (i.e., Gellner 1983) is qualified by Hobsbawm (1990). He argues that nationalism and nations are created not only “from above” but also “from below.” The state’s need to generate loyalty from its people (i.e., for war purposes) eventually leads to democratization and the introduction of mass politics. This is significant because it strengthens sentiments of nationalism from below. Thus, In an era of mass political and class consciousness, rival elites compete for support among the population by adhering to different slogans.

Hobsbawm’s explanation of political construction in an earlier phase of a national movement and the emergence of nationalism from below during a later stage is adopted from Hroch’s model of national movements and the importance of certain social actors in each phase. Hroch (1985) emphasizes the changing nature of the social composition of a national movement and thus the different demands arising in its different stages. He argues that in Phase A the educated classes devote their energies to “scholarly inquiry into and dissemination of an awareness of the linguistic, cultural, social and sometimes historical attributes of the non-dominant group-but without on the whole, pressing specifically national demands to remedy deficits” (Hroch 1996, 63). During Phase B, a new social group emerges who engage in patriotic agitation to educate the people about the future nation and thus to draw

much popular support. However, it is only during Phase C, that mass support becomes possible and the national movement is now split into liberal and conservative wings, each with different views of how the struggle for political emancipation should come about and which principles the nation is going to be based on.

Smith (1991) develops another model of “lateral” versus “vertical” ethnies to explain the manner in which nationalism and the articulation of the nation came about. He argues that in “lateral” ethnies, the role of the state in developing those necessary conditions for the formation of the subsequent nation is very important. The building of an adequate infrastructure and a vast communications network, economic processes, and the development of secular studies are all handled by a powerful state. The intelligentsia in this model has been co-opted by the state and works for its maintenance and welfare. On the other hand, a “vertical” ethnie is usually a subject community with an organized religion that ensures its cohesiveness. The dilemma here is how to transform a religious, subject community to a political and independent one. Here, the role of the intelligentsia is crucial to the transformation of the community into a nation. Under the impact of a colonial or imperial scientific state, market economy and major social transformation lead to the emergence of a new class of intellectuals who have their own ideas in terms of the future of their community. However, these intellectuals might be divided as to the “shape, pace, scope and intensity” of the transformation; an ideological battle takes place between a secular intelligentsia and the “guardians of tradition” in their efforts to mobilize the people. Like the state in the lateral model, the intelligentsia in the vertical ethnie uses myths of election and common origin, popular traditions and the use of history to base their claims for the nation and to forge a movement that will

lead to self-autonomy. The articulation of the nation and nationalism must be sought in the works and writings of “intellectuals-poets, musicians, painters, sculptors, novelists, historians, and archaeologists, playwrights, philologists, anthropologists and folklorists” (Smith 1991, 93). Hobsbawm makes a similar argument by pointing out that one should pay attention to the national slogans that are used in politics by rival elites to gain support among the population. One should ask the question of how many slogans are there, are they incompatible with each other, and whether these changed over time. If the nature of the slogans did change, one should be able to identify the circumstances under which this took place and which slogans eventually prevailed over the citizenry.

### National Consciousness and Identity

The modernist perspective perceives identity as fluid and flexible particularly in a political, social and economic framework where the meaning and the status of “culture” meant different things to those who lived under it (Gellner, 1983). In this framework, national identity is constructed and reconstructed and is not primordial, unchanging or essential. Moreover, it does not have to trump all other identities (Hobsbawm 1990; Calhoun 1994).

Gellner (1983) for example, distinguishes between the conditions prevailing under an agrarian society and those existent in an industrial world to support his argument for a lack of nationalism and national identity in the former. Indeed, the lack of literacy and the nature of social structure are inimical to the emergence of a national identity that gives priority to the value of the political nation.

The ruling class forms a small minority of the population, rigidly separate from the great majority of direct agricultural producers, or peasants. Generally speaking, its ideology exaggerates rather than underplays the inequality of classes and the degree of separation of the ruling stratum. (Gellner 1983, 10)

Friction and inequality in agrarian society, in the form of millet or caste or estate is established and maintained easily because this is rationalized as “the nature of things.” Ordinary people care more about everyday survival than the category of the nation and therefore they manipulate the ambiguities of their society to better themselves. The role of the clergy in keeping their flock within the parameters of the culture is significant in this stage, even though it is difficult for this group to “properly dominate and absorb the entire society” (Gellner 1983, 17). The close relationship between the polity and the culture becomes important in the industrial era due to the changes in technology and increased mobility and education. Citizens are socialized into a shared culture through an educational system and a standard language. The most important debate in this period is not between classes but between nations.

The problem of identity is also discussed by Hobsbawm (1990), who argues that the origins of nations and nationalism ought to be examined not only “from above” but also “from below.” This is due to the fact that “official ideologies of states and movements are not guides to what it is in the minds of even the most loyal citizens or supporters” (Hobsbawm 1990, 11). This argument raises issues of legitimacy by asking the question of whose nation is it when it finally emerges. Like Hroch (1985), Hobsbawm emphasizes the unevenness in the development of a national consciousness among social groups and geographical regions. His concept of “protonationalism,” that is, the existence of bonds such as language, religion,



ethnicity and national consciousness—is useful in demonstrating the way in which these are used at a later stage to make nationalistic demands. Hobsbawm examines each criterion separately only to find out that “protonationalist” bonds are problematic in defining the nation since different ones are used by different ethnic groups. Moreover, some criteria may have been crucial in defining the nation at an early stage of a movement but new ones are added at a later phase. For example, he notes that the relationship between religion and national consciousness often becomes closer in the mass phase of a national movement rather than in a period where few nationalists exist.

The role of the school in ideological engineering of new generations in the ideals and symbols of the nation has also been emphasized (Hobsbawm 1990; Hroch 1985). National anthems, flags, and the reverence of heroes place the historical nation above all other identities and “trump” their existence. Moreover, the learning of a national language acquires enormous political significance by the end of 19th century and generates a linguistic nationalism unprecedented in an era where most people were illiterate.

The articulation of national identity and the degree of national consciousness is also examined in Hroch’s three-phase national movement. The argument here is that national consciousness is weak in Phase A and strongest in Phase C, when mass mobilization for the nation-to-be is at its peak. Hroch points out that there are several aspects of a national movement that ought to be investigated in order to understand the changing degree of national consciousness and the process by which mass mobilization becomes possible; these include the social composition and “territorial distribution of leading patriots and activists,” the role of language “as symbol and

vehicle of identification” (Hroch 1996, 63) and the spread of literacy through the school system which have already been noted above (i.e., Hobsbawm). Other dimensions to be looked at are the role of theatre, music and folklore, the demand for civil rights, historical awareness, the influence of religion and the like (Hroch 1996, 65). Nevertheless, these dimensions must be looked at in association with certain processes that facilitate the transformation of an ethnic group to a potential nation: “A social and/or political crisis of the old order, accompanied by new tensions and horizons, the emergence of discontent among significant elements of the population and the loss of faith in traditional moral systems” (Hroch 1996, 66).

Duara (1996) also provides a useful argument of how self definitions of identity and national identity and consciousness come about. He views identity as relational, one in which people define themselves in terms of the Other (163). The way in which a national identity is produced is through a process of “community closure” in which certain cultural signifiers such as religion, language, or common historical experience are privileged and are used to mobilize a community. There are two levels in which this takes place; the first one is called the “discursive” meaning and refers to ideology, language-as-rhetoric, and narratives expressed by nationalist intellectuals and historians . The second level is the “symbolic” meaning, articulated by anthropologists and social historians by pointing out to certain cultural practices—rituals, festivals, culinary habits, kinship forms, etc. Symbolic meanings represent soft boundaries of a community “if they identify a group but do not prevent the group from sharing and even adopting, self-consciously or not, the practices of another” (Duara 1996, 168). However, if a discursive meaning at a point in time privileges symbolic meaning, then national consciousness is heightened and what occurs is a

hardening of the boundaries of a community. “Symbolic” meanings are central in the discussion of Smith (1991) and Eller (1997) who argue that one must pay attention to the ways in which ethnic groups and nations use the past to demonstrate “uniqueness” and thereby legitimize political demands.

### Greek Cypriot Identity and the Origins of Nationalism in Greek Cypriot Historiography

Greek Cypriot historiography has been informed by 19th century German perceptions of nationalism and the nation in order to explain its origins in Cyprus. The nation is viewed as “natural” and its objective characteristics (i.e., language, religion, history) set it apart from other entities and gives it its distinctive “spirit” to act as a causal power in the world (Smith 1971). For example, in his description of the history of Cyprus, Georgiades (1993) adopts the above model to explain Greek Cypriot identity. He repeatedly discusses the existence of a Hellenic conscience, national/ethnic feelings and national/ethnic spirit during the antiquarian, Byzantine and Ottoman periods. Peoples’ desire to unify with Greece is viewed as “inborn and firm because no conqueror was able to blunt this national sentiment with his passage through the island” (Georgiades 1993, 231). The author insists on the unchanged ethnological composition of the population, a statement that implies a racial and cultural continuity of a people who have consciously defined themselves against others, for example Persians during antiquity or Turks in the Renaissance age.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>See also the discussion in John Koumoulides, *Cyprus and the Greek War of Independence 1821–1829* (London: Zeno Booksellers and Publishers, reprint, 1974).

Georgiades' description of Greek Cypriot identity reflects the larger debate about the nature of the Greek nation, identity and nationalism of which Greek Cypriots are an important part. In this discussion, most Greek Cypriot historiography, views the history of the Greek nation as historically and culturally unified, with each period transforming Greek identity but each one forming a natural continuity with the previous era (i.e., Byzantine religious thought with antiquity). It is a description of identity that emphasizes the objective criteria that characterize it. Moreover, the beginnings of an ethnically conscious Greek identity and nationalism are traced further back in time, i.e., the Byzantine period or antiquity:

... formulated in successive stages a view of their history that united the contemporary Greeks with the city-state of classical Hellas, the Greek Christian civilization of the Byzantine Empire, and the Greek culture that had been maintained by the Orthodox Church during the centuries of Ottoman rule in one unbroken chain. . . . This unitary vision of history provided both a proud lineage for a new state just emerged . . . and a guide for the nation's future development. (Augustinos 1977, 3)

Defining Greek Cypriot identity as primordial serves the purpose of tracing the origins of the Greek Cypriot national unification movement (*enosis*) with Greece to the beginning of the Greek war of Independence in 1821. In the imitation of the "organic" model of nationalism, Greek Cypriots who form part of the Greek nation will naturally strive to free themselves from oppression. The evidence presented for the origins of the movement refers to unification demands made by members of the Greek elite at that time.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, other Cypriots who served as leaders or soldiers in the Greek struggle for independence are mentioned as proof of a wider desire to liberate Cyprus and unify the island with Greece (Koumoulides 1974, 52).

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<sup>3</sup> See the discussion in Costas Kyrris, "Ένας πολιτικός λόγος του Λουκά Παϊσιου," *Kypriaka Chronika* 39–43: (January–May 1964): 508.

Lack of conflict among the Greek Cypriot elite during the 18th and 19th centuries also dominates the analyses on the origins of nationalism on the island. It is a portrayal of national unity, with both clergy and lay members of the elite agreeing as to the superiority and importance of belonging to the nation and the need for immediate liberation from the Ottomans and later the British.

Particularly, the institution of the Church is viewed as the vehicle through which the Greek identity and consciousness was preserved throughout the centuries, despite religious persecution and oppression by various conquerors (Mitsides 1971; Persianis 1978; Coumoulides 1974). A causality is established between the Orthodox Church as a preservator of Greek culture (i.e., through language) and the subsequent emergence of a national conscience among the Greek Cypriots that would unleash the seeds for the growth of nationalism.

One way of demonstrating the means by which national conscience was cultivated is through the Church's involvement in education (Persianis 1978). Greek Orthodox Church leaders had been exercising control over the school system since Ottoman times and they had financed many of the schools founded during the early 19th century. In addition, religion and language were the two most important subjects in the curriculum of Greek Christian schools, both under the Ottoman and British periods (Persianis 1978, 43). Teachers had to be Christian Orthodox and know the Greek language very well. This was a consequence of the Church's influence which continued to have significant control over the schools within the first fifty years of British rule.

An emergent literature has challenged the assumption that points to antiquity or Byzantine times as the origins of Greek and Greek Cypriot nationalism.<sup>4</sup> While the “Greekness” of Greek and Greek Cypriot identity cannot be disputed (based on the objective criteria), it is the definition of an identity with ethnic and nationalistic characteristics that is being pointed out as problematic. For Kitromilides (1990), this primordial view is ahistorical and “has considered nations as unchanging entities which have remained the same throughout all the stages of their historical existence” (3). Kitromilides notes the need to reconstruct those cultural and social processes that helped forged the identity that saw the nation as the primary identification. Papadopoulos also argues against the existence of a national conscience under the Ottoman regime:

This theory, intended to exalt the national importance of the Church, is too much sophisticated to resist scientific criticism; all historical data point to a contradiction between the newly developing national conscience, as from the later half of the 18th century, which culminated in the Greek war of Independence of 1821, and the ecclesiastical regime, under which the people feel members of an Orthodox Community, in which the national unity is realized in the person of the Patriarch and the Ecumenical Patriarchate. (Papadopoulos 1990, 149)

The assumption that the Greek Orthodox Church has always been the national champion of the movements for self-determination in Greece and Cyprus is also been questioned. For example, Kitromilides (1990) argues that the history of the Church during the 18th and 19th centuries, points out the Orthodox Church (represented by the Patriarchate of Constantinople) was opposed to secular notions of the Enlightenment that called for freedom and national independence. It was only in the 20th century that the church came to be associated with the national interests of the

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<sup>4</sup>See Augustinos (1977) for references of both points of view.

nation-state. Moreover, it is argued that the path towards a national movement and liberation has not come about with the absence of conflict in the ranks of the elite. National unity is primarily the product of 20th century developments. (Attalides 1979; Katsiaounis 1996).

None of the works on the origins of nationalism in Cyprus deny the oppression that took place, especially during Ottoman rule. Most authors are very explicit in demonstrating the arbitrary oppression that occurred, especially on behalf of Ottoman soldiers (Georgiades 1993; Hill 1972; Mitsidou 1971; Koumoulides 1974). However, such oppression did not represent the official policy of the Ottoman state and was not necessarily directed only against the Greeks (Hill 1972; Sant-Cassia 1986). Nevertheless, the issue of oppression has been overtly emphasized in Greek Cypriot historiography at the expense of a sociological explanation of the conflict.<sup>5</sup>

### Hypothesis

Nationalism is a product of the 19th century in Cyprus as elsewhere (Hobsbawm 1990; Gellner 1983; Smith 1991). Moreover, nationalism was created primarily “from above” (Gellner 1983; Hobsbawm 1990). A mass national identity that saw the nation as the most important type of group collectivity was absent prior to the 20th century (Hobsbawm 1990; Hroch 1985). The development of Greek-Cypriot ethnic consciousness and identity at the mass level was not a product of the

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<sup>5</sup>For example, Papadopoulos (1990) argues that the fiscal abuses of the Ottomans in Cyprus have been greatly exaggerated in Greek Cypriot ethnography and that if one compares the fiscal regime in Greek regions with that in other Christian lands at the time, it becomes evident that fiscal exactions in Cyprus were much less.

Ottoman period. A mass nationalism was non-existent prior to the beginning of the 20th century.

### Sub-hypotheses

1. Historians, philologists, archaeologists, anthropologists and folklorists play a significant role in articulating the nation (Smith 1991; Hobsbawm 1990). National identity is articulated by focusing on the past (myths of common ancestry, shared historical memories) and self-definitions of the Other to claim group uniqueness (Smith 1991).

2. Nationalism spread unevenly in Cyprus with certain social groups and geographical areas exhibiting a greater sense of a Greek national identity and disseminating the ideology of nationalism first (Hroch 1985; Hobsbawm 1990).

3. The emergence of nationalism in Cyprus and the development of a national movement can be understood within Hroch's three-phase national movement (1985) and Gellner's "pre-industrial" and "industrial" society. In this thesis, the first and second phases in Hroch's model correspond to the periods discussed here, that is, the periods prior to the advent of a mass nationalism. In each phase, modernization processes (i.e., the spread of literacy and the introduction of printing technologies) and their use by different social actors help foster national identity and thus provide the seeds for the development of nationalism as a mass movement in the third stage (Anderson, 1991; Hroch 1985; Smith 1991; Gellner 1983).



## Methodology

The goal of this thesis is to reconstruct those social and historical processes that explain the nature of Greek Cypriot identity and the origins of Greek Cypriot nationalism. For this purpose, I engage in a historical and sociological qualitative analysis. The thesis focuses on the relations within the Greek Cypriot community. The organization of the empirical chapters is based on the observation that the British and Ottoman periods constitute different political, social and economic frameworks and therefore are treated as such. My concern for wanting to avoid generalizations due to lack of important sociological information for this century, guided my decision to focus on the periods for which much evidence was available, that is the Ottoman and early British eras. An examination of the third phase of the Greek national movement, that is the mass phase in the 20th century, is a future objective should more sociological data become available. In this thesis, I use both original and secondary sources. The original sources include published speeches and newspapers while secondary sources consist of textbooks and articles. I have benefited tremendously from the use of original sources since they have allowed me to observe first-hand the beliefs and attitudes of a people in a former era. Original sources have been widely used in the second chapter where I attempt to define Greek Cypriot identity a truly challenging task. The use of original sources in this chapter has allowed me to observe self definitions of identity in the past as well as the process of change in the definition of identity. Nevertheless, I am aware that these are the writings of an educated class in a period of great illiteracy and therefore more

evidence is needed that will shed light on the way people identified themselves at the time.

### Organization of the Thesis

The first chapter has presented the background and context of the issue to be examined and provided the theoretical framework within which the hypotheses developed will be tested.

Chapter II attempts to define Greek Cypriot identity via works produced in 19th and beginning of 20th century. Since this is the time when print-capitalism was introduced in the island, it becomes possible to decipher self and other definitions of identity among the Greek Cypriots of the time.

The third chapter describes the social bases and relationships in the Ottoman era. I examine identity from above and from below within the political, social and economical framework of the empire. External factors (i.e., Enlightenment ideas) and the conditions prevailing on the island are examined to identify the nature of Greek Cypriot identity and nationalism.

Chapter IV describes the changes that take place during the British period. This is Hroch's second stage in the development of national identity and nationalism in Cyprus. I examine the impact of modernization (i.e., the impact of modernization) as this interacts with the existing political, social and economic environment to motivate the actions of the elites and other social groups of the time (Greenfield 1992; Smith 1991; Hobsbawm 1990).

Chapter V discusses the findings of the thesis and offers some concluding thoughts in terms of Greek Cypriot identity today and policy consequences for the future.

## CHAPTER II

### THE COMPONENTS OF GREEK CYPRIOT IDENTITY

#### Introduction

The emergence of national identity is a complex phenomenon. Chapter I has presented several theoretical arguments on national identity. In this chapter, I argue that the educated classes of the 19th and early 20th century, that is, historians, anthropologists, philologists, archaeologists and folklorists play a significant role in defining ethnic identity (Smith 1991; Hobsbawm 1990; Hroch 1985). This does not imply a mere “invention” of identity but rather an articulation of it out of privileging certain cultural signifiers as its most important components (Duara 1996). Historians, anthropologists, folklorists, philologists and the like engage in this process of “community closure” by privileging certain cultural practices (Duara 1996)—rituals, festivals, culinary habits, kinship forms and the like—as constituting important symbols of Greek Cypriot identity. In Duara’s words, this “symbolic meaning” is only one of two levels in which community closure takes place; the other one, that is, the “discursive” meaning, takes place via the dissemination of ideology, rhetoric and other narratives expressed by nationalist intellectuals and historians. Thus, the articulation of national identity by the Greek Cypriot educated class who espoused the ideology of the nation in a period of great illiteracy but significant social change contributed to the emergence of a Greek Cypriot national identity at the mass level later on. Behind this argument is the idea that nations and national identity are not

primordial and unchanging entities but can be constructed and reconstructed (Hobsbawm 1990; Kitromilides 1990). The subjective sense of national identity is most crucial in bringing about the “imagined community” (Anderson 1990), one in which its members view themselves as unique and as deserving sovereignty. While objective symbols of Greek Cypriot culture were in place for centuries, they were only given meaning during the 19th and early 20th centuries. An imagined community became possible with the articulation of the symbols of Greek Cypriot identity by Greek and Greek Cypriot intellectuals. Prior to the 19th century, it is difficult to talk about a subjective sense of Greek Cypriot national identity at the mass level, one that saw the nation as the most important organizing principle.

For the Greek Cypriot educated class, national identity is derived from the ideology that views the nation as the only legitimate form of human organization in which humans can be free and realize their full potential (Smith 1991). Anderson (1990) would argue that these individuals imagined themselves primarily as Greek-Cypriots, that is, people who belonged to the Greek nation and desired to be part of it. Thus, this was the articulation of a Greek-Cypriot as opposed to a merely Cypriot national identity. The common myths and memories (Smith 1991) that were emphasized were those that explained the uniqueness of the Greek nation and not of Cyprus. In this sense, the national identity that was articulated was exclusive and relied primarily on ethnic or “objective” criteria (Greenfield 1992; Hobsbawm 1990; Ben-Israel 1992). This is in opposition to a “civic” and inclusive national identity (Greenfield 1992), one that is primarily based on political rather than ethnic allegiances. Thus, the term *Cypriot* is such a potential national identity; however, in today’s reality, it connotes “citizenship” only. It is an impossibility for Greek Cypriots

to think of themselves as solely *Cypriots* since for them the concept lacks the cultural element of which national identity is primarily comprised. The status of this political identity is secondary to the ethnic identity in people's minds. The significance of the ethnic element in the definition of national identity is reflected in the use of the relevant concepts in Greek:

It should be kept in mind that in most Greek studies written in Greek one still does not find different terms to denote "ethnic" and "national." The Greek adjective *ethnikos* usually is translated as "national" but in fact it means "ethnic." . . . This linguistic deficiency partly explains Greek reluctance to justify the existence of nation states without preexisting ethnic cores. (Gounaris 1995, 16)

The following accounts are important in the sense that they constitute some of the early systematic writings on the history of Cyprus by educated Greek-Cypriot intellectuals. According to George Fragoudis (1890), previous works on various aspects of the island were mostly done by foreigners who had a different perspective on what constituted the Greek Cypriot identity and thus what its political future should be. For example, in his introduction to *Κυπρις*, a history of Cyprus, Fragoudis notes that up to the time when he was writing his book (at the end of 19th century), there had been very few works done in the Greek language but much had been done in English, French and German. Particularly, the author protests the writings of a French author M. L. de Mas Latrie, whose work emphasizes the French period in Cyprus. According to Fragoudis, this was done purportedly so that future territorial rights over Cyprus could be claimed. Fragoudis argues that Mas Latrie

distorted the truth and neglected to discuss the forceful imposition of the Latin Church on the Orthodox population of the island.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, he mentions that

... most Europeans are under the impression that Cyprus in the Historic period, during which the Greek spirit was at place, the country was clearly Phoenician; they derive to these conclusions after examining ancient objects of art, most of which they say are Phoenician. (G. Frangoudis 1890, 13)

Secondly, these authors write at a time when part of the world was being shaped on the basis of the “ethnic” and “historic” as opposed to the “civic” and “liberal” nation (Greenfield 1992; Hobsbawm 1990). Greece, a product of the first category, had already achieved independence in 1830; however, towards the end of the 19th century, this new nation was still in the process of recovering more territory from the Ottoman Turks. Towards the middle of the 19th century, the concept of the *Great Idea* expressed the foreign policy program of Greek politicians to expand the borders of Greece according to its historic, Byzantine boundaries. Nevertheless, it was only during the Balkan Wars (1912–13) that Greece managed to regain much of its northern and eastern regions where Greek-speaking populations resided.

The next section describes the background of some of the most important members of the Greek Cypriot educated class and their contribution to Greek Cypriot society. Next, I develop a theoretical framework to explain the articulation of Greek Cypriot identity. The subsequent four sections analyze the components of Greek Cypriot identity via the application of these theoretical concepts; the view of the

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<sup>6</sup>George Frangoudis, *Κυπρις* (Athens: Alexandros Papageorgiou, 1890), 7–9. The same argument is made by Theodoros Papadopoulos in his introductory note in A. Sakellarios, *Ta Kypriaka* (Athens 1890; reprint, Nicosia: Πολιτιστικόν Ίδρυμα Αρχιεπισκοπής Μακαρίου Γ, 1991), 7. He argues that Mas Latrie neglected to include many sources written in the Greek language in his works on Cyprus. Many of these belong to the medieval period.

cultural, historical and mythical past as well as a definition of group identity in relation to the “Other” are examined.

### Background of the Educated Greek Cypriot Elite

Social scientists have noted the importance of an educated national intelligentsia in the raising of ethnic consciousness and the formation of national movements (Hroch 1985; Hobsbawm 1990; Smith 1991). The Greek Cypriot national intelligentsia constitutes an important social group that influences Greek Cypriot society at the end of 19th and beginning of 20th century. The entrance of these individuals in the political and intellectual life of Cyprus contributes to the articulation of Greek Cypriot identity at the mass level and the subsequent involvement of Greek Cypriot population in organizing a national movement against British colonialism. They publicly disseminate the importance of the ideology of the nation at a time of great social and economic change. According to Katsiaounis (1996), most of these people are united through the cult of freemasonry and espouse enlightenment ideas. They are teachers, journalists, philologists, lawyers and many of them get involved in politics or they are merchants and consular agents. They all appeared at more or less the same time, they came from the upper classes, acquired their education abroad and were influenced by the ideologies of their time. Many of them lived and worked abroad during some part of their lives and some of them kept their international connections even after their return to Cyprus. Thus, in many ways, these people can be characterized as the vehicle for the transmission of national ideologies into the island and the dissemination of these through textbooks, literature, newspapers and public speeches.



One of the historical works discussed in this chapter was used in elementary schools towards the end of the 19th century (Ieridis 1893). Another historical work is the one by George Fragoudis (1869–1939) who had studied in Greece and Europe, practiced law and journalism and wrote historical, political and literary books. He lived in Cyprus, Greece, Alexandria and Chartoum. Euriviadis Fragoudis (1829–1887) was a merchant and a consular agent in Cyprus representing Britain, Sweden and Norway. He was involved in the establishment of a female school (*parthenagogio*) and was the editor of newspaper *Omonia* in Alexandria. While in Cyprus, he continued writing for a newspaper. He lived in Venice for a short time where he tried to make a career as a wine merchant. Sakellarios' two-volume work, *Ta Kypriaka* provides a more formal way of looking exclusively at Greek Cypriot identity and its link with ancient Greece. In his introductory note, Theodoros Papadopoulos evaluates Sakellarios work as being the first successful and systematic attempt in the study of Greek Cypriot identity (Sakellarios 1991, 11). Sakellarios (1826–1901) studied philology in Athens and spent most of his life teaching and writing. In 1957 he set up his own printing and publishing house. Th. Constantinidis, the editor of *Neon Kition* (1848–1900) was a teacher, a journalist and a writer who lived in Cyprus, Alexandria and Smyrna (Turkey). He was also the editor of the first newspaper in Cyprus published in 1878. A. K. Paleologos was a teacher, journalist and was heavily involved in Cypriot politics, local and national. According to Koudounaris (1989), he was one of the most ardent nationalists since the beginning of the British occupation. He was the founder and editor of the newspaper *Alithia* (1880–1897). Philios Zannettos (1863–1933) was born in Greece and studied medicine in Athens. In 1888, he settled in Cyprus where he practiced medicine and

was also involved in politics. He was a member of the Legislative Council (1901–1904, 1916–1921) and other educational committees. He wrote for the newspaper *Neon Ethnos* (New Nation) and published several other books. From 1918–1920, he accompanied the Cypriot delegation to London that demanded *enosis* (union with Greece). Nicolaides Demetrios was a philologist and a member of the Legislative Council (1883–1886, 1886–1888). He was very active in educational matters and actions concerning the political future of Cyprus.<sup>7</sup> Other individuals whose speeches are briefly mentioned include both Greek Cypriots and Greeks from the mainland who are also philologists. Particularly, those of Greek origin seem to have occupied very high positions in educational institutions in Cyprus (Papadopoulos 1985). Ohnefalsch-Richter's *Greek Mores and Customs in Cyprus* is the most important work by a foreigner discussed here. A native of Germany, she was married to journalist and archaeologist Max Ohnefalsch-Richter. Together, they were involved in important archaeological excavations in Cyprus with the support of the German state. During that time, Magda-Helena Ohnefalsch-Richter, who was learned in Greek and Turkish, had the chance to record the everyday life of Greek Cypriots, their customs and other political and social aspects of the island. The use of 19th-century newspapers *Neon Kition* and *Alithia* constitutes another important source of information from which perceptions of Greek identity can be drawn. In addition, newspapers expose the political and societal environment at the time.

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<sup>7</sup>The above short biographical notes were found in A. Koudounaris, *Βιογραφικόν λεξικόν Κυπρίων 1800–1920* (Nicosia: Ίδρυμα Πιεριδή, 1989).

### Articulating Greek Cypriot National Identity

Smith (1991) and Eller (1997) argue that one must look into the uses of the past in order to understand the manner in which different types of collectivities have come to define themselves. First, the cultural past is described by examining “ancient” traditional or “objective” set of criteria, namely, language, religion customs, values, morals, dress and the like (Hobsbawm 1990, 5; Ben-Israel 1992). Re-discovering the traditional past serves the purpose of establishing cultural continuity. Secondly, the historical past is examined by focusing on the ancient or medieval glorious eras. The more recent past which consist of periods of conquest and colonialism are also discussed to demonstrate the humiliation and decay of the nation once self-rule was taken away. Thirdly, the mythical past or “the anthropological sense of ‘remote and unprovable history’” (Eller 1997, 589) emphasizes themes like common history and descent (real or imagined), heroic eras, conquest, decline and rebirth. Thus, this process involves a great deal of “remembering, forgetting, interpreting and inventing” (Eller 1997, 590). Finally, ethnic groups and nations use the past to make claims for the present; their antiquity and cultural and historical uniqueness gives them a base from which to demand political recognition. In other words, it is a source of the “subjective” element for supporting one’s rights to belong to the nation (Hobsbawm 1990; Ben-Israel 1992).

### Cultural Continuity: The View of the Cultural Past

Herzfeld’s analysis of cultural continuity in the case of Greece provides a useful starting point from which an identical process in Cyprus can be understood.

Herzfeld examines the way in which the development of folklore studies in Greece during the 19th century (and after Greek independence) contributed to the creation of a Greek national identity. The development of folklore studies in Greece was part of a political and cultural project that sought to justify the creation of the Greek nation-state, and to support the realization of the Hellenic ideals such as the *Great Idea*. This project derived great support from European philhellènes who had created a romantic view of Greece in which Greeks were thought of as the descendants of their ancestors and antiquity as the source of western civilization. However, the German intellectual Fallmerayer criticized this thesis and argued that Greeks could not be the descendants of their ancestors because they were ethnically mixed with other neighboring groups (i.e., Slavs). However, Herzfeld points out that Fallmerayer was anti-Greek but pro-Turkish (he was against Russian expansionist intentions). In any case, the discipline of folklore studies by Greeks flowered even more after Fallmerayer's claims.

The study of folklore by Greek scholars provided the answer to which the problem of linking the illiterate Greek peasantry to ancient Greeks could be solved. Folklore studies developed into two ideological trends. The first was the Hellenist thesis which predominated during the 19th and beginning of 20th century and emphasized the ancient pagan glories of Greece. The supporters of the Hellenist thesis (Hellenes) attempted to prove a cultural continuity between classical Greece and the modern nation-state. For example, pagan practices were linked to current Christian Orthodox ones. In addition, the Hellenes supported the establishment of *katharevousa* as the official language of Greece. This was a form of pure, neo-classical Greek that was supposed to be rid of foreign words. The language

movement in support of *katharevousa* was defended by the Greek intellectual Adamantios Koraes (1748–1833), who was influenced by the French revolution and its ideals. The second thesis, the Romeic, and its supporters (*Romii*), emphasized the link between the Byzantine Empire and Christianity. Moreover, they preferred the *demotic* language as the official language of state, since this was also the language of the people. For Herzfeld, this second thesis reflected the nativist positions, whereas the first one was viewed as an imported ideology. According to Herzfeld, the greatest Greek folklorist and the first one to systematize the field as well as engage in cross-cultural research was Nicolaos Politis (1852–1921). Politis represented the Hellenist position and was the one to invent the term *laografia* (folklore studies).

The concept of cultural continuity in Cyprus followed a parallel process with that of Greece. Racial continuity and an emphasis on the purity and authenticity of Greek language were constant themes in 19th and early 20th century newspapers and other historical sources. These arguments are supported by European philhellènes like Ohnefalsh-Richter, and by Greek Cypriot editors who responded to Fallmerayer's argument of the abrogation of racial continuity of Greek Cypriots with ancient Greeks and thus the illegitimacy of Cypriot and even Cretan demands for unification with the nation of Greece (*Neon Kition*, 1880, 2/14 February). In the process of responding to these statements, Greek Cypriots and European philhellènes define Greek Cypriot identity. For example, Constantinides (*Neon Kition*, 1880, 2/14 February) denies accusations of Greek propaganda in Greek Cypriot reading clubs. He argues that there is no need for propaganda because the field of archaeology had already brought out the truth; the people of this place are Greeks who have been in a Greek place since the time of the Olympian gods and the other semi-gods. Moreover,

these people speak Greek, they have the same religion as Greece, that is Orthodox Christianity, have the same mores and customs (ήθη και έθιμα) and traditions (παράδοσεις). Moreover, they long for the same things as mainland and other Greeks. Throughout the centuries, all these elements including the “natural character” of Greek Cypriots have remained unchanged. Another powerful statement of identity is the one offered by Ieridis:

Conquest did not succeed in altering neither the Greek language, neither Greek religion, neither the Greek mores and traditions. Why? Because the first inhabitants, their origins, were Greek. We, contemporary Cypriots are the descendants of those. Therefore, Cypriots were, are and will always be Greek. Apart from language, religion, mores and traditions which are the same as those of liberated Greeks . . . there is love for Greece, which is embedded in the hearts of all Cypriots; this love proves that internally there is something that unifies Cypriots with liberated Greeks. That is, their origins and brotherly blood. (Ieridis 1893, 6–7)

In other instances also, the above criteria are used to identify Greek identity even though not the exact same ones are used every time. Thus, the elements that appear in the definition of Greek identity include language, mores and customs, religion, history or “memory and worship of the past,” origin/descent and “place.” Very often these objective elements are combined with subjective ones to strengthen claims of identity. Therefore, apart from *love* and *longing*, the terms *feeling*, *character*, *affection and faith for the future*, and *mind and heart* are used to demonstrate a natural love and desire to belong in the Greek nation.<sup>8</sup>

Another important argument behind the rationale of cultural and racial continuity is the claim of harmony between classicism and religion, or the Hellenist

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<sup>8</sup> *Alithia*, no. 61 6/18, no. 62 13/25 February 1882. *Neon Kition*, no. 35 26/7, no. 36 2/14, no. 44, 45, 48 February 1880. See also G. Fragoudis, *Κυπρις* (1890), 61–62, 85 and E. Fragoudis *Εγχειρίδιον Χωρογραφίας και Γενικής Ιστορίας της Κύπρου* (1885), 14.

and Romeic theses (Herzfeld 1986). However, like Herzfeld, Papadopoulos argues that there was a conflict between Greek Orthodox thought represented by the Patriarchate in Constantinople and the ideals of the Enlightenment supported by Korais (Papadopoulos 1985). As already noted, Korais was a classicist and he therefore rejected a definition of the new Greek nation based on religious principles. According to Papadopoulos, a schism between the two traditions was avoided via the Church's acceptance of the Greek national movement and by incorporating the Greek Orthodox tradition in the ideology of the nation. Thus, a dialectic process took place in which Orthodoxy and classicism were brought together to define the new nation (Papadopoulos 1985, 8). To demonstrate his argument, Papadopoulos presents twelve speeches that were delivered in Greek Cypriot reading clubs and schools from 1877 until 1925 by educated individuals. A closer look of the ones delivered in reading clubs (1877, 1891, 1897, 1901, 1924) reveals an emphasis on classicist ideals with religion in the background. On the other hand, the speeches delivered in schools (1892, 1903–4, 1908, 1909, 1910, 1915) argue for reconciliation between classicism and religion. The speech delivered in 1925 focuses on the importance of religion in the definition of the nation as this is was read in an Orthodox cathedral to commemorate Greek and Greek Cypriot heroes.

In *Neon Kition*, the findings of a British professor are discussed in length as proof of the continuity of the Greek nation since antiquity (*Neon Kition*, 1880, 16/28 February). Dr. Jebbs' findings on cultural and racial continuity incorporates both ancient and byzantinist traditions as part of Greek identity without any conflict between the values and ideals embraced by each tradition. Moreover, he argues that each tradition is associated with two different types of Greeks resulting from the

activities of Alexander the Great. Alexander's colonization of Asia resulted in an Asianized type of Greek who is cunning, shrewd and clever (and thus less pure than the second type). The religious element of identity is also very important because the Byzantine empire was based on the Asianized Greeks. The Byzantine Greeks called themselves Romans (*Romii*) and not Greeks at the time, since the later term was reserved for the non-Christian (ethnic) Greeks. The other one, the "European Greek" is the purer Greek, that is, in terms of racial descent and character. Thus, the current Greeks are associated with their ancestors by racial descent, "character, and language." The entrepreneurial spirit of the Greeks and their success in trade is attributed to the uniqueness of the Greek character.

Fragoudis', Sakellarios' and Ohnefalsch-Richter's works attempt to establish cultural continuity via the description of Greek Cypriot customs whose origin is believed to lie with antiquity. Fragoudis emphasizes athletic and other games as well as folk mythology and superstitions as having ancient origins. Newborn rituals, local dances, folk poetry and Carnival customs are also described as part of Greek Cypriot customs even though it is not always clear which ones are "ancient" or more modern (Sakellarios 1991, 1:691–740; G. Fragoudis 1890, 56–81). Ohnefalsch-Richter argues that beef bones and burned olive leaves were used in antiquity to protect people from the "evil eye." These ancient customs came to be associated with Christian Orthodox rituals (Ohnefalsch-Richter 1913, 214–215). Moreover, the three authors note the possibility that the religious celebrations of *Pentecost and*



*Kataklysmos*,<sup>9</sup> may have originated with the worship of mythological goddess Aphrodite in antiquity. Ohnefalsch-Richter appears to be the most convinced about this; she provides a very vivid description of *Pentecost* through an article produced by her husband on this particular celebration (Ohnefalsch-Richter 1913, 82). She states that the Monday of *Pentecost* was the most important celebration on the island in which all religions participated, including Muslims. This religious festival was marked by people “storming” the sea where they drank, danced and ate in boats. According to Ohnefalsch-Richter, it was not only customs and mores that demonstrated the cultural continuity between the Cypriots and ancient Greeks; it was also the way they produced all kinds of articles used in everyday life, that is dress, weaving instruments, jewelry, spoons, the shepherds’ bag, stick and musical instrument and the like.

While Greek Cypriot customs are treated as a representation of an authentic past, certain aspects of customs are occasionally acknowledged to have been influenced by non-Hellenic elements due to conquest. For example, Ohnefalsch-Richter (1913) states that in order to be able to describe some Cypriot customs, one must include European influence and Turkish dress (182). In describing the everyday dress of Greek Cypriots she notes the extraordinary similarities of the Greek dress to that of the Turks. For example, the *fez* (men’s hat) and the women’s head veils were identical and were worn in similar manners. Moreover, the wedding veil in traditional villages used to be a red color fabric, decorated with golden coins. However, in the

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<sup>9</sup>*Pentecost* is celebrated fifty days after the Orthodox Easter. During this day, it is believed that the Holy Spirit blessed the apostles with the knowledge that was needed to prepare for preaching the Christian dogma around the world. *Kataklysmos* (January 6th) marks the day when Christ was baptized by John the Baptist.

towns many women were wearing the white European wedding gown with the long white veil. Another influence mentioned by the author is the Chinese custom of shaving one's head with the exception of part of the hair in the back of the head. Ohnefalsch-Richter states that this was a habit among very old males and was short-lived. In very few cases, some of these males pierced their ears and wore earrings (Ohnefalsch-Richter 1913, 193).

Greek Cypriot *ηθη* (mores) is captured by general descriptions of the Greek Cypriot personality.<sup>10</sup> For example, Sakellarios (1991) characterize Cypriots as being “sociable, affable, peaceful, hospitable, thrifty, of entrepreneurial spirit, fond of pleasure, noble . . .” (740). In addition, G. Fragoudis and Sakellarios include physical appearance of Greek Cypriots in this discussion. Fragoudis (1890) refers to the physical appearance of Cypriot women to conclude that generally “Cypriot women are not very good-looking but if one travels to Karpasia, one will see very good-looking people due to . . . a purer Greek blood” (60). He attributes ugliness to Turks who had taken many beautiful women away during the Ottoman period (Fragoudis 1890, 61). Ohnefalsch-Richter also refers to Greek Cypriots as being very hospitable and hardworking even though at times they can be stubborn, a characteristic that prevents them from reaching consensus in politics.

Language occupies a prominent position in the minds of those who defined Greek Cypriot identity. It is believed that the existence of Greek language in Cyprus is dated from about 1300 B.C. The dialect spoken on the island which belongs to the

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<sup>10</sup>The phrase *ηθη και εθιμα* (mores and customs) is used to describe those cultural traditions that are accompanied by value systems. See M. Meraklis, *Ελληνική Λαογραφία: Ηθη και εθιμα*, 5th ed. (Athens: Odysseas Publications 1996), 7.

Arcadian dialect of the Greek language has retained many similarities with that original dialect. A possible explanation for this is the geographical isolation of ancient Cypriots from the rest of the Greek speaking world (Sakellarios 1991). Sakellarios' work reflects the rich folk literature that was created in the Cypriot dialect.

It is Sakellarios' work that established him as the most important intellectual for his attempt at establishing cultural continuity. His focus on language, ethnography and *laographia* closes the gap that existed previously in the articulation of a Greek Cypriot identity. His goal is to establish the continuation of an antiquarian Greek culture on the island via the survival of "language and of material and spiritual expressions of the people" (Sakellarios 1991, 7). The author of the introductory note of the volumes, Theodoros Papadopoulos, points out that Sakellarios' approach is the one adopted by the German romantic school of thought and that of Voltaire which was used later by German nationalist intellectuals to support the existence of a unity of culture and of *Volksgeist* (folk spirit). For this purpose, Jacob Grimm wrote on German mythology and emphasized the folk life of the peasants. Herzfeld also points to the Grimm brothers as having a significant influence on Greek folklorists during the second half of the 19th century (Herzfeld 1986, 11).

While Sakellarios' description of Greek Cypriot folklore has much in common with G. Fragoudis' work in terms of the description of Greek Cypriot mores and customs, it is the second volume of *Ta Kypriaka* that sets Sakellarios' work apart from all previous ones. The entire second volume is dedicated to understanding the origins, grammar, pronunciation and writing of the Cypriot dialect and its transformation through the centuries. Its rich tradition and significance is demonstrated by the inclusion of many folklore songs, riddles, fairytales, myths,

children's bedtime songs, and proverbs. These are written in the *demotic* language (language of the common people) with the influence of French, Italian, Turkish and Arabic words. He argues that these songs "reflect . . . the character, and social and intellectual life (of the common people)" (Sakellarios 1991, 2:8). In these, "the nation's sufferings..during periods of conquest" are also depicted (Sakellarios 1991, 2:8). The themes represented by the songs are discussed by the author. Some of them were written by Christians captured by the Turks and returned to Cyprus after many years in captivity. Others describe the story of Muslims or Christians who died in the hands of Turkish rulers. Religion, love, war and everyday life situations are also themes that seem to have inspired the content of *demotic* songs. Thus, Sakellarios manages to depict the rich tradition of a language preserved in its ancient form.

Religion is another important criterion in the definition of Greek Cypriot identity. Christianity was introduced in Cyprus in 45 A.D. by Apostles Paul and Barnabas and has played a prominent role in Cypriot society ever since. The role of the church was strengthened by the inclusion of the island under the Eastern Byzantine State. Much of the art produced during Byzantine times was religious in nature. During Ottoman times, the church acquired the right to be the political and religious representative of the people. Local priests exercised a religious, political and social role in their communities (G. Fragoudis 1890, 52–53). In a sense, the Orthodox Church managed to preserve cultural unity of its flock through the use of the Greek language in its liturgy (Persianis 1978, 6). Furthermore, Orthodox dogma discouraged people from intermarrying with other religions, especially Muslims (Sant-Cassia 1986).

Since many Cypriot traditions are associated with religion, cultural life appeared to have a religious overtone particularly in the past. Engagement and wedding customs, pre-burial practices, Easter traditions, *Pentecost*, *Kataklysmos* and memorials are all characterized by very elaborate rituals. Many of these celebrations, such as Easter, involved games and contests in which mainly youth participated (Sakellarios 1991, Vol.1; G. Fragoudis 1890). Katsiaounis points out that “out of 22 fairs, where feasting was closely related to the marketing of produce, 19 were attached to the Church’s calendar and were held during the namedays of saints and on the premises of monasteries and churches” (Katsiaounis 1996, 56). For example, saint worshipping via the commemoration of a saint on a particular date is very important. During that day, a fair (*πανηγυρι*) takes place next to the church named after that saint. In the past, during a fair, people went to the particular church or monastery with offerings in kind, that is, olive oil, meat, animals, grains and the like (Ohnefalsch-Richter 1913, 54). Katsiaounis also mentions that fairs presented a chance for people to sell their produce. The tradition of *πανηγυρι* is still very alive in Cyprus even though the nature of the activities has changed. G. Fragoudis (1890) mentions that “true Muslims also believed in Saints and went to Christian fairs” (57).

### The Origins of Greek-Cypriots: The View of the Mythical Past

According to Ieridis (1893, 8), the first inhabitant of Cyprus was a male by the name of Kettis. His father, Ion, was one of Noah’s grandchildren who were saved during the Great Flood. Ion belonged to one of the Greek tribes, the Ionians, who lived in Asia Minor. According to the book of Genesis in the Old Testament, after Noah’s voyage was over, many relatives of Ion went to inhabit what is presently the

state of Greece. Kettis went to Cyprus and built the first city named after him, Kition (today's Larnaka) in 2500 B.C. Thus, Kettis, the first inhabitant of Cyprus is shown to be a Greek by race.<sup>11</sup> Cypriots were known in the religious scriptures as Chettim and worshipped one God.<sup>12</sup>

George Fragoudis (1890, 96) offers a more detailed explanation of the manner in which Noah's descendants moved to inhabit what constitutes today the Greek nation-state. Noah had three sons that formed three different tribes; the Hamites, Semites and Iapetes. The Iapeties refers to the Aryan race that included those who spoke languages derived from Latin. Therefore, those who spoke Greek, German, Slavic, Albanian, Hindi, Celtic and Persian had come from the regions of central Asia and north India. These people spread to different regions to form different peoples. Thus, the Italians and Greeks lived in the ancient region of Phrygia. The Greeks were further differentiated by moving to Asia Minor and Cyprus. The tribes that moved to Cyprus were mainly the Dorians and Ionians.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>Ieridis (1893) mentions in a footnote that he got this information from six or seven histories on Cyprus; however, he acknowledges that at the time the ancient history of Cyprus remained in the dark.

<sup>12</sup>On this point, G. Fragoudis (1890) also acknowledges the problem of establishing a scientific explanation of the first Cypriot inhabitants. He points out that science had started to change the way people thought at the time on these issues. He states that "nobody is in a position to know who were the inhabitants of Cyprus in the very ancient years" (93). Moreover, he refers to the excavations at the time of a French archaeologist, Corneille Le Brun who had discovered old human and animal bones on the island. Like Ieridis, he admits that it is very difficult for somebody to know the truth about the origins or the language of the first inhabitants (94).

<sup>13</sup>G. Fragoudis (1890, 99) indicates recent excavations at the time which demonstrated the resemblance of language and religious rituals between the Asia Minor Ionians and those who lived in Cyprus. However, he also acknowledges the

(continued...)

Zannetto's explanation (twenty years later) of the Greek origins of the first Cypriots confirms the previous explanations but relies on other historical and archeological findings to support his interpretations. At the time, other theories attempted to challenge the Greekness of Greek Cypriots and pointed out to the Phoenicians as being the first ones to inhabit Cyprus. By then the field of archeology seemed to have made great advancement and therefore Zannettos seeks answers from those who had brought to light objects of art. Referring to the Phrygians of Asia Minor, he also notes the similarities of religious rituals, dress and hairstyle, and language to those of Cypriot islanders (Zannettos 1997, 77). He argues that previous historical attempts to prove the origins of Cypriots as being solely "eastern" are not valid since such theories come into conflict with the story of the Greek Ionian tribe as confirmed by the religious and other historical sources. Thus, while it seems difficult for Zannettos to claim that Greeks were the only first inhabitants on the island, he meets his objective of demonstrating Greek racial origins in the story of the first inhabitants of Cyprus.

#### Freedom and Development Versus Conquest, Victimization and Catastrophe: The View of the Historical Past

Cyprus is perceived as having reached its peak of material and intellectual development during the reign of Greek rulers (1174–707 B.C.) and Byzantine emperors. For example, Ieridis refers to the first period in order to indicate the great amount of material improvement that took place in agriculture, the arts, trade and

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13(...continued)  
possibility of Greek tribes mixing with other Near Eastern tribes to form the first inhabitants of Cyprus.

seamanship due to the freedom that Cypriots enjoyed. On the contrary, conquest by foreigners is associated with a decrease in population and a poor economy (Ieridis 1893, 6). He characterizes the Phoenician conquerors (2200–2000 B.C.) as “mean and greedy” (Ieridis 1893, 9). He argues that even though Greek Cypriots lived well with the foreigners, they never stopped searching for the right opportunity to get rid off them. Identical statements are made by Fragoudis who argues that except from periods of Greek rule (ancient and Byzantine rule), Cypriots lived in the dark ages of conquest and slavery (G. Fragoudis 1890, 8). According to this author, Greek Cypriot society underwent a process of being past the prime that starts with the French (Λουζινιανοί), accelerates with the Italians and reaches its peak during the Turks.

Ieridis’ depiction of foreign rule implies that this is not only associated with underdevelopment and a decrease in population but victimization as well. For example, French rule (1192–1489) is perceived as one of the saddest periods in the history of Cyprus due to the forceful imposition of the Catholic church on the Orthodox majority of the island. Naturally, it was the Orthodox clergy that endured the consequences of such attempts as the martyrdom of the thirteen monks reveals. In 1221 A.D., these Orthodox monks were put to jail by the French rulers after they had denied to convert to Catholicism; they were eventually tortured and burned alive (Ieridis 1893, 19).

According to Ieridis, venetian rule (1489–1570) did not bring any better results for Cypriots; heavy taxes were imposed, many people were slaughtered, local products were exported to Venice to the detriment of the Cypriot economy and only Venetian schools were allowed to function.



It is the detailed description of Turkish rule (1571–1878) in a sensationalist language that evokes feelings of helplessness, anger and victimization (G. Fragoudis 1890, 324). For example, Fragoudis refers to this period as the “most horrible slavery, the most monstrous tyranny” (G. Fragoudis 1890, 9). Natural disasters, famines, neglect of agriculture and widespread literacy are associated with the entrance of the Turks in the island. The author attributes the maintenance of hope among Greek Cypriots and the survival of a “Greek consciousness” throughout the ages to people’s religious faith (G. Fragoudis 1890, 9, 325).

The conquest of the island by the Ottoman Turks enhances the feeling of victimization and catastrophe, not just due to the continuation of heavy taxes and administration by harsh rulers but due to the violent invasion of the Turks into the island. Ieridis’ detailed description of the looting and slaughter that took place upon the conquerors’ arrival in Cyprus has an extraordinary power of stirring up emotions of anger and shock. The fall of Nicosia is associated with a total of forty thousand people slaughtered or sold, and of images of Christian pregnant women whose stomachs were butchered so that Turkish soldiers—who bet with each other—could determine the sex of the infant (Ieridis 1893, 24–25). Moreover, we are told that some people committed suicide so that they would not fall into Turkish hands; the author describes the martyrdom of Maria Syglitiki, a young Cypriot girl of noble origin who was captured along with other thousand youth to be offered as gift to the Great Sultan. In order to prevent the ship from travelling to Constantinople, Maria set the ship on fire by using the explosives on board (Ieridis 1893, 26).

The conquest of Famagusta symbolizes the fall of the entire island into the hands of the “wild Turks” (Ieridis 1893, 26). Interestingly enough, Ieridis argues that

Cypriots asked for the help of the Italian Duke of Savoy, in exchange for the takeover of Cyprus by the Italians, a plan that did not succeed.

One of the most pronounced images of Greek Cypriot victimization is the one portrayed by the event that took place July 9, 1821. This date marks the execution of Archbishop Kyprianos along with other 470 Greek Cypriot notables and clergy by the Turkish governor Kutchuk Mehmet. The Archbishop had been charged with endorsing and having actively planned to participate in the Greek Revolution along with other Greek Cypriots (Ieridis 1893, 30–31). Ieridis argues that “since then, the Turks were transformed into real monsters” (32). The author referred to the shut down of Greek schools, and the prohibition of the Christian churches to ring the bells. Furthermore, Ieridis notes the arbitrary imprisonment of Christians without any reason and a general absence of justice. “Justice left Cyprus at the time!” (Ieridis 1893, 32).

Commenting on the nature of British rule (1878–1960) which was in place at the time his book was written, Ieridis refers to the various taxes imposed by the new rulers, the widespread poverty and the neglect of agriculture and infrastructure. Despite initial hopes by Greek Cypriots that the British—as the richest and most liberal nation—would be their saviors, they had not lived up to Greek Cypriot expectations. G. Fragoudis (1890) refers to the British as being “worse than the Turks in terms of the development of the island and that Cypriots were cheated” (14). But more than material development, it was also disrespect for Greek culture that angered at least the educated Greek Cypriots (G. Fragoudis 1890, 363).

### *We Versus Them: Modern Statements*

While the historical past is told as the story of a unique and noble people versus the Persians, Europeans, Turks, and the British, in the modern period identity is also defined in terms of the “Other” (Duara 1996, 163). The achievements of the Greek nation and the moral superiority of its people as opposed to other groups is asserted to be a source of communal pride for those who are included in it. For example, Constantinides of *Neon Kition* authored the article “On the Educational and Intellectual Achievements of the Clergy of the Various Ethnic Groups in Ottoman Turkey” (*Neon Kition*, 1880, 19/31 January) in which he argued that there are very few ethnic groups in Turkey that can be proud of a rich philology, the basis of a national education. In discussing the state of intellectual development of the clergy of the Ottoman Turks, Albanians, Kurds, Tatars, Arabs, Jews and Bulgarians, he finds that the status of intellectual development of these people—with the exception of Armenians and Bulgarians to some extent—is low due to the lack of advances in philology. In terms of the Bulgarians, the author argues that the Greeks must be credited for their advancements. Moreover, it was the Greek letters that inspired Bulgarians into seeking their freedom and independence. The mission of the Greek nation is stated as civilizing others and Europe owes the basis of their civilizations to the Greeks. This description is followed by examining the state of intellectual development of the Greek nation. The editor praises the intellectual development of the senior clergy, which is considered a source of intellectual development for the rest of the nation during the Ottoman period. It is argued that love for knowledge and preservation of the Greek language continued among those who belonged to the

Greek nation through the actions of Korais. After the French revolution Korais brought his ideas of freedom, the need for educational development and contributed to the spread of literacy.

The innate moral superiority of Greek Cypriots as opposed to “Others” is also claimed via their comparison to the Muslims of Cyprus. For example, Fragoudis indicates that Greek Cypriots are “. . . obedient, hard-working, thrifty, . . . sociable, courteous, shrewd.” He claims that Christians are more hard-working than “Mohammedans” who they (Muslims) oftentimes engage in stealing, just like Ethiopians (G. Fragoudis 1890, 63). Moreover, Greeks are more intelligent than Muslims. Referring to the period when various administrative changes on the island took place (1838), the author assesses the new Turkish rule as “better” and not of a wild nature anymore; however, that did not mean that the new administration became more “civilized” (G. Fragoudis 1890, 359).

In another instance, the Greek Cypriots are portrayed as being more civilized than Turkish Cypriots. In an article published in *Neon Kition* (1879, 3/15 October), Nicolaides writes:

Greeks and Mohammedans differ in religion, character and customs, language, material and intellectual development; Greeks are farmers, traders, manufacturers; Mohammedans work with their hands, they are army officials and carry loads at the harbor. There are very few farmers, manufacturers and traders. (1)

When comparing the educational level of Greeks and “Mohammedans,” Nicolaides comes to the conclusion that in comparison to Greeks—who are very often educated in Greek and European universities and most of whom speak French and Italian—few “Mohammedans” know how to read and write and their education is mostly centered on the readings from the Koran, the holy book for Muslims. The author concludes

that “their intellectual development is limited both in quality and quantity” (*Neon Kition*, 1879, 3/15 October: 1).

Albert Goudry, a French writer, supports this position in his portrayal of Muslims and Christians (*Alithia*, 1882, 2/14 January). He argues that Muslims are fanatics, very illiterate and that all their women are entirely veiled. Moreover, they live in the same villages as Christians and one can tell their houses from the big gardens that surround them. He refers to Christians as being smarter than Turks and “more hospitable towards Christians” (*Alithia*, 1882, 2/14 January: 3) (even though it is not very clear that which is conveyed here, the author may want to imply that Greek Cypriots are more hospitable towards foreign Christians who resided on the island). He praises the beauty of certain Christian girls and argues that Christians of Rizokarpaso must be of mixed origin (Greek-Latin), which is the cause of their very fair skin.

### Conclusion

This chapter has examined the contribution of 19th and early 20th century Greek Cypriot intellectuals in the articulation of Greek Cypriot identity. A theoretical framework has been developed to analyze the components of Greek Cypriot identity. The cultural, historical and mythical past are the concepts used to examine the articulation of identity. This process can also be described as “community closure,” one in which certain cultural signifiers are privileged to define the “borders” of national identity. The articulation of Greek Cypriot identity by the educated upper class of the 19th and early 20th century is the departure point for the emergence of

Greek Cypriot national consciousness at the mass level or the creation of the imagined community (Anderson 1990).

## CHAPTER III

### PRE-INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY IN OTTOMAN CYPRUS

#### Introduction

Gellner (1983) has argued that the conditions prevailing in a pre-industrial society are not conducive to the development of nationalism and national identity. A pre-industrial society is characterized by hierarchy and sharp distinction of classes in which a very small part of the population forms the ruling elite while the majority belongs to the lower classes, the agricultural producers. The ideology of the ruling elite perpetuates inequality and reinforces these hierarchical relations. According to Gellner, the lack of modernization processes, that is industrialism accompanied with a complex division of labor, high social mobility and skilled and literate citizens, prevents the formation of national identity and nationalism. The Ottoman period in Cyprus reflects the nature of Gellner's pre-national and agrarian society in which social cleavages appear to be mainly intraethnic rather than interethnic (Sant Cassia 1986). Identity was primarily influenced by one's economic and social status rather than ethnic considerations.<sup>14</sup> Concerted action on behalf of the Greek and Turkish peasant class against the Ottoman and Greek authorities to alleviate economic

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<sup>14</sup>Non-Muslim subjects (*zimmis*) lived within the Ottoman legal framework of the millet system by which subjects were to be protected but in return had to pay taxes to the Ottoman authorities.

distress reflects this. Fluidity in identity and shifting of loyalties characterized the behavior of both rulers and subjects from both religious communities.

In terms of the Greek ruling elite, their uneasy relationship with their co-religionists of the lower class emanated from the fact that they were entrusted conflicting roles by the Sultan in Constantinople. On the one hand, Church leaders were made the official political representatives of the Greek Cypriot Ottoman subjects (*rayah*) but they were also given responsibility for tax-collection, thus becoming co-rulers with the Ottomans on the island (Sant Cassia 1986). The position of the *Dragoman*,<sup>15</sup> mostly occupied by Cypriots of Greek or French-Italian origin, was also another prestigious occupation. Some of these Dragomans like Markoulles were resented by the peasants due to their cruel manner in tax-collection. Increasingly, tax-farmers became significant by way of their tax-collection role and their participation in local administration after the Tanzimat reforms.<sup>16</sup>

The hierarchical relationship between rulers and ordinary peasants in pre-national Cyprus was a complex one. On the one hand, the lower classes exhibited feelings of contempt which resulted from the role of the Greek ruling classes as tax collectors. On the other hand, the lower classes depended on their co-religionists to protect them from the oppression of the Ottoman rulers and to provide for them in times of need. This resulted in feelings of deference and respect. Gellner (1983)

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<sup>15</sup>The Greek Interpreter of the Ottoman authorities who could speak Greek and Turkish. He had direct access to the Sultan, and during the early 19th century his was one of the most powerful persons in Ottoman administration, a reason for which the Turkish military garrisons resented him. This position was abolished in Cyprus in 1821 (Hill 1972).

<sup>16</sup>Ottoman administrative reforms introduced in 1839 and 1856 .



explains this ambiguity with reference to the relationship between the clergy and the lower classes in the context of pre-industrial, agrarian societies:

. . . the only stratum which can in any sense be said to have a cultural policy is the clergy. Sometimes [. . .] its policy is in effect to create a complementarity and mutual interdependence between itself and the other orders. It seeks to strengthen its own position by making itself indispensable, and the complementary roles it ascribes to itself and to the laity, far from requiring its own universalization, formally preclude it. (Gellner 1983, 16)

To sum up, Cypriot society during the Ottoman era can be described as corporate and hierarchical, with the religious Greek and Turkish hierarchy, Turkish officials, merchants and lay members of the Greek elite (*kocabasis*) forming the upper echelons of society and the lower classes occupying the bottom. In between these two classes, a third class exists, the tradesmen or craftsmen of the towns who were organized in guilds (*esnafs*). These were attached to the Church and protected the interests of the craftsmen. Many of these tradesmen were of Greek Cypriot origin and after the Tanzimat reforms their interests were represented in the administrative councils (Katsiaounis 1996). The tradesmen's guilds demonstrated the strong connection between one's profession and identity. Katsiaounis argues that this class contributed to the hierarchical and conservative nature of society.

The next section examines Gellner's "pre-industrial society." Then, I analyze the conditions of literacy, modernization and ethnic consciousness during the Ottoman era. Finally, I discuss the role of nationalist ideas in Ottoman Cyprus and the role of the church in coping with nationalist ideology.

## Social Relations and Identity

According to Gellner (1983), in pre-national societies the agricultural producers' major concern for basic survival renders the category of the concept of the nation meaningless to them. To ameliorate their everyday life, peasants do not hesitate to shift allegiances and identities via the manipulation of the existing societal traditions. In this situation, the role of the clergy in preventing its flock from exhibiting such double identities is significant; however, the clergy is not always able to check the activities of its flock (Gellner 1983). In Cyprus, shifting allegiances and fluidity in identity is represented via the institution of marriage and conversion to Islam by Christians. Since the Ottoman system of administration provided legal superiority<sup>17</sup> to Muslim subjects but not to Christians, the latter used various means by which they could change their social status and avoid paying higher taxes. Greek-Ottoman intermarriages (mostly Turkish males marrying Christian females), religious conversion and "Greek adoption of the customs, dress, and language of the Turks" were means by which this was achieved (Sant Cassia 1986, 24). Jennings (1993), who looked into judicial registers between 1571–1640, reported that mixed marriages were a rather common phenomenon. In terms of conversion of Christians to Islam, he found a surprisingly large number of married Christian women converting to Islam, a phenomenon that he attributes to the powerful influence of dervishes. Conversion among Christians intensified in the beginning of the Ottoman conquest of the island but a considerable decline was evident by the middle of the 17th century (Jennings

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<sup>17</sup> By ascription, Muslims were superior to people belonging to other religions. One of the most important privileges was the fact that they paid half the amount of taxes that other religious groups had to pay.

1993). In part, this decline can be attributed to the active participation of the Orthodox Church to keep its flock within the religious community. Potential sanctions for those who apostatized to Islam such as non-burial increasingly prevented Christians from converting to other religions. Individual conversion to Islam was viewed as assimilation by that particular religious community. Another form of conversion was the one in which entire villages would pronounce public allegiance to Islam while privately practicing Orthodoxy. These individuals were called *lino-vamvakoi* (linen-cotton) expressing the dual identity of this group (Sant-Cassia 1986).<sup>18</sup> During British rule, many villages whose members practiced *linovamvakianism* resorted to Christianity (G. Fragoudis 1890). Ohnefalsch-Richter (1913) also notes that at the end of the 19th century membership in this religious group appears to have declined rapidly since the *linovamvakoi* were under pressure from both Greeks and Turks to convert to one or the other religion, reflecting the politicization of ethnicity that started during the British era. She argues that Greeks and Turks looked down on *linovamvakoi* and used different adjectives to ridicule their practices. For example, Greeks used adjectives that implied lack of total devotion to one religion while Turks called them infidels. Ohnefalsch-Richter mentions that in the past the *linovamvakoi* attended both the church and mosque, they baptized their children and performed circumcision.<sup>19</sup> They offered Christian and Muslim

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<sup>18</sup>This group forms part of a continuing controversy among scholars who study Cypriot politics and society. Some social scientists believe that many Turkish Cypriots originate from this group.

<sup>19</sup>Circumcision is not practiced by Greeks and baptism is not performed by Muslims.

names to their children and got married according to both Islamic and Christian traditions.

The importance of class identity and peaceful coexistence between Greek Christian and Turkish Muslim peasants was reflected in instances of rivalry among rulers (Ottoman officials and Church leaders) and subjects (Christian and Muslim) expressed in the form of uprisings by the latter group (Kyrris 1976, 253, 256). There were recurrent rebellions between 1572 and 1670 and in 1764, Christian and Muslim peasants revolted against the new governor, Chil Osman, for having increased taxes (Pollis 1973). Moreover, in 1833 another great revolt against Governor Esseyid broke out among peasants. Kyrris comments on its nature: "To a great extent it was a marked expression of social demands independent of ethnic and religious differences, in effect of class struggle an the old symbiosis of Greek and Turkish *rayas* of a similar and economic status" (Kyrris 1976, 264).

The leadership of this revolt which broke out in the southern, western and eastern part of the island was provided by Nicolaos Theseus,<sup>20</sup> Giaur Imam (Turkish prayer leader), and the Greek monk Ioannikios.<sup>21</sup> Theseus escaped from the island after having succeeded in getting the tax revoked. However, Giaur Imam and Ioannikios were captured and executed after having caused great trouble to the Turkish authorities.

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<sup>20</sup>See page 69 of this chapter for information on the Theseus family.

<sup>21</sup>He is thought to have been a veteran of the Greek war of independence. For a detail discussion of the revolts, see Sir G. Hill, *The Ottoman Province. The British Colony, 1571–1948* (Cambridge: University Printing House, 1972), vol. 4: 157–165.

In addition, intercommunal land transactions were additional signs of harmonious coexistence between ordinary Turkish and Greek Cypriots. Jennings (1993, 136) reports that “twenty-five percent of the land transfers and twenty-two percent of the property transfers” for the period of 1593–1637 were of intercommunal nature. Furthermore, in cases where written documents such as inheritance wills were made, Christians and Muslims co-signed them as witnesses (Kitromilides 1988).

Non-Muslims often resorted to *Kadi* courts (Islamic) to resolve their disputes. For example, in one instance wage laborers petitioned the *Kadi* (Muslim judge) because the tax-farmer they worked for did not remunerate them in a just way (Jennings 1993). Illegal collection of food and money from the peasants on behalf of tax-farmers was another reason for resorting to the *Kadi* to resolve the situation. Complaints against the Christian clergy constitute some of the courts disputes on behalf of peasants. Thus, Jennings has found that

several clergy were involved in disputes over possession of certain property such as donkeys, oxen, water rights, and other land and property, usually with other *zimmis*. Several clergy were accused of theft, one of rape, and one of murder. In addition, popular complaints were raised against two others. Nearly all the complaints originated among *zimmis*. (Jennings 1993, 152)<sup>22</sup>

Of course relationships between the two communities were not always ideal; the ferocity of certain Muslim governors against Greek subjects aroused resentment among the latter, as the behavior of Governor Kutcuk Mehmet demonstrated in 1821. Also, the unjust system of taxation that favored Muslims was a source of friction between the two communities. Even Kadis were found to be guilty of

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<sup>22</sup>*Zimmis* were the “protected people” in the Ottoman empire (Greek Orthodox Christians and other Non-Muslims).

oppression at times. In at least one case, several Ottoman subjects accused a Kadi of forcing them “to sell honey, olive oil, chickens, carobs, barley, and wheat to them for less than half the official fixed price” (Jennings 1993, 79). There are also numerous times even as late as 1877 when Christians would petition the Bishops due to the oppressive behavior of Muslims. Some of these cases included molestation, insult of the Christian religion, and unfair treatment of Christians in the Kadi courts (Katsiaounis 1996, 55). However, to the extent that the Ottoman system of administration made both Christians and Muslims suffer, it was a source for rapprochement (Kyrris 1976, 261). Kyrris documents that peaceful coexistence rather than religious or ethnic conflict was the norm:

Although at times of crisis such as in 1841, 1846, 1853, 1862, 1866, 1871, 1875 etc. minor intercommunal incidents occurred, mostly prepared by unscrupulous Governors and eventually prevented by prudent Cypriot Turks, the prevalent pattern was harmonious co-existence which was often recorded by European consuls and other observers throughout the XIXth century. (Kyrris 1976, 264–5)

The same author argues that similar events in 1804 and 1821 did not put an end to the symbiotic existence among the two communities. Even while the massacre of Christian notables and clergy was taking place in 1821, Muslim notables who objected to the policies of the Governor helped Christians to escape execution (Koumoulides 1974). In addition, economic exchanges between the two during the British period offer further support to this argument:

Cooperatives, agricultural, labor and other social organizations in the British period were made by both communities together, or if made with Greek initiative, they admitted the Turks in their ranks without any discrimination. This went on until the mid-thirties and even the forties of our century when the Turkish Cypriot ruling classes in reaction to the growing Enosist

movement promoted the process of establishment of separate institutions by their community. (Kyrris 1976, 259–60)<sup>23</sup>

The cordial relations among Greek and Turkish influential individuals after the Ottoman administrative reforms in the 1830s continued. Greek and Turkish lay *kocabasis* formed part of the ruling elite and thus behaved in a manner that matched their social and political status. They socialized among them in exclusive clubs such as the Yesil Cazino in Nicosia (Katsiaounis 1996). Like the clergy, they were respected by their poor co-religionists via much charitable work and donations.

Despite a significant lack of control of the lower classes on the part of the church, the latter increasingly by its mere political and financial status did not cease to be perceived by Christian peasants as their legitimate religious leaders. Indeed, as the island's largest landowner, the church had thousands of sharecroppers. Peasants who felt very insecure about the status of their land would often lease their land to the church in order to escape usury from the Turkish authorities or other tax-farmers. This activity, however, was not without its drawbacks since often the church would enter into disputes with the heirs of those who had leased their land with the clergy (Sant-Cassia 1986; Katsiaounis 1996). Moreover, the church was one of the major employers on the island, employing hundreds of people belonging to the lower classes (Katsiaounis 1996). The popularity of the profession of clergyman was due to the economic stability enjoyed by the church hierarchy and thus a considerable number of priests was in place at the time (Katsiaounis 1996). This provides a partial explanation on the observation of Greek and European observers that many priests

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<sup>23</sup> Attalides (1979) argues that even this situation never really disrupted patterns of coexistence even down to the 1970s when the Turkish invasion took place.

were illiterate (Hill 1972; Katsiaounis 1996). In addition, “monastic life was even more popular with the poor, because monks, unlike priests, were not dependent on their parishioners but lived off the extensive properties of their monasteries” (Katsiaounis 1996, 37). The financing of schools and charitable activities on behalf of the senior clergy and rich inhabitants (i.e., tax-farmers) of Cyprus were two means by which the respect of the lower classes was maintained. Philanthropy on behalf of the church was extended not only to Christians but to Muslims as well (Kyrris 1976). Moreover, it has already been noted that in case of injustice against the Christian *rayahs*, the church would intervene.

#### Conditions of Literacy, Modernization and Ethnic Consciousness During the Ottoman Era

During the Ottoman period, the lack of geographical mobility was due to inadequate infrastructure. This situation persisted into the British occupation as John Hay reported in July 1878:

Roads hardly exist at all; there is only one road that can be dignified by that name, and is the one, which connects Larnaka with Nicosia; its condition is as bad as possible. The rest are mere tracks, rarely passable by bullock carts, and generally only fit for mules and camels. (Katsiaounis 1996, 53)

Theodoros Peristianis, Vice-Consul of Greece in Larnaka, offers his own observations on the degree of ethnic consciousness of Greek Cypriots in a confidential report in the year 1872. He estimates the number of people who were learned in “proper Greek” before the Greek revolution at about thirty. However, he notes that the spread of literacy since then increased the number of townspeople who could read and write proper Greek to about one third. In terms of the subjective identity of the Greeks and Turks in Cyprus, he writes, “The prevailing mutual



disfavor is mostly religious rather than ethnic. The Christian is not aware of his history, his origins, his nation. He considers all Orthodox to be co-nationals”

(Katsiaounis 1996, 51). Interestingly, Peristianis does not perceive religious identity as being coterminous with ethnicity as understood today. However, ethnic identity came to be closely associated with religion in national movements of the 19th and early 20th century, including the Greek and Greek-Cypriot national movements.

Peristianis offers his suggestions in terms of the way by which Christians could come to see themselves as Greeks:

Should a breeze of freedom blow for a while on the island and a national sense of direction be inspired in the spirit of the inhabitants, a teaching urging them along the road to nationhood, and these Christians will recover from the lethargy in which they have been cast by so many centuries of slavery. That day however will dawn very late. (Katsiaounis 1996, 51)

Professor Ludwig Ross, who lived in Cyprus during the mid-1840s, provides further commentary in terms of the Cypriots’ perceptions of their place in the world:

I had to traverse my path of yesterday through the same pass which connects the lonely village with its 40 or 50 families with the rest of the world. What isolation! The men, sometimes but seldom, cross the mountains into the Mesaoria, and even as far as the twelve-hours-away market of Nicosia, which is for them the center of the universe... Such conditions which we find again in the Southern half of Rhodes, partly explain the crass ignorance, the mere stupidity, the dark superstition, the distrustful repugnance to all that is strange and unusual, which mark the inhabitants of the smaller islands of Greece. (Katsiaounis 1996, 53)

A sign of changed identity at least among the educated and influential Greeks was reflected in the establishment of reading clubs.<sup>24</sup> Even though the significance of these in terms of raising the ethnic consciousness of the lower classes takes place during the British era, in the Ottoman era reading clubs were elitist, that is,

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<sup>24</sup> See Kitromilides (1990) for a discussion on the importance of the reading clubs in fostering Greek identity especially at the end of 19th century.

membership was restricted to the upper class of educated Greeks. In the clubs of Nicosia (*Proodos and Zeno*), Larnaka (*Kitiefs*) and Limassol (*Isotis*), educated Greeks from places like Smyrna, Constantinople and Alexandria (Egypt) would deliver lectures, and newspapers from these places would be read (Katsiaounis 1996, 52). In a lecture delivered a year before the British occupation in 1878, Ioannis Pavlides, a philologist, discusses the importance of literacy for the material and intellectual progress of a nation and offers some clues as to the state of literacy in Cyprus that must be of concern to all (Papadopoulos 1985). In terms of school enrollment, the ratio of students to inhabitants is stated as 1 out of every 70 persons or fourteen students out of a thousand people. In certain densely inhabited areas, he claimed that the ratio of enrollment was even lower. Moreover, school enrollment for women was extremely low: one female student out of 200 women or one out of 388 residents.

Another sign of a slowly changing identity at least in the towns was the fact that more townspeople would name their children after ancient Greek heroes and those of the Greek war of Independence. On the other hand, rural people still preferred saints' names (Katsiaounis 1996, 52). According to Ohnefalsch-Richter (1913) this phenomenon continued into the beginning of the 20th century.

Except for the presence of reading clubs and the educated groups of the port towns, most intellectual activity in Cyprus still revolved around religion. At least in the capital, Nicosia, most books imported from Smyrna were of religious nature (Katsiaounis 1996, 56).

Even education revolved around religion, and religious books were used to teach such things as the alphabet in Katsiaounis. However, "secondary education was

the preserve of the very wealthy and was provided in Nicosia, Larnaka and Limassol up to the age of sixteen. These were the only children who received a training in mathematics, geography, history, and ancient Greek” (Philippou 1930, 358, quoted in Katsiaounis 1996, 57).

### The Transmission of Nationalist Ideology in Ottoman Cyprus

Individuals who came from prominent Cypriot families and acquired their education abroad supported the struggle for Greek independence and were influenced by the ideals of the French revolution. However, the evidence suggests that the ideologies and activities of those persons who espoused a nationalist ideology and desired a self-autonomous Cyprus unified with Greece did not form a mass political movement that would lead to significant political changes during the Ottoman era. The conditions prevailing in pre-national Cyprus were not conducive to the formation of a mass national identity and the formation of a unified national movement despite the presence of nationalist ideas. As a social group, the ruling Cypriot elite did not appear to entertain revolutionary ideas and they behave within the framework of the privileges that they enjoyed from the Ottomans. Thus, the existence of revolutionary ideas among certain individuals from the upper classes during the Ottoman era remained in place on a theoretical level only and did not find expression in “nationalist organized endeavors” (Hroch 1985). Moreover, the lower classes did not engage in organizing a movement that had as a purpose the unification of Cyprus with Greece. Both lower and upper Greek and Turkish Cypriot classes continued to display primarily behavior that reflected class conflict.

By the end of the 18th century, the presence of Greek merchants attached to foreign consulates on the island constituted a novel element in Cypriot society. Situated in the port town of Larnaka, the most European oriented city in Cyprus at the time, many of these had come from Smyrna, Constantinople, and the Ionian islands of Greece (Katsiaounis 1996, 18). However, according to Katsiaounis (1996), these merchants were by no means a middle-class but they “were content to accept the values of a corporate and essentially aristocratic society” (16). Indeed, the entrance of Greek merchants to Cyprus from the Ionian Islands continued throughout the 19th century, especially around the 1830s and upon the beginning of British rule, to fill several administrative positions (Kyrris 1962). The transmission of revolutionary ideas to Cyprus during this time is attributed to this social group; for example, according to Kyrris, the 1830s demand for unification of the island with Greece was made by persons of Eptanesian origins. Moreover, during the middle of the 19th century one carrier of revolutionary ideas was E. Fragoudis, a teacher at the Greek secondary school of Nicosia and of Ionian origin. Frangoudes is described as the first person to introduce socialist ideas in Cyprus, mixed with nationalist ideology (Kyrris 1962). Moreover, a text dated from the middle of the 18th century demonstrates the presence of freemasonry in Cyprus since that time even though no Masonic Lodges existed then (Papacharalampous 1967). The text belongs to another Cypriot prominent family, possibly of Eptanesian origins, and appears to be influenced by English freemasonry (Koudounaris 1976). In the text it is argued that God created humans with an inborn freedom and as a result all humans are equal; suppression of freedom would mean condemn towards God. All humans regardless of

race or religion are invited in undertaking their own struggle towards freedom (Papacharalampous 1967).

The transmission of masonic ideas in Cyprus must be analyzed in the context of the beginning of the Greek revolution in 1821. A few years before the beginning of the revolution, freemasons in Cyprus were excommunicated by Archbishop Kyprianos. Some Cypriots joined the war in Greece and prominent families in Cyprus who had escaped abroad during the tragic events of 1821 contributed greatly to the liberation movement and hoped that something similar would be achieved in Cyprus. One of these families was that of Theseus who is associated with the 1821 episodes in Cyprus and the 1833 revolts (Koudounaris 1974). The Theseus family was one of the richest and most prominent on the island during the Ottoman era. Archbishop Kyprianos belonged to this family and his three nephews, Kyprianos, Theofilos and Nicolaos were involved in the Greek war of Independence. The first nephew, Kyprianos, was a merchant in Cyprus (Larnaka) and escaped to Greece in 1821 to fight in the war. He also tried to collect money to buy weapons that could be used for a future insurrection in Cyprus. Theophilos worked with his brother in his private business in Marseilles. Along with his brother Nicolaos they were put in charge of a Cypriot military garrison that fought during the Greek war of Independence. In 1821, Theofilos came to Cyprus and distributed revolutionary literature, an event that led to the execution of the Archbishop Kyprianos along with 470 other persons from the Greek upper classes and ruling elite. Nicolaos Theseus, a merchant, acquired his education in Italy and lived in Marseilles. He also contributed to the Greek war of Independence. During 1833 he returned to his native Cyprus to recover his property and was involved in the 1833 revolts.

The relation between the Greek Cypriot Orthodox Church and nationalist ideology must also be examined. According to Greek and Greek Cypriot historiography, the Church has been the vehicle of preservation of Greek Cypriot identity through the acceptance of Greek national ideals and the involvement of the church in the Greek revolution for Independence (1821). Indeed, the evidence suggests that demands for unification with Greece have been made since the beginning of the Greek revolution. Nevertheless, these endeavors did not represent a mass nationalist movement, remained episodic and representative of the upper and influential Greek Cypriot class. Moreover, Greek Cypriot laymen and clergy created regional factions through which their interests were expressed and were not unified politically or ideologically (Hill 1972).

According to Kitromilides, the history of the Orthodox Church during the 18th and 19th centuries reveals that this institution did not support the ideology of nationalism. "The official attitude of the Orthodox Church as represented by the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, was from the outset inimical and often actively hostile to the secular values and aspirations propagated by nationalism" (Kitromilides 1990, 10). The Church opposed the secular tenets of the Enlightenment that called for freedom and national independence since the 18th century and as a result the Greek revolution of 1821 was condemned by the Patriarchate. Eventually the national Orthodox churches of the Balkans supported the national cause of the nation, particularly from the beginning of the 20th century; however, "the Patriarchate of Constantinople remained opposed to nationalism" (Kitromilides 1990, 11).

Papadopoulos (1990) offers further support to this argument. He refers to the “Paternal Exhortation,” a document written during 1798 in reaction to the writings of two Greek national champions of the Enlightenment, Rigas Valestinlis and Adamantios Korais. This pamphlet—whose author, according to Papadopoulos, is controversial<sup>25</sup>—provides a justification of Ottoman rule over Greek subjects. That is, the Sultan’s authority over the Greeks came about due to Divine Providence, to protect Greek Orthodox people from other dogmas, namely Catholicism, Protestantism and the like. It was believed that if freedom from alien rule would come about, it would not be from purportedly human action but from Divine intervention (Sant Cassia 1986).

Thus, the attitude of the Archbishops of Cyprus towards revolutionary ideas and revolts during the 19th century can be understood in the light of the official policy of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Constantinople. This is not to deny that the senior clergy did not revere their Greek identity. However, the political position of the Church within the larger framework of the Ottoman Empire meant that at least the senior clergy acted in a way that reflected that position. In addition, the Greek revolution of 1821 saw the active involvement of the lower clergy in the struggle against the Turks. However, the evidence suggests the official policy of the Orthodox Church in Constantinople was not in support of nationalist ideas. Some of the Greek Cypriot Archbishops to be discussed next are representative of the contradiction between nationalist ideology and official church positions. The archbishops’ actions

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<sup>25</sup>It is signed by Anthimos, but it is believed to be written by the Patriarch of Constantinople. Gregorios V. Papadopoulos supports this as well.

reveal that their main interest was to preserve the balance between their role as representatives of their ethnic group and as co-rulers of the Ottomans.

Archbishop Kyprianos (1810–1821), considered to be one of the greatest national martyrs in the history of Cyprus, presents an important case, due to the fact that he was executed in the hands of the Turks in 1821 along with other 470 members of the church and lay establishment. These were accused by the Ottomans of attempting to instigate a revolution in Cyprus, similar to the one taking place in Greece at the time. Those of course were faulty accusations since Archbishop Kyprianos only promised to provide financial aid to the insurgents who came from Greece to ask for any kind of support on behalf of the Cypriots. Kyprianos' response to them was that it was not possible for him to offer more than financial support to the struggle due to the geographical proximity of Cyprus to the Ottoman central government and the disastrous consequences that an active involvement in the Greek struggle would entail. Unfortunately, later on, Archimandrite Theofilos Theseus came to the island and distributed revolutionary pamphlets. Some of these fell into the hands of the Turkish governor, Kutchuk Mehmet, whose suspicions about the involvement of the Greek elite in the war were enough to accuse Kyprianos and other laymen as attempting to instigate a revolution. After the Sultan in Constantinople gave permission for the executions of the Cypriot establishment to begin, Archbishop Kyprianos did not leave the island even though he had the opportunity, an event that elevated his status into a true national hero who sacrificed for his flock.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>The poem *Η ενατη Ιουλιου (July 9th)* celebrates the personality of Archbishop Kyprianos and the fact that he did not desert his co-religionists even when he had the chance to escape from the island prior his execution on July 9th.



In any case, the beginning of the Greek revolution in 1821 had created a tense situation on the island. The Sultan in Constantinople had issued a *firman* (imperial decree) asking the local Turkish authorities in Cyprus to make sure that all Christians were disarmed. Therefore, Archbishop Kyprianos tried to calm down the Greek Christians and asked them to surrender any weapons they had. Moreover, he told them to be patient and asked them not to engage in any activities against the authorities (Koumoulides 1974, 45).

Moreover, the last letter of Archbishop Kyprianos addressed to all the Christians on the island (dated May 16, 1821), also reveals an effort to encourage his co-religionists to remain calm and patient:

Reverend priests and all other blessed Christians . . . the present anomalies so suddenly have fallen upon us because of our many sins as well as because of some external events which are taking place at the moment. I have no doubt that you are extremely alarmed and worried..we therefore consider it our duty to offer to all of you our fatherly advice. . . . First of all we must turn to God with humiliation and repentance and beg him to forgive our sins, and also leave all our hopes and trust to his mercy and omnipotence. . . . We must pray that God may protect us as he has done with our ancestors. We must also pray for the agha our lord [the sultan] under whom for years we have been enjoying kindness and protection . . . as so many times in the past, so in this critical period we must keep our trust to our king, who has done so much for the rayahs of the island. Please be very careful not to create the slightest suspicion nor the opportunity for any trouble. . . . The bishops and I are praying day and night for your protection and for God's mercy upon all of us. With God's help we shall do our very best to defend you and take care of you . . . Again I urge you to be extremely careful how you behave . . . this as you know very well, is a most critical period we live in . . . make sure that your appearance is humble and your clothes black, since this is a strict order from our governor. . . . (Koumoulides 1974, 48)

Six years before the commencement of the Greek revolution in 1821, Archbishop Kyprianos excommunicated the freemasons in Cyprus “on the grounds of religious heresy but also of opposition to the Sultan’s authority” (Katsiaounis 1996,

18). The following excerpt presents part of Kyprianos' comments on the activities of the freemasons:

The aforementioned oppose the decrees of the Sovereign and deserve to be put to death for everything they preach . . . We ought to urge the authorities to crack down on them, to arrest them in their meetings and councils and to punish them harshly . . . And we extend a fraternal request to our brother . . . the Metropolitan Bishop of Kitium. We urge you dear brother to be on the alert about this matter, which is pit against not only our most sacred and pure faith but also against the wishes and commands of our king . . . (Katsiaounis 1996, 18)

The excommunication of the freemasons by the Archbishop has been interpreted by different scholars in various ways as to the motives behind such an act (Chrysanthe 1979). For example, one explanation might be that Archbishop Kyprianos engaged in excommunication to please the Turkish authorities. A second one is that the Archbishop wanted to safeguard the position of the church from retaliation by demonstrating that the church had nothing to do with such revolutionary ideas. Another position is that Kyprianos' act reflected a genuine reaction on behalf of the church which has already been expressed by the Patriarch of Constantinople as well in 1798. Finally, the reaction might be nothing more than a religious and moral reaction. Chrysanthe (1979) argues that the most probable explanation is that Archbishop Kyprianos wanted to protect the Church from Turkish suspicions of involvement in any revolutionary activity. Chrysanthe claims that since the threats by the church to burn down the houses of the freemasons were never realized, suggests that the Church did not oppose freemasonry. To support his position, the author presents a letter sent by members of the Archbishopric in Nicosia to the Masonic Lodge Evagoras in 1925. The contents of this letter concern the subject of unification with Greece and demonstrate the lack of hostility between the

church and the freemasons. However, considering that the behavior of the Church did not always exhibit tolerance towards the freemasons, the 1925 letter must be interpreted within the context of the conversion of the church to nationalism and the prevalence of the nationalist elite during the beginning of the 20th century.

Archbishop Panaretos (1827–1840) is the next important Prelate whose contribution to the Christians of Cyprus is noted. Like his predecessor Kyprianos, Panaretos has been praised for his educational efforts<sup>27</sup> on the island and his success in persuading Turkish authorities to lower the tax burden on the people (Koumoulides 1974, 71). In addition, he is credited with the fact that during his time a demand for *enosis* was made to Governor Kapodistrias of Greece in 1828 and 1830. During 1828, Archbishop Panaretos along with other three bishops and laymen wrote to the Greek Governor that “he should include Cyprus as part of Greece in his future negotiations with the European governments” (Koumoulides 1974, 81).<sup>28</sup> Two years later, the unification demand was repeated. Often, this last demand is used to demonstrate that the clergy and the lay establishment were in favor of unification with Greece at the time and therefore the struggle for *enosis* existed since Greece obtained independence (Koumoulides 1974).

Panaretos’ contributions to the welfare of the Christians on the island is accompanied by his good relations with the Turkish authorities. For example, in a letter sent to the Sultan in Constantinople, Panaretos asked the authorities to take

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<sup>27</sup>He reopened the Greek School which was first opened by Kyprianos but closed down during the 1821 events; he established additional schools in various districts of the island (Kitromilides 1971).

<sup>28</sup>See also Kitromilides (1971), who makes an identical argument, in *Apo ti drasi tou Archiepiskopou Kyprou Panaretou*.

measures so that the Christian and Muslim population of Cyprus will not engage in attempts to escape from the island. Panaretos was referring to an incident where one hundred and fourteen Christians and Muslim peasants tried to escape from Cyprus due to droughts and famines that had taken place the previous year. In his letter, the Archbishop blames the foreign nationals of the island for the incident (a Greek boatsman and an Austrian citizen were involved) who often engaged in similar acts. He refers to the foreigners' mischievous activities as "harming the particular and the wider interests of our homeland" (Spyridakis 1966, 193).<sup>29</sup> Therefore, he asks the Ottoman authorities to take measures against foreign nationals and other boatmen in the coastal towns.

In 1831, Panaretos, under orders of the Ottoman authorities, asked all Cypriots to give up their Greek citizenship, return to their *rayah* status and pay their taxes to the government. This was necessary due to the fact that since the beginning of the Greek revolution, there were Cypriots who had escaped to Greece and other European countries, acquired Greek or European citizenship and started returning to Cyprus around the 1830s (Koumoulides 1974). This caused a big dilemma for the Ottoman government since legally they could not ask citizens of other nation-states to pay taxes (Hill 1972).

The Archbishop's loyalty is also reflected in his reaction to three consecutive revolts that took place in 1833 by both Greeks and Turks (peasants and town radicals) against the authorities due to a rise in taxes. For one thing, Panaretos condemned the revolts not only because he viewed them as damaging to his close

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<sup>29</sup>The letter is signed by the Archbishop and a Turkish official.

cooperation with the Ottomans, but also because he saw these as being harmful for the interests of the *rayahs* (Kyrris 1976). He and other Prelates and lay *kocabasis* denounced the revolts (Katsiaounis 1996). Panaretos referred to the people participating in the Larnaka revolt (south coast) led by N. Theseus as “unwashed rowdies and certain Turks and Christians of the inhabitants of Larnaka and Scala and all the Europeans of the so-called third class” (Kyriazis 1935, 164).

Moreover, commenting on the second uprising that took place in the district of Paphos (west), Panaretos blamed the French Consul, other Europeans and Theofilos Theseus (brother of Nicolaos Theseus) as the instigators. He describes them as “lovers of liberty and patriots, forsooth, but really subverters and destroyers of humanity” (Hill 1972, 165).

Kyrris notes the possibility of an association between these revolts and the Eptanesian middle class in Cyprus, including vice-consul Constantino Peristiani who represented various foreign nations. Indeed, the presence of Cypriots with Greek origin from the Ionian Islands since the 18th century has already been noted. Their entrance to Cyprus intensified once more in the 1830s (Hill 1972). Indeed, Kyrris points out that it was these Eptanesian laymen situated in the towns of Larnaka and Limassol that made the unification demand in 1830 via the vice-consul Paul Vondiziano to Governor Kapodistrias, who was also of Eptanesian origin. This suggests that the interests of the senior clergy in Cyprus and the interests of the merchants of Ionian and other European origin did not coincide all the time. In addition, there were additional divisions within the Greek clergy; Kyrris (1976) argues that another reason for which Panaretos denounced the 1833 revolts was due to the fact that monk Ioannikios and N. Theseus were affiliated with the Makhairas

monastery which was in conflict with Kykkos monastery that Archbishop Panaretos came from.

Serious nationalist expressions were to be observed again during Archbishop Kyrillos' reign. Indeed, in the middle of the 19th century (1852–1854) revolutionary pamphlets were seen circulating around the island as the French Consul's report states. One of these pamphlets made reference to ancient Greece and French socialist ideas. The person who was suspected of importing and distributing these texts was E. Fragoudis, who was teaching at the secondary school in Nicosia and was accused of hiding revolutionary literature in his quarters. After this, Archbishop Kyrillos pronounced his loyalty to the Sultan, denounced the revolutionary ideas and sent orders to the senior clergy to declare that anyone caught engaging in any discussions of revolution or reading these pamphlets would be excommunicated (Hill 1972). E. Fragoudis was expelled from his teaching post by the Archbishop.

Archbishop Sofronios (1865–1900) is another great personality in the ecclesiastical history of Cyprus. He is the last Archbishop into the Ottoman era and the first one who served during the transition from Ottoman to British rule. In Cypriot historiography his personality has been linked with the welcoming speech addressing the British in 1878, in which references to Enosis demands were purportedly made. However, recent scholarship disputes that such demands were actually included in the speech delivered by the Archbishop in Nicosia (Katsiaounis 1996, 26–7).<sup>30</sup> Katsiaounis reaches this conclusion after examining the available

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<sup>30</sup>Katsiaounis (1996) distinguishes between two speeches, one delivered by Archbishop Sofronios in Nicosia and another one by the Bishop of Larnaka. The same argument about *enosis* applies to the second speech.

evidence provided by various Greek-Cypriot and other scholars. He argues that the other speech delivered by the Bishop of Larnaka Kyprianos does not appear to contain references to *enosis*.<sup>31</sup> Kyrris (1964) seems to agree with Katsiaounis; he points out that in his speech, Sofronios talked about the Greek origins and aspirations of the Greek Cypriots but he was not thinking about *enosis*.

The Archbishop is also credited for his role in the deputation to London in 1889. The deputation consisted of Greek Cypriot delegates that demanded primarily financial and administrative changes in the island. According to Kitromilides (1990), Archbishop Sofronios enjoyed good relations with the British and was in fact honored by them when he visited Britain in 1889. However, even the trip to London was not without its problems. Except the fact that the Turkish members of the Legislative council did not agree with the demands for the deputation (there were referrals to *enosis*), there were divisions among the Greek elite as to whether such a deputation should be sent and as to the kinds of demands made. After two years of conflict (1887–1889) between the more radical members of the intelligentsia (of Larnaka and Limassol), and the more conservative ones (in which the Archbishop belonged to—Nicosia and Kyrenia) a compromised was reached. The deputation was to take place but the demands would be limited to administrative and financial changes, with Enosis claims only implicitly referred to.<sup>32</sup> Katsiaounis mentions that

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<sup>31</sup>Katsiaounis (1996) argues that the original speech by the Bishop does not exist in the Archive of the Archbishops of Cyprus but that there is a copy in the archive of the Greek Foreign Ministry. The contents of the copy supports the author's arguments on Enosis.

<sup>32</sup>See the discussion on the deputation in R. Katsiaounis (1996), *Labor, Society and Politics in Cyprus*, 186–187.

the Archbishop, in a confidential report sent to the British High Commissioner and referring to the deputation, states that he has “being pushed into it by ambitious and dissatisfied persons and being afraid to go against any movement of a popular nature . . .”<sup>33</sup> Kyrris (1964) also characterizes Sofronios’ approach towards the British as “middle-way.” The two extremes are represented by those who support British rule and do not view Enosis as a future possibility while another part of the intelligentsia would like to see the end of British occupation and enosis with Greece (Kyrris 1964). In his autobiographical note, Sofronios does not express any desire for Cyprus to unify with Greece, despite the fact that the Archbishop had lived in Athens for eight years. He refers to his origins by stating that “my fatherland is Cyprus, and my parents are Orthodox Christians of the Eastern dogma” (Papadopoulos 1971, 102).

Archbishop Sofronios represents the last generation of Prelates with a neutral attitude towards colonialism. The political scene from the beginning of the 20th century was to be dominated by Prelates who were ardent supporters of *enosis*. His death in 1900 and the question of his successor was to give rise to a political struggle among the Greek conservative and radical nationalist elite (clergy and non-clergy). Indeed, due to this struggle the Archbishopric seat remained vacant for nine years (1900–1909). In 1909, the Archbishopric seat was to be filled with Cyril Papadopoulos (of Kition), an individual who actively participated in the promotion of *enosis*.

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<sup>33</sup>The memorandum is discussed in R. Katsiaounis (1996), *Labor, Society and Politics in Cyprus*, 186.



Papadopoulos (of Kition), an individual who actively participated in the promotion of *enosis*.

### Conclusion

The Ottoman period in Cyprus corresponds to Gellner's pre-industrial society in which rulers and subjects exhibited shifting allegiances and flexibility in identity. Ethnic identity did not overwhelm the existence of others forms of identity, that is, those that originate from a sense of being a peasant, a religious leader, a *kocabasi* or a Turkish Cypriot official. Interethnic harmony and cooperation of Greek and Turkish peasants *vis a vis* the Greek and Turkish upper classes was the rule rather than the exception. However, the Greek ruling upper classes and especially the church occupied an ambiguous role that stemmed from their position as co-rulers of the Ottomans and as representatives of the Greek Cypriot community. Far from being nationalist champions, the church had to cope with the spread of an ideology that was in direct opposition with religious ideas. In doing so, the church did not espouse nationalist ideology but continued to act in a manner that was consistent with their traditional role, that is to represent the interests of the Christian population and co-rule with the Ottomans. This does not preclude a change in the beliefs of some clergy to reflect the spread of national ideology on the island. After all, the role of the lower clergy in the Greek revolution of 1821 is well known. However, the overwhelming evidence suggests that the Greek Cypriot clergy did not contribute to the creation of a national movement during the Ottoman era. Moreover, the lack of an efficiently large nationalist elite whose primary goal is to persuade people of the importance of the nation and its interests was not in place yet (Hroch 1985). Enlightenment and

nationalist ideology existed during the Ottoman period; however, the nature of the Ottoman empire that did not allow the spread of such ideas and the lack of a large and active nationalist elite did not encourage the development of ethnic consciousness and the organization of a national movement. Low levels of literacy, infrastructure and communications contributed to the maintenance of a low level of ethnic consciousness and the lack of important organized endeavors to form a mass nationalist movement.

## CHAPTER IV

### POLITICS AND SOCIETY DURING THE BRITISH ERA: THE RISE OF A NATIONALIST ELITE AND THE IMPACT OF NATIONALIST IDEOLOGY

#### Introduction

The arrival of the British in Cyprus in 1878 marked the beginning of a different institutional arrangement within which nationalist ideology would eventually become expressed. During the first two decades of British rule, the prevailing sociopolitical framework, with the traditional Greek upper classes dominating the political scene, did not facilitate the development of a mass national identity and thus the formation of a national movement. Contrary to the conventional view that supports a primordial ethnic Greek identity and a unified national movement since the War of Greek Independence in 1821, I argue that the process of the formation of a national identity and hence of a national movement in Cyprus was a recent and an uneven phenomenon in which individuals changed attitudes gradually and not consistently (Hroch 1985; Hobsbawm 1990). The unevenness in the formation of the movement and the change in identity among social groups is the result of pre-existing established institutions of the Ottoman period reflected in the attitudes of the traditional elites. These came in contact with new institutions and new ideologies brought about by the new bourgeoisie in the British period to define the nature and pace of the movement. Thus, the institutional transition from Ottoman to British rule was not a painless one, despite the desire of educated Cypriots at the time to be

governed by the liberal “nation of Alvion” as it was often called. New ideas and institutions during the British era coexisted with old forms of behavior, that is, with the patron-client society in the Ottoman era. The entrance of the professional intellectuals to the political scene constitutes Hroch’s (1985) Phase B of a national movement during which this social group actively attempts to educate citizens about the significance of self-rule within the context of the nation. External events such as the Cretan struggle for liberation (1896) and the Greco-Turkish war (1897) also play a role in the changing Greek Cypriot national consciousness and contribute to the formation of the Greek Cypriot national movement.

The pace and nature of the national movement as well as the change of identity was influenced by the way in which the traditional and modern elites contacted politics (Katsiaounis 1996). The former group consisted of the established upper classes that dominated politics and society during the Ottoman period. These were the tax farmers and tax collectors, landowners, merchants, and during the British era, low and middle rank Greek administrative officials and tax agents appointed by the government. Like in the Ottoman period, these individuals kept good relations with the current rulers and tried to maximize their economic interests within the new institutional framework of market capitalism. Far from exhibiting nationalist behavior, they displayed multiple allegiances depending on the situation in order to remain popular with both English government officials and their ethnic group, especially the lower classes. On the other hand, a growing middle class or professional intellectuals was reflected in the personalities of lawyers, teachers, historians, journalists, doctors. This group openly criticizes the government for their contact of politics and administration in the island as the newspapers and other

historical works of the 19th and early 20th century demonstrate. They were also very concerned with the political future of Cyprus and viewed British rule as purely provisional and short term, with *Enosis* (unification with Greece) as the appropriate political status to be achieved. During the first two and a half decades of British rule, the traditional classes (Katsiaounis 1996) via their affluent position, good relations with the rulers and access to authority, appeared to define the institutional framework within which society operated. The corporate and hierarchical values exhibited during Gellner's pre-national society remained in place. Nevertheless, soon the signs of a "national society" (Gellner 1983) influenced the context of politics and became a fertile ground for the ideology of the nation to be consolidated. The slow but steady progress of modernization (Hroch 1985; Hobsbawm 1990; Anderson 1991), that is, commercialization of agriculture, a significant increase in trade, proto-industrialization, the introduction of printing technologies and the spread of education contributed to an accelerated pace of social transformation that provided the opportunity for the "new bourgeoisie" (Katsiaounis 1996) to make their own political demands based on the ideology of nationalism and to provide leadership for the lower classes.

The next section describes the nature of the new institutional arrangement during the British period, the continuing predominance of the traditional elites during the first two decades of British rule and the socioeconomic changes that accompanied the novel institutional arrangement. Next, I describe those important modernization processes that facilitated social mobility and made possible the transmission of new ideologies. The last two sections analyze the rise of the nationalist elite, the spread of

nationalist ideology, and the turning point of the victory of the nationalist class over the conservative elite.

### The New Institutional Arrangement and the Predominance of the Traditional Elites

Social scientists have analyzed the importance of the role of the state in disseminating the ideology of nationalism (Gellner 1983; Hobsbawm 1990; Smith 1991). Gellner and Hobsbawm agree on the introduction of nationalist ideology via political entrepreneurs, a “nationalism from above.” However, Hobsbawm notes the significance of “nationalism from below” at a later stage. In another model (Smith 1991) nationalism from above is typical of a “lateral ethnie” (i.e., Europe) in which the state co-opts the intelligentsia and the two work together for the dissemination of the ideology of the nation. Smith regards nationalism from below as taking place in a subject community or “vertical ethnie” in which a new class of professional intellectuals opposes the actions of the state and organizes a movement that would lead to self-rule for the nation. In Hobsbawm’s and Gellner’s models, and in Smith’s lateral ethnie type of community, the state is responsible for facilitating the development of infrastructure, communications, commerce and trade and the spread of literacy. The goal is not only to maintain the welfare of the nation-state but to educate citizens in a shared culture and to create a homogeneous society.

In the case of Cyprus, this kind of nationalism from above does not take place until the end of 19th century, when Hroch’s new social actors in Phase B or Smith’s professional intellectuals and their nationalist ideology dominated the political scene. In Cyprus, Smith’s intelligentsia of the lateral ethnie that is co-opted by the state is represented by the Greek Cypriot traditional elites and their dominance during the

first two decades of British rule. In turn, the state represented by the British contributed to accelerating the modernization process in the island through the development of infrastructure, communications, education and commerce and trade (Gellner 1983; Hobsbawm 1990; Smith 1991). However, unlike the models above, the British did not engage in disseminating a state ideology early enough that would lead to a homogenization of society and therefore to the development of a Cypriot identity and nationalism.

Instead, the British approach to administrating the island was that of liberalism and laissez-faire mixed with their own nationalist ideology that denied great participation of indigenous peoples in politics and administration. For example, the administration of education was left to the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities and only gradually did the British decide to take over this important means of socialization (Persianis 1978). Moreover, many Cypriot authors point out to the “divide and rule” or the privileging of one community over another to run the state. For example, the overrepresentation of Turkish Cypriots in the police force led to feelings of enmity towards the British on behalf of educated Cypriots and reinforced the idea that the Turkish Cypriots were siding with the colonial power.

In this novel institutional framework, Cypriots were given rights and institutions that they did not enjoy in the Ottoman era. Security of tenure for one’s property was one of these rights. Unlike in the Ottoman period where land was cultivated by the peasants without the right to actual ownership, now peasants could do with it as they wished. In return, citizens were expected to pay their taxes on time. Indeed, the British managed the efficient collection of taxes, unlike their Ottoman predecessors that led corruption reign and non-payment of dues owed to the state

was the rule rather than the exception. The gradual introduction of British courts was another novelty that was applauded by the educated individuals of the island since it was believed that this would put an end to injustice and the discrimination against non-Muslims by Muslim judges. State funding of schools and freedom of public expression via the introduction of newspapers on the island were other significant changes on behalf of the British.

At the same time many privileges enjoyed by the traditional ruling and upper classes during the Ottoman era were abolished. The abolition of privileges was repeated in the case of tax-farmers of the Ottoman period. The farming out of taxes (system of *iltizam*) was abolished and the state became the collector of taxes. All individuals had to pay their dues directly to the government, that is to tax-collectors appointed by the government. Moreover, as in the case of the Orthodox clergy, the British abolished the habit of sending *zaptiyes* to accompany tax-farmers in their collection of taxes.

It has been argued that the loss of privileges by the traditional classes was a significant factor in the formation of the Greek Cypriot national movement (Persianis 1978). In other words, the movement is viewed as a reaction to British reforms and efforts to anglicize Greek culture. I argue that at least for the period examined this was not the case as Greek Cypriot traditional classes (landowners, tax farmers, senior clergy) continued their dominance over society and politics and did not seem to encourage the formation of a movement. Their attitude can be called “moderate” in that they were able to secure the loyalty of their fellow ethnic people and British officials. In this sense, the traditional Greek Cypriot class corresponds to Smith’s intelligentsia that is coopted by the state to ensure its welfare and maintenance (Smith



1991). Despite the loss of their privileges, tax-farmers found other ways of maintaining their financial and social power. For example, they engaged in commerce and money-lending. These individuals became the new capitalists of the island and played the role of credit institutions. They made profit not by practicing healthy capitalism, that is investing in industrialism, but by acting as subcontractors for the needs of the colonial government in army supplies, public works, etc. They also lent money to peasants at high interest rates, making this vulnerable social group dependent on them. They would also buy the peasants' products at a very low price and resell it at a much higher one (Katsiaounis 1996, 31). The peasants came to be dependent on these merchants for the marketing of their products.

The clergy also did not turn to nationalism to secure their privileges; in fact, they still possessed great influence over society not only through their financial assets, i.e., land property, but also via the control of the means of socialization, that is, the school system (Katsiaounis 1996). The clergy only gradually came to take sides in the ideological and political conflict between the traditional and nationalist Greek Cypriot elites. Unevenness characterized their involvement in the movement (Hobsbawm 1990). The clergy from the more conservative towns of Kyrenia (north coast) and Nicosia (northeast coast) supported the views of the traditional classes. On the other hand, the senior clergy of the coastal towns of Larnaka (southeast) and Limassol (south coast) came to support the more radical nationalism of the new bourgeoisie.

Originally, this body was established in 1878 along with an executive council. It was comprised of no less than four people but no more than eight, of whom half were British officials and half locals, Christians and Muslims. The locals were

appointed by the Crown on the recommendation of the Grand Governor. The latter had the authority to legislate jointly with the Legislative Council while the Crown held the final approval on legislative bills. In 1882, the reform of this body by the British turned it into a partly elected one, with nine Greek and three Turkish Cypriot members, to reflect the changing demographics of the island. However, there were also six British officials in this body as well as a British presiding official. Obviously, the purpose of this arrangement was the control by the British of the type of bills approved. During the later years of the British period and with the ascendance of the new Greek Cypriot bourgeoisie this arrangement caused much controversy since Greek Cypriot members could not advance the cause of *Enosis*. Turkish Cypriot members and British officials collaborated on the issue which resulted in repeated defeats of the Greeks. However, according to Katsiaounis, Greeks and Turks would often collaborate together when it came to economic matters. For example, some of these laws protected the interests of the moneylenders and merchants. A law enacted in 1885 made it easy for money-lenders to seize property from peasants who could not repay their loans (Katsiaounis 1996, 101). In 1890 the Legislative Council opposed a bill introduced by the Colonial government that would have made it difficult for peasant property to be expropriated. The bill was rejected unanimously by both Greeks and Turks (Katsiaounis 1996, 108). Even towards the end of the century, when the radical nationalist voices became stronger and popular grievances in towns were heard more, the Legislative Council continued to reject laws that would ensure a fairer system of taxation for all. For example, the traditional classes in the Legislative Council resisted the reform of the property valuation system suggested by the British. Encouragement for reform took place due to a situation

where the lower classes' properties were overassessed while the affluent classes' property were underassessed (Katsiaounis 1996, 193).

Kyrris' commentary provides a partial explanation of the behavior of Greek Cypriot politicians (Kyrris 1964). Responding to Hill's argument that lawyers who publicly favored *Enosis* were at the same time taking advantage of peasants due to the lawyers' money-lending practices, Kyrris argues, that many other Greek Cypriot political entrepreneurs (e.g., lawyers, merchants) who were publicly supporting the British were also taking advantage of the peasants in supporting laws that guaranteed the upper classes' economic interests. Therefore, Kyrris points out that often it is difficult to distinguish between those political entrepreneurs who were clearly pro-British or nationalist. Often the individuals who publicly supported *Enosis* might in reality favor British administration and vice-versa; a public supporter of the British might in reality have been an *Enosist* (Kyrris 1964).

Interestingly, sometimes even senior clergy in the Legislative Council supported laws that were detrimental to the survival of the peasants as producers (Katsiaounis 1996) despite the fact that they publicly despised other aspects of British administration (i.e., disrespect for Greek religious customs on behalf of the British in several occasions).

Lysiotis' analysis of the social background of the Greek legislative members from 1883 to 1931 offers clues that might explain the contradiction in the Greek members behavior. Indeed, during this period, it was a very common phenomenon for legislative members to exercise more than one profession. In particular, a large number of lawyers would exercise one or two other occupations simultaneously, such as merchant, landowner and moneylender. Lysiotis finds out that during this period,

the occupations by the members were as following: Lawyer (37.5 percent), lawyer plus another occupation (16.0 percent), merchant (14.0 percent), church official (7.1 percent), secondary school teacher (7.1 percent), merchant plus another occupation (5.3 percent), physician (3.5 percent), farmer (1.7 percent), and other (3.5 percent). Lysiotis (1990) notes the dependency of the peasants on this “bourgeois group” and their parasitic role in production. This was because the peasants did not have real access to the Government or the market for their needs and had to rely on these influential members to market their products. This situation led to the reinforcement of the patron-client social structure between affluent people who were interested in getting reelected and peasants who needed their services. These powerful patron-client networks or vertical coalitions strengthened the relationships between merchants and producers and prevented the latter from organizing on a large scale based on class interest. Moreover, despite the many efforts of the British to weaken these powerful patron-client networks and to gain the support of the peasantry, the peasants continued to ally ideologically and politically with their Greek Cypriot patrons who controlled credit and the marketing of produce (Attalides 1977).

The system of political representation demonstrated the predominance of the interests of the influential members of the society and the continuing marginalization of the lower classes from politics and public policies. From 1882 all male payers of vergi (property tax) could vote on the condition that they paid their taxes in a timely fashion. Since there were a lot of small property owners on the island one would expect that these people would exercise their voting rights immediately. However, during the first election in 1883, only 21,703 registered to vote out of 58,916 male payers (35.8 percent). Moreover, voter participation continued to decline in the

elections of 1886 and 1891 (Katsiaounis 1996, 86). To a great extent, voter participation after 1886 reflected the decline in the living standards of the lower classes due to the severe economic crisis of that year. Indeed, the consequences of the crisis were to continue for several years. Many small property owners were unable to pay their taxes on time and they were therefore unable to exercise their right to vote. Other problems with the electoral system discouraged people from voting; there were only twenty-two polling stations for 660 town quarters and villages (Katsiaounis 1996, 87). Considering the still primitive nature of traveling at the time and the condition of roads, it was not a surprise that villagers were unwilling to travel long distances just to vote. In addition, voting took place via an open ballot due to the great illiteracy still prevailing among the lower classes. This system was another means through which the patron-client relationships were reinforced since the peasants would vote for the influential people that took care of the peasants' needs.

In many ways, the view of the Ottoman period as oppressive and culturally underdeveloped was replaced by a situation where Greek Cypriot cultural development was possible but not within the context of democracy and the guarantee of the welfare for the many. The laissez-faire state had a built-in bias for those who owned the capital and the means of production but did not provide for the economic security of the peasants. This presented a great change from the Ottoman era where the Turkish rulers would maintain insecurity of tenure purportedly so that moneylenders could not easily confiscate a peasant's land who had not repaid a loan. However, moneylenders could now take advantage of English contract law to expropriate the lower classes' land in case of default on loans. The consequence of this new set of relations came to be equaled with a potential for the pauperization of

the lower classes, great social change and the potential use of the lower classes' grievances in politics.

Indeed, in 1886, an unprecedented economic crisis due to a drought on the island demonstrated the vulnerability of the lower classes and town labor. Agricultural output was down and peasants were unable to pay their taxes for several years. This resulted in a large number of forced auctions of the peasants' property by moneylenders and the government. Town tradesmen and wage earners, that is, boatmen, masons and the like were also affected. Moreover, in-migration to towns led to overcrowding, spread of disease, unemployment and poor sewage maintenance. This situation increased death due to famine. The incidents of alcoholism, gambling, theft, and quarrels were on the rise and in general, an unprecedented demoralization was in place. Poverty forced many women to beg for their daily food while others became prostitutes. The response of the British government in this situation was mostly symbolic, that is, it donated food to the poor during celebrations only (Katsiaounis 1996, 116–118). The Church also was unable to contribute significantly to the welfare of the towns' paupers. It was certain private charitable organizations presided over by some of the island's affluent indigenous individuals who were part of the traditional upper class that engaged in the most significant effort to provide instant relief for the poor. Katsiaounis argues that the above actions by the government and their coopted intelligentsia, that is, priests and politicians, guaranteed the subservience of the lower classes towards the British administration and the Greek Cypriot traditional classes.

Towards the end of 19th century, allegiance to the government and patron-client relationships increasingly coexisted with a spirit of defiance on behalf of the

peasants towards them. Socioeconomic change was accompanied by the spread of materialist theories and the spread of literacy. Moreover, the decline in number of church goers raised concerns about the status of religion on the island (Katsiaounis 1996, 139). The spirit of defiance towards authority was also reflected in an unprecedented increase in crime, particularly stabbing and animal theft (Katsiaounis 1996, 143), phenomena related to the economic crisis. A feeling of contempt by the poor against the affluent and the authorities was reflected in letters that threatened the lives of the rich (Katsiaounis 1996, 145). The increasing socioeconomic gap between the rich and the poor led to this spirit of defiance that resulted in non-payment of taxes by the peasants to the tax-agents accompanied by policemen (*zapties*); in other cases premeditated murders against moneylenders or other officials took place (Katsiaounis 1996, 148–149). The most popular exhibition of organized social protest against authority took place via the phenomenon of social banditry. According to Hobsbawm, the bandit who engaged in crime was idealized by the community; he was considered as a hero rather than a villain and was protected by the community who did not betray him to the police. In Cyprus, the phenomenon of social banditry took place mostly in the 1880s and 1890s (Katsiaounis 1996, 149).

The social change on the island caused a strong reaction on behalf of the Church, whose attitude was represented in the conservative press of Cyprus. They attributed the defiant spirit of the peasantry to the individualist values introduced by the British. They commented on the undesirable incidence of vagabondage in the town's streets, that is, the fact that many young people wandering in the streets without employment (Katsiaounis 1996, 160). The conservative press also condemned what it saw as the demoralized life of the lower classes, the forms of

popular entertainment and the activities taking place in the village coffee-shops, including gambling, and singing by low class singers. They considered the above activities as an infection that spread in previously healthy villages (Katsiaounis 1996, 161). Most importantly, the conservative press (i.e., *Enosis*, *Phoni tis Kyprou*) expressed their disapproval with the implications of liberal values and democracy because these were means by which the lower classes could now participate in politics. They blamed the participation of the poor in elections the reason for which many undeserving Greeks were in influential political positions. Behind the disapproving tone, the nostalgia of the past times was evident in the press:

During the present stage of civilization everything has changed for the worse . . . An equality of unequals is reigning everywhere, which handicaps progress and ruins every activity in pursuit of good deeds. A scientist, a merchant, a manual worker in the vulgar crafts, a dock laborer, are all equal, enjoying the same rights, possessing the same knowledge and expressing opinions on an equal basis, on every issue. . . . Could there be a more miserable state of affairs? (Katsiaounis 1996, 162)

. . . the blessed times, during which all meetings were dominated by the prominent people of our town and the rest used to listen to them and obey their words as if they were the oracles of Pythia. . . . Those were the days when every one was aware of his worth and therefore abided, on every communal affair, by the station which was due to him. Inferiors would respect and honor their superiors, and they in turn would show affection to those who behaved properly. In a word, there was love and honesty amongst all classes in society, and consequently there was activity and progress in communal matters in general. (Katsiaounis 1996, 62–63)

The conservative leadership dealt with what they perceived as the decline of religious sentiment and of moral communal values, was through the active re-education of citizens in literacy and religious education. This took place by means of the establishment of reading clubs, starting with *Agapi tou Laou* (Love of the People) in 1891 in Nicosia. This club did not have the elitist outlook of its predecessor,



*Kypriakos Syllogos*.<sup>34</sup> It was open to people from all social classes who wished to acquire literacy and basic education. The aim of the club was quoted as the “cultivation of letters and the moral reeducation of good citizens” (Katsiaounis 1996, 164). Another difference of these reading clubs from their predecessors was the fact that they did not remain disconnected from politics. They established May 25th (Greek Independence Day) as the club’s day of celebration. A chain of clubs was also set in the other major towns by 1897. That these reading clubs were to become places where traditional and modern elites would compete for public support is evident in the gradual change in leadership and aims. Initially, the leadership of Agapi tou Laou comprised those who had access to authority and manufacturers. However, gradually and by the very end of the century, the leadership of the clubs would be replaced by more radical nationalists who were not only interested in educating citizens in moral education but teaching them about “several worldly matters and the Fatherland” (Katsiaounis 1996, 166).

In conclusion, the significance of socioeconomic change on the island became a ready made pool of support for the elites that competed for political power at the end of the 19th century. On the one hand, the conservatives or the traditional classes, were to make use of the towns’ paupers to intimidate their opponents while the new bourgeoisie or professional intellectuals were to blame the misery and poverty on the actions of British officials and their Greek Cypriot intelligentsia. The next section examines those other modernizing changes that facilitated the development and articulation of novel ideas, and particularly that of nationalism.

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<sup>34</sup>For further discussion on this reading club, see Chapter III in this thesis.

## Education, Communications: The Influence of Modernization Processes

Social scientists have noted the correlation between a change in national identity and the spread of the ideology of nationalism and modernity (Deutsch 1966; Gellner 1983; Hobsbawm 1990; Hroch 1985). Gellner has located the progress of nationalism at a time when full scale modernization process is underway. However, Hroch points out that several national movements were underway before industrialism was developed. Instead, Hroch suggests that one must examine those “mediating effects” that result from new market relations and industrialization, that is a social and geographical mobility, generational change, commercialization of agriculture, spread of literacy and generational change. Anderson (1991) also has noted that the introduction of printing technology offers the opportunity to people to “imagine” themselves in a novel way. The transmission of the ideas of the nation and the ideology of nationalism (Greenfield 1992) become accessible to many more people through the newspaper and other forms of writing, such as the novel (Anderson 1991).

In Cyprus, the introduction of the printing press became possible with the arrival of the British on the island. During the Ottoman era, the introduction of print-capitalism did not take place due to the lack of the appropriate technology, great illiteracy and the Ottoman law that did not allow public criticism against the government (Sofocleous 1984). In 1878, the first newspaper *Cyprus* was established by a Cypriot teacher formerly residing in Egypt, Th. Constantinidis. He was encouraged by other educated Cypriots residing there who helped finance the publication of the newspaper. Other Greek Cypriot newspapers soon spread in the

port towns of Larnaka and Limassol, centers of social change and new ideas while in Nicosia, the center of conservatism, newspapers were slower to be established.

According to Katsiaounis, seven Greek newspapers sold 4, 600 by 1900 (Katsiaounis 1996, 96).

The first newspaper was established in Larnaka, the most developed part of the island in all aspects (Sofocleous 1984, 231). Here also there were the greatest amount of literate people who could read a newspaper. Nevertheless, according to Sofocleous there were great difficulties in maintaining newspapers at the time. The cost of publishing them was too high while the number of people who subscribed to them was too low due to illiteracy. Acquiring daily news was another problem; since there were no planes, telephones or teletype at that time, journalists relied on other Greek newspapers that came from abroad, other correspondence from other towns in Cyprus, the post office, Reuters Press (that was made possible through the local English government) and the activities of the Legislative Council. Another difficulty lay in the distribution of newspapers in remote villages where usually school teachers were the only subscribers. There, the distribution of mail only took place once a month or every fifteen days via the use of animals such as donkeys. Sofocleous notes the fact that the newspapers were published in an ancient form of Greek (*katharevousa*) that was known to very few people.

The newspapers reflected the factionalist politics of the time. Some of them such as *Enosis* (Unification) and *Phoni tis Kyprou* (Voice of Cyprus), supported the traditional ruling classes of the island and were more moderate in their positions vis a vis the British. Others, such as *Alithia* (Truth) and *Evagoras* (Greek Cypriot antiquarian hero), reflected the more radical nationalist voices of the new

bourgeoisie. In Katsiaounis' opinion, all newspapers "represented varying shades of Greek nationalism and devoted a major part of their space to giving Cypriots hard facts about their fellow Greeks in the Kingdom and about Greece's relations with other powers" (Katsiaounis 1996, 95). Some of the most common themes were the continuance of heavy imposition of taxes on the rural and laboring poor and the fact that the taxes went to the British Treasury rather than to the development of the island. Behind the protests and the criticism there was the hope for a short term administration by the British and the unification of Cyprus with Greece via the goodwill of the British. In addition, much concern was expressed on the state of the island's education. In an article in *Neon Kition* newspaper, the editor suggested that ecclesiastical revenues should be diverted for educational purposes, so important for the development of the island, and that the salaries for the Bishops should be fixed (Neon Kition [English edition], 20 October 1882). Another sign of the heightened identity of Cypriots were criticisms about the lack of British respect for Greek culture. For example, the ridicule by the British of the procession of the Epitaph during the Easter celebrations and the repeated assertions on behalf of the colonial government that Cypriots were not able to run their own affairs because of lack of an adequate number of educated people caused even more resentment of the British (Neon Kition [English edition], 25 November 1882). Also, the use of solely English and Turkish in the official government documents during the initial years of British administration and the lack of interest by the British in learning Greek was also perceived as great disrespect for the Greek community on the island. To sum up, what was expected from those Cypriots who looked to the idea of the nation as the future of the island was the implementation of the liberal values of the Alvion nation.

Instead, the tone of some of the newspapers reflected a great disappointment in British administration on the island.

Despite the great incidence of illiteracy, the dissemination of ideas due to the expansion of the mass media was significant. For example, a newspaper would be read aloud in a coffee shop by the most literate person of the village, usually a teacher. A British official comments on the significance of the newspaper at the time by noting “. . . the unchecked liberty of the press, the influences of village school masters and priests who are in touch with the clergy and clubs in towns, and who communicate to the peasants what is said in the newspapers” (Katsiaounis 1996, 96).

But even outside the village café, illiterate tradesmen and other ordinary people had ample chances to hear about other ideas due to the increased opportunities for direct communication. The expansion of trade and increased mobility as well as better infrastructure made it possible for more people to meet at town markets, wine shops, bakeries and coffee shops to exchange ideas and news (Katsiaounis 1996, 97). In particular, the coffee shops had become “centers of political and nationalist communication, in ways comprehensible to ordinary folk” (Katsiaounis 1996, 97). Hroch (1985) has pointed out to the importance of theatre as another element in the development of nationalist sentiment and heightened national identity. Indeed, the coffee shop performed this role as well. For example, a play with the theme of *The Greek War of Independence* was performed in a Limassol café in 1885 and was watched by a great number of people (Katsiaounis 1996).

Furthermore, the improvement in the infrastructure of the island had brought more remote regions and its people in contact with the towns, making it easier for people to exchange ideas and to contribute to the development of trade and other

economic activities. Katsiaounis notes that within a year after their arrival, the British engaged into constructing carriageable roads that connected all the major towns and even the towns and the mountainous villages of the interior.

By 1882, a total of 356 miles of roads, though some of them of poor quality, had been constructed. Rural distress and the need for relief works kept up this momentum during the late 1880s and the 1890s until, by early 1902, good public roads stretched throughout Cyprus for 628 miles. The proportion of road mileage to square miles of country, 1:57, meant that Cyprus had one of the best road networks of countries by the British Crown. (Katsiaounis 1996, 175)

The result of this was a significant change in the social structure (mobility) and increased urbanization and internal migration (Katsiaounis 1996, 177). By the end of the 19th century there was an increase in professions associated with commerce and trade and manufacture and a decline in farmers and gardeners. Katsiaounis calls the development of the manufacturing sector “proto-industrialization” occurring in the coastal town of Limassol and followed by Larnaka (south coast) and the capital. On the other hand, much less development was taking place in Famagusta (east coast) and Paphos (west coast), whereas Kyrenia (north coast) was the least mechanized. In 1880 “there were three tanneries, three tobacco factories, ten steam and flour mills and two distilleries. By 1900, the number of tanneries had grown to 13, tobacco factories to eight, steam mills to 26 and distilleries to 21” (Katsiaounis 1996, 176).

Hroch and Hobsbawm have also pointed out the significance of education in teaching new generations the symbols and ideals of the nation. Moreover, Hroch (1985) has noted that generational change is an important factor in the change of identity and consciousness. In Cyprus, from 1881 until 1901 there was a significant change in population growth and age structure (Katsiaounis 1996, 175). Not only did

the population increased from 186,173 to 237,022 (27.6 percent increase), but in 1901 about 54 percent of the population was “under 25 years of age” (Katsiaounis 1996, 175). A significant number of people were born into the British period and had experienced the politics and turbulence that era. This change must be seen with the considerable progress in education. According to Katsiaounis (1996, 92), the educational system in Cyprus was one of the major agents of political socialization. Since the beginning of British rule, an increasing number of schools and the improvement of roads led to the spread of literacy. From 1881 to 1901 there was an increase of 209 percent in the Greek Cypriot student population. Moreover, the educational system was left in the control of the indigenous communities in Cyprus; local communities and the Church decided on all matters concerning the schools’ operations. For example, school curriculum, language of instruction and hiring of teachers in the Greek Cypriot schools, for example, were closely associated with Greek culture and the Orthodox tradition (Persianis 1978). In general, Greek Cypriots followed the educational system of Greece and even the books used came from Greece, Constantinople and Smyrna. Many teachers that taught in Greek Cypriot schools came from Greece while Greek Cypriots abroad like the Cypriot brotherhood in Egypt were actively involved in keeping Greek Cypriot schools operating via the contribution of monies or setting up new schools. Thus, Greek Cypriot students were educated in all matters concerning their motherland via the use of textbooks such as *The Heroes of Modern Greece* (Katsiaounis 1996, 94); ancient and modern Greek constituted one of the most important subjects. In general, textbooks expressed the desire for *Enosis* and the importance of freedom and self-rule. In addition, at the turn of the century, more youths had the opportunity to study

at the universities in Athens and Europe getting well acquainted with the Great Idea, that is, the redemption of all Greek speaking areas in the ancient nation of Greece. These youths were also the ones who would side with the Greek Cypriot professional intellectuals or radical nationalists at the end of the 19th century. These people were to become the greatest concern for the Greek Cypriot traditional elites. This concern was expressed in *Enosis* newspaper, the moderate paper that expressed the traditional voices:

Precisely at this juncture, when scores of young university graduates arrive from Athens . . . their eloquence, is wasted prematurely in party political debates and festive oratory, through which they attack persons whose political conduct should be for them an example and a source of inspiration. (Katsiaounis 1996, 237)

The transmission of ideas to the public—even though still illiterate—took place at another importance place: the reading clubs. Recall that these were established by the church to reeducate the people in religion and were set up by the establishment classes. They were no longer elitist as they had been in the past, but now they included the towns' labor in their efforts to gain the support of ordinary people in order to remain in power. The clubs along with newspapers became important instruments for those who competed for power towards the end of the 19th century. During this time, the mediating effects of modernization (Hroch 1985) provided a fertile ground for the professional intellectuals to disseminate their ideas for the future of Cyprus, that is their nationalist ideology.

### The Rise of the Professional Intellectuals and the Spread of Nationalist Ideology

Social scientists have noted the significance of the emergence of a new bourgeoisie or professional intellectuals in articulating a sense of national identity and



providing leadership for the nationalist movement (Hroch 1985; Hobsbawm 1990; Smith 1991; Greenfield 1992). The ideology articulated by these intellectuals is based on several assumptions about the importance of the “nation” (Smith 1991). First of all, the world is divided into nations and each one of them is unique in terms of history and destiny. Secondly, politics and social power flow from the nation and “loyalty to the nation overrides all other allegiances” (Smith 1991, 74). Moreover, freedom and self-realization can only take place if humans identify with a specific nation. Finally, world peace and justice can prevail when nations acquire their own freedom and security.

It remains to be discussed whether nationalist ideology was first articulated “from above” or “from below.” In Hobsbawm’s view, nationalism from above precedes nationalism from below (Hobsbawm 1990). Moreover, the state is an important agent in the dissemination of nationalism. However, in Cyprus state agents were not the ones to engage in that type of nationalism. A national elite actively sought to educate the people about the importance of self-rule and the nation via the use of reading clubs, newspapers and schools. These individuals rather than the state constitute a “nationalism from above.” On the other hand, one could argue that they could be regarded as “nationalism from below.” Nevertheless, their differentiated status justifies that they be categorized as nationalism from above, that is, cultural leaders who attempted to instill in the masses a sense of national identity.

What is clearly evident is that towards the end of the century, the traditional and modern elites used national slogans to compete for political support among the ordinary population (Hobsbawm 1990). The conflict between the two elites in the fast changing and modernizing Cypriot society resembled a social and political crisis

in which the secured position of the old ruling classes is in jeopardy. “There is a loss of faith in traditional moral systems” (Hroch 1996, 66) and an “emergence of discontent among significant elements of the population” (Hroch 1996, 66). In this situation, the ideology of the new bourgeoisie is more appealing to many.

Katsiaounis (1996) notes that at the beginning of British rule in Cyprus, indigenous lawyers and doctors were hard to find, but by the end of the 19th century the study of law was the most common field of study among young Greek Cypriots. Indeed, it has already been noted that the majority of the Greek legislative members from 1883 to 1931 were lawyers who practiced an additional profession simultaneously. These professional intellectuals were educated in Athens and Europe and had espoused Enlightenment ideas. In Cyprus, many of these were united through the cult of freemasonry (Katsiaounis 1996, 190).<sup>35</sup> Unlike the traditional elites, these intellectuals were at the front of continuous anti-government criticism (Katsiaounis 1996, 179). They viewed the presence of the British on the island as short-term and desired self-rule and unification with Greece in the immediate future. On the other hand, the traditional Greek elites who occupied many administrative positions enjoyed very good relations with the British and perceived self-rule as well as *enosis* desirable but preferably to be attained at the appropriate time and not through radical nationalist agitation. Despite the differences in their outlook and ideology, both elites seemed to be conscious of their Greek Cypriot ethnic identity; for example, both participated in the celebrations for the independence of Greece and

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<sup>35</sup> Many of these figures, like G. Fragoudis and Zannettos, were examined in Chapter II in this thesis.

one of the newspapers that supported the traditional classes was titled *Enosis*. The new bourgeoisie (Katsiaounis 1996) or the professional intellectuals represent Smith's opposition elite in a subject community who come to articulate the importance of self-rule and the ideology of the nation. The friction between the traditional upper classes and the new bourgeoisie is reflected in a newspaper that represented the positions of the former:

Our towns are divided into two and three factions, not parties, which fight amongst themselves. Their purpose is not to see that the most correct and beneficial of ideas are being examined and ultimately prevail but to cancel and ruin every effort for the achievement of anything that is good. The fact is however, that for the present situation those to blame are not the people, the class that is which is occupied with the task of labor. This class took no part in public affairs, either in the past or at present, but left their administration to those belonging to the higher classes. The responsibility for the present situation is borne, in our opinion by those who, by virtue of their moral and material development, belong to classes a and b.

Those of the second class compete with those of the first and, doing their best to show themselves as their equal, challenge their worth and power and try to obstruct their views and place obstacles to their wishes and commands, without having the boldness or influence to put into effect their own wishes and commands. Those of class a, being used till now to command public affairs without any checks, are displeased by this current, which is opposed to them and stems from their inferiors, and they depart from the stage abandoning everything in a quandary. (Katsiaounis 1996, 180)

That the new class of professional intellectuals were gaining in popularity must have been worrying for the traditional classes who had dominated politics and society in Cyprus since the Ottoman times. Indeed, the new bourgeoisie was very successful in utilizing the existent anti-authority sentiment of the lower classes to their own benefit. The economic crisis of 1886 and its effects on the peasants and the town labor for years to come was one of the issues that nationalist agitators could talk about. According to Katsiaounis, traditional leaders of the Greek Cypriot community also organized public meetings in which "wider powers were requested

for the elected members of the Legislative Council and . . . that a memorandum should be drawn up for the whole island, and that a deputation should proceed and submit it to the Colonial Office in London” (Katsiaounis 1996, 184). However, even this deputation that included mainly demands for economic reform came about after a great deal of disagreement among members of the traditional and radical nationalist elites; since the former was the “co-opted” intelligentsia that was on good terms with the British, they desired to maintain the good relationship with the rulers by making sure that the demands made in London were of a moderate nature. Moreover, the town’s tradesmen, that is the plebeian strata (Katsiaounis 1996) were becoming a useful pool of resentment against the government. Since the economic crisis in 1886, high municipal and trade taxes that these people had to pay were felt heavier than before. Much discussion about the situation amongst tradesmen took place at the coffee shops while the radical nationalist newspapers, in particular *Evagoras*, supported their grievances (Katsiaounis 1996, 202). By 1897, the largest organized protest among grape harvesters in the surrounding districts of Limassol reflected the capability of the nationalist elite to provide leadership for this class. These peasants felt that government authorities and private creditors did not care about the welfare of the peasantry (Katsiaounis 1996, 196).

The increased popularity of the nationalists was reflected in their success in the 1896 Legislative Council election, the first since 1883 in which voter participation was on the increased. Despite the domination of the election by the conservatives, the two nationalist candidates, who called themselves *Ethniki* (nationals) had led the polls in their constituencies.

One of the most important members of the nationalist elite was Nicolaos Katalanos, a Greek by origin from the mainland, a freemason and an advocate of the Great Idea. His significance in the raising of ethnic consciousness of Greek Cypriots is discussed by Katsiaounis (1996). Hobsbawm (1990) would argue that Katalanos belonged to those individuals who engaged in a nationalism from below. He arrived in Cyprus in 1893 after being offered a teaching position at the Pancyprian Gymnasium (secondary education). Three years later, however, he was dismissed from this institution due to his anti-British behavior and his open criticism of the Greek Cypriot board which he perceived as being very submissive to British policies. His dismissal from academia did not put an end to his anti-authority attitude but made him more active against the British authorities and what he saw as their Greek Cypriot puppets. He took over the editorship of the Nicosia based newspaper *Evagoras* as well as the presidency of the reading club *Agapi tou Laou*, previously controlled by the conservative elite. The reading club and newspaper became the main instruments through which Katalanos expressed his nationalist ideology. Particularly, he organized a series of lectures which he delivered to the people and especially the town labor. His decision reflected Katalanos' view that labor participation in politics was very important in any future political change of the island's status. Through his lectures, he attempted to educate people not only in religion, national history and literature but in other "practical" subjects as well; political economy, physics, chemistry, geology and phytology were some of the subjects taught (Katsiaounis 1996, 217). According to Katsiaounis, this must have been an extraordinary experience for a public whose religious ideas rather than science organized their world view. Moreover, Katalanos presented a vision of the

world where a nation's indigenous people should run the affairs of their country rather than a colonial elite with a coopted intelligentsia. He criticized the paternalistic behavior of the traditional Greek Cypriot elite whose attitude towards labor he perceived as unacceptable; he argued that all humans are equal and therefore they should be treated as such. In Katalanos' view, labor should be treated with respect and gentle manners, and physical punishment should be avoided (Katsiaounis 1996, 221). However, he did not stress a Marxian position on class struggle and felt short of criticizing the activities of moneylenders and merchants towards the peasants. Since people from all sorts of classes attended his lectures—including the bourgeoisie—Katalanos was careful in order not to offend anyone. He defined the existing social conflict on the island as a problem of colonialism and did not emphasize class conflict. Therefore, in Katalanos' view, Greek Cypriots had a duty as a respectable people who belonged to the Greek nation to get rid off their alien oppressors and those who supported them if the island was to prosper. He urged labor to be inspired by their Greek heritage whenever possible (Katsiaounis 1996, 221).

Amidst this situation, the impact of external events on ethnic consciousness raising was significant (Katsiaounis 1996, 210). The Cretan Revolt of 1896 and the Greco-Turkish war of 1897 witnessed an active recruitment of youth and labor. For the Cretan revolt, the efforts of Nicolaos Katalanos were most important in recruiting labor mostly from Nicosia to fight in the revolt. However, it was the Greco-Turkish war that attracted most war volunteers. Joannis Kyriakides (the promoter of the wine rallies discussed above) and Philios Zannettos, members of the nationalist elite and freemasons were actively involved in recruiting people to fight in the struggle. Youth,

labor and peasants disembarked from Cyprus to fight in the war. So great was the excitement for this war that in 1897 many more people attended the March 25th public celebrations in the towns. Katsiaounis points out that the two wars “inspired a whole body of patriotic literature” (Katsiaounis 1996, 213). Thousands of copies of these ballads encouraged people from all walks of life to join the war.

The popularity of the ideology of the nationalist elite increased the reaction of the traditional Greek Cypriot ruling elite, who utilized religion rather than nationalism and anti-British sentiment as their base for political support. In this competition for political power based on ideology, members of the Orthodox Church sided either with the nationalist or the conservative elite. The next section examines the conflict between the two elites and the turning point of the predominance of the later.

#### The Conflict Between the Nationalist and Traditional Elites: The Predominance of Nationalist Ideology

Until the end of the century, the traditional Greek Cypriot ruling elite's power had not been challenged officially in the polls, even though the nationalists were increasing in popularity. The traditional class still enjoyed significant popular support particularly in the rural areas. However, the death of Archbishop Sofronios in 1900 and the elections of 1901 for the Legislative Council created a crisis in which the power of the conservatives was openly challenged. It was the first time that an open conflict would take place between the conservatives and the nationalists. Indeed, the death of the Archbishop created a crisis due to the fact that the Archbishopric had always remained the cornerstone through which Greek Cypriots had the opportunity to influence the political future of their society. Moreover, it has already been noted

that during the Ottoman era and since the British occupation, the Archbishopric was controlled by the traditional Greek Cypriot elite who kept good relations with the island's rulers. However, the ideological conflict between the nationalist and traditional elites and the popularity of nationalist ideology led to significant changes within the Orthodox Church; now, senior members of the Church openly supported the nationalists or traditionalists in order to compete for the Archbishopric throne.

Thus, Bishop Kyrillos Vassiliou of Kyrenia belonged to the traditional class while Kyrillos Papadopoulos of Kitium (Larnaka), was an ardent nationalist. The crisis over the Archbishopric throne divided politicians, other intellectuals, and members of the Church and ordinary people in two factions. The first one came to be known as *Kyreniakoi* and represented the conservative class while those who openly espoused a nationalist ideology were called *Kitiakoi* (Katsiaounis 1996, 227).

It has already been noted that different slogans were the means by which the two elites competed for popular support (Hobsbawm 1990). For example, Katalanos explained his vision of the island's future based on the ideology of the nation. On the other hand, the traditional elite used religion and particularly the Sunday church liturgies. For this reason, one skilled rhetor from Greece, a preacher by the name of Tecnopoulos, came to Cyprus in 1899 to aid the conservatives in their campaign. This influential individual, skilled in rhetoric was supposed to counter the influence of the freemason Katalanos who delivered lectures to the public in the reading clubs. The traditional elite set up a new reading club by the name of *Orthodoxia* (Orthodoxy) in which Tecnopoulos became the president. Indeed, such were the strong rhetorical skills of this priest that he attracted people to the sermons and the reading club from all classes (Katsiaounis 1996, 227). Like the nationalists, the



traditional elite also used newspapers as a way to influence their public. For example, *Phoni tis Kyprou* was one of them; in the August 25, 1900 edition, this newspaper published the denunciation of freemasonry by Greek Cypriot martyr Archbishop Kyprianos. Other newspapers that reflected the positions of the establishment, that is *Enosis* (Larnaka), *Salpinx* (Limassol) and *Cypriot* (Kyrenia) also wrote extensively against the cult of freemasonry and the nationalists (Katsiaounis 1996, 229). They even accused the nationalist candidate for the Archbishopric throne, Kyrillos Papadopoulos of Kitium, as belonging to the sect. However, the bishop denied the accusations.

On the other hand, the nationalists *Kitiakoi*, fought back against the accusations from the *Kyreniakoi* camp that freemasons were atheists and offensive to religion. They argued that being a freemason did translate into agnosticism or religious skepticism and that “freemasonry was quite compatible with Christian Orthodoxy” (Katsiaounis 1996, 229). In fact, the nationalist camp produced evidence that showed the bishop of Kyrenia to have been a student of a leading freemason from the mainland, a response that caused the silence of the conservative circle.

The societal influence of the nationalist club was first tested in the elections for special representatives who were responsible for choosing a new Archbishop. The *Kitiakoi* won the elections, as forty-seven special representatives out of 66 belonged to the nationalist club. However, the conservatives challenged the elections, arguing that corruption had taken place and thus they did not accept the results. This created a gridlock that kept the Archbishopric throne vacant.

In this political conflict, more ordinary people took side with one or the other camp. First of all, there was a division as to rural versus urban settings. Rural

communities were most likely to side with the conservatives (Katsiaounis 1996, 230), who made their case based on religion. In particular, many communities in Nicosia, which had always been a stronghold of conservatism due to the presence of the Archbishopric, had associated nationalists with freemasonry and atheism and were against such ideas. However, even in towns, members of the conservative elite used people from the lowest classes to derive support for the creation of riots against the nationalist club. Indeed, around 1900–1901, the conservative elite used the towns' paupers to physically intimidate members of the nationalist elite. Nevertheless, the nationalist club also enjoyed the support of paupers, even though not to the extent that the conservatives did (Katsiaounis 1996). Katsiaounis' point is that paupers were utilized by both camps within the tradition of a patron-client society, where the influential provide for the survival of people in exchange for political favors.

The point of no return, that is, the victory of the nationalist elite came with the Legislative elections of 1901. That the ideology of nationalism had become the most important ideology and form of organizing was also reflected in the positions taken by the Church of Cyprus and especially by the members of the Holy Synod, the highest religious body on the island. It has already been noted that this body overruled the result of the Archbishopric elections and prevented the nationalists from enthroning their own representative. However, in December 1900 for the first time, the Holy Synod referred to *Enosis* as being the ultimate goal of the Greek Cypriot community, which would be achieved, however, with the consent of Great Britain at some future period. Thus, this was a sign of an official conversion of the Church of Cyprus to a national church. The British High commissioner commented on this attitude in his report to the Secretary of State:

The matter has a political aspect. The party of the Bishop of Kitium has stimulated public feeling by strongly advocating Union with Greece. The party of the Bishop of Kyrenia are not able to resist the popular cry but say union with Greece can only be brought about with the willing consent of Great Britain. I read the concluding paragraph of the representation of the Holy Synod as framed so as not to offend what they believe is the popular feeling amongst the Greek-speaking Cypriots. (Katsiaounis 1996, 237)

According to Katsiaounis, the Legislative elections of 1901 were the first ones in which candidates used leaflets to express their slogans:

... the Kyreniakoi candidates generally promised in their leaflets to work for enosis, though stressing that until the achievement of this goal, they would concentrate on internal affairs and on administrative and financial issues.

The people of Limassol and Paphos will vote for landowners, agriculturists and merchants, who care for the land and whose interest is the interest of the district. The people have realized their interest and do not want to fill the Legislative Council with advocates, whose only wish is to increase the number of court cases. (Katsiaounis 1996, 238)

On the other hand, the nationalist club stressed Enosis and the public's anti-authority sentiments:

Hurrah for Enosis.

Voters!

Your greatest enemy is the Government and its friends.

Today give a good slap to the Government and its friends.

Vote for those who fight the Government and its boys.

Cast your vote in the ballot-box of the Saint of Kitium, Mr. Kyriakides and Mr. Sozos. (Katsiaounis 1996, 239)

The 1901 elections to the Legislative council resulted in a 129 percent increase in voter participation since the elections of 1896, a sign of the highly politicized times. In these elections, none of the candidates from the conservative club were elected. All nine Greek members of the Legislative Council belonged to the nationalist camp, the *Kitiakoi*. Despite the victory of this camp, the nationalists had to wait for another ten years before they were able to put their own candidate, Kyrillos Papadopoulos, in the Archbishopric. The conservative elite continued to

challenge the legitimacy of Kyrillos Papadopoulos, a situation that left the Archbishopric vacant for ten years (Katsiaounis 1996, 239). Nevertheless, the electoral victory of the nationalist club meant the replacement of other ideologies and allegiances with that of nationalism once and for all. The members of the traditional class jumped on the bandwagon of the political power of the nationalists in order to remain in power. For the next fifty years, the idea of the nation became the new common ground from which Greek Cypriot politicians and members of the Church based their policies and actions.

### Conclusion

The arrival of the British in Cyprus in 1878 witnessed a change in the institutional framework of the island and aided the process by which the ideology of nationalism would be articulated. In this framework and during the first two decades of British rule, a change in identity and the development of the Greek Cypriot national movement took place via a rather slow and uneven process. The predominance of a conservative elite or a “co-opted intelligentsia” (Smith 1991) that cooperated with the British in administration contributed to the continuance of this situation. However, the rise of a nationalist elite, politics in Cyprus witness a significant change. The new bourgeoisie becomes responsible for the dissemination of the ideology of nationalism. They become very popular with the masses and the conservative elite’s powerful political position seem to be threatened. An open ideological conflict between the two takes place in which the conservatives and nationalists strive for political preeminence. In an era of significant socioeconomic change, the conservatives and the nationalists put to use the existence of the

newspapers, reading clubs, Sunday church liturgies, pamphlets and the like to strive for political and ideological preeminence. At the turn of the century, the idea of the nation and the slogans used by the new bourgeoisie make more sense for the common people who choose the nationalists over the conservatives as their new leaders.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS

This thesis sought to understand the origins of the Greek Cypriot national movement and its relationship to Greek-Cypriot identity. In the beginning of this thesis, I argued that identity is crucial in the formation of a mass national movement. In the case of Cyprus, I have demonstrated that the absence of a mass national identity prior to the end of the 19th century did not enable the formation of a mass national movement. The Greek Revolution of 1821 and the spread of nationalist ideology in Cyprus since the 17th century certainly provided the seeds for the development of Greek Cypriot national identity. During the Ottoman period there were those who embraced the concept of the nation and made demands for the unification of Cyprus with Greece. However, these efforts did not lead to the creation of a mass national movement.

During the Ottoman period, ordinary Greek and Turkish Cypriots had not “imagined themselves” yet as ethnic peoples in the sense defined by Anderson (1991). The image of a communion based on the concept of the nation did not exist. In most cases, the village rather than the nation constituted the limits of one’s place in the world. By examining Gellner’s notion of pre-industrial society in the Ottoman era, one finds that class conflict rather than interethnic conflict dominated the relationships between rulers (Ottoman authorities, Orthodox church) and subjects (Greek and Turkish Cypriot peasants). Identity was primarily influenced by economic

and social status rather than ethnic characteristics. Flexibility in identity and shifting allegiances was common. Even the Orthodox Church did not support the spread of nationalist ideology due to its ambiguous and simultaneous role as the representative of the Christian population of the island and as co-rulers with the Ottomans. The conversion of the Orthodox Church to a national church did not take place until the end of the 19th century when some clergy started to openly support the nationalist elite whose primary goal was the unification of Cyprus with Greece (*enosis*).

Thus, the main hypothesis of this thesis has been supported. Nationalism is a product of the 19th century in Cyprus as elsewhere (Hobsbawm 1990; Gellner 1983; Smith 1991). A mass national identity was absent prior to the 20th century and hence a mass nationalist movement did not form before the beginning of this century. The development of Greek Cypriot ethnic consciousness at the mass level was not a product of the Ottoman period.

The second part of the main hypothesis claims a creation of nationalism primarily from “above” (Gellner 1983; Hobsbawm 1990). This argument has also largely found support. Considering that nationalism from above refers to the efforts of the cultural and political elite to instill a sense of national identity among the masses, then the Greek Cypriot case fully corresponded to this understanding. However, defining precisely who constituted the “above” as opposed to “below” requires elaboration. In Hobsbawm’s and Gellner’s models the state and its agents are important actors in the project of nationalism from above. The Greek Cypriot cultural and political elite at the end of the 19th century did not represent the interests of the state, which was, after all, a colonial state. Moreover, the governmental apparatus composed by the British hardly engaged in nationalism from above, if the goal of

nationalism refers to purported endeavors to generate a national identity that is co-terminous with citizenship (Hobsbawm 1990). As indicated, the British engaged in a laissez-faire policy towards education, the most important agent of socialization on the island. Only later did the British consciously strive to “anglicize” education, albeit unsuccessfully. The British did eventually establish policies that contributed interethnic conflict by privileging one community over the other. Thus, one could argue that those cultural leaders who opposed the state could be perceived as “from below”; however, their different outlook and status justifies their categorization as “from above.” Ideally, Hobsbawm’s and Gellner’s model applies to the Greek Cypriot case from the time when the nationalist elite emerged politically and ideologically victorious at the end of the 19th century and early 20th century because at that time the nationalist elite and the state become closely associated.

The third sub-hypothesis suggested that the emergence of nationalism in Cyprus and the development of a national movement could be better understood with respect to Hroch’s three-phase national movement (Hroch 1985) and Gellner’s pre-industrial and industrial societies. The modernization thesis, an important feature of the models, is supported in the Greek Cypriot case, even though the stages do not fully comply.

During the Ottoman period, low levels of social mobility, literacy, infrastructure and communications prevented the development of national identity and nationalism (Gellner 1983; Anderson 1991; Hobsbawm 1990; Hroch 1985). Gellner’s notion of what constitutes a pre-industrial society contributed significantly to understanding the necessary conditions for the lack of nationalism. On the other hand, Hroch’s Phase B of nationalist movements explained better the dynamics of a



time when a nationalist elite rather than a full scale modernization process influences the progress of the movement and contributes to a change in ethnic consciousness. Rather than focusing on the degree of modernization processes to measure the progress of nationalism in a society, Hroch (1985) argues that one should pay attention to the “mediating effects” of market relations and industrialization along with the change in the outlook of the social elites. These mediating effects refer to the spread of literacy, social and geographical mobility, generational change, commercialization of agriculture and other institutions that contribute to social change and influence perceptions of identity. The introduction of printing technologies, the spread of literacy, increased social mobility and urbanization and the development of infrastructure and communications in Cyprus in the latter half of the 19th century facilitated social change and the spread of nationalist ideology.

The first sub-hypothesis has also been supported. The educated classes who espoused national ideology played a significant role in articulating the conception of the nation and its importance. National identity was expressed by focusing on the past (myths of common ancestry, shared historical memories) and self-definitions of the “other” to claim group uniqueness (Duara 1996).

The mediating effects of modernization and the rise of a nationalist elite in the 19th century made possible the articulation of Greek Cypriot identity. Historians, philologists, archaeologists, anthropologists, folklorists, and lawyers articulated Greek Cypriot identity by engaging in a process of “community closure” in which certain cultural signifiers such as religion, language and common historical experiences were privileged and used to mobilize the community. Community closure takes place on two levels, the “symbolic” and “discursive”(Duara 1996). On the

symbolic level, certain specific cultural practices such as rituals, festivals, culinary habits, kinship forms and the like are pinpointed by anthropologists as constituting important components of a specific ethnic identity. However, this does not prevent different communities from “sharing and even adopting, self-consciously or not, the practices of another” (Duara 1994, 168). When community closure takes place on a symbolic level only, soft boundaries characterize the coexistence between two communities. However, at one point in time, if a discursive meaning, that is narratives and rhetoric by nationalist intellectuals, privileges symbolic meaning, then what occurs is a hardening of the boundaries of a community. In the case of Cyprus, it was observed that symbolic and discursive meaning during the end of the 19th century started a process in which the hardening of the boundaries between two communities took place. Politicization of identities and the creation of mythologies and stereotypes reflected the hardening of boundaries. Even at this point, however, it did not result in the end of interethnic harmony as social scientists sometimes suggest. On the contrary, interethnic harmony persisted more or less unabated up to the days of the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974.

The second sub-hypothesis was also supported by the empirical data. Nationalism spread unevenly in Cyprus with certain social groups and geographical areas in which a greater sense of a Greek national identity developed and nationalist sentiment was disseminated first (Hroch 1985; Hobsbawm 1990).

The formation of the Greek Cypriot national movement at the end of the 19th century was not perceived in the same manner by the traditional and nationalist elites and therefore a national unity—as is conventionally suggested in Greek Cypriot historiography—did not take place at the time. There was a clear division of a

traditional as opposed to a national elite, each one with a different understanding of the manner in which political change in the status of the island should come about. In other words, the spread of nationalist ideology and its associated political program spread unevenly across the island (Hroch 1985; Hobsbawm 1990). The evidence presented in Chapter IV demonstrates that church members, Greek Cypriot officials and other members of the Greek Cypriot upper classes did not embrace nationalist ideology and the objectives of the nationalist elite simultaneously. There were clear regional differences with the northern and eastern parts of the island generally being conservative and more sympathetic to the British. On the other hand, the southern coastal towns of Limassol and Larnaka were the first ones to generate a large nationalist elite and some form of organized protest by the lower classes.

In Greenfield's model, in the earlier case of England, nationalism was closely associated with democracy.

The location of sovereignty within the people and the recognition of the fundamental equality among its various strata, which constitute the essence of the modern national idea, are at the same time the basic tenets of democracy. Democracy was born with a sense of nationality. (Greenfield 1992, 10)

However, as the above meaning of nationalism came to be associated with the "uniqueness of a people," nationalism became particularistic—or in Greenfield's words, "collectivistic." In turn, the uniqueness of a people comes to be dictated to the masses by the elite. Greek-Cypriot nationalism can be analyzed in this model. The elites articulated the importance of self-rule in the context of the nation. However, as it has been observed in the process of the creation of the movement, neither democracy nor welfare for the common people was seriously considered. Political and civil rights, administrative reforms to reflect indigenous participation and respect

for Greek culture and agricultural reforms were repeated demands by elites in the newspapers of the time. However, in reality the peasants' interests were often not accommodated even by their fellow Greek Cypriot legislators. While the British were slow in bringing about improved infrastructure and administrative changes, Greek Cypriot elites did little more to unravel the inequality of classes and the "unhealthy" capitalism in Kyrris' words. Moreover, the opportunity of the masses to participate in politics was viewed by the conservative elite with skepticism. Elections were perceived as a tool to be used by the nationalist intelligentsia to disempower their opponents. In other words, the articulation of national identity and the interests of the nation prior to the 20th century remained apart from the reality of unequal classes and people's welfare at the practical level.

The analysis of the origins of nationalism and its relationship to Greek Cypriot identity has been examined taking into account the circumscribed empirical data. Ideally, additional primary sources such as private correspondence and other witnesses' works from the periods involved would have added strength to available evidence. Empirical data were more easily acquired for some periods (i.e., British rule), while the Ottoman era presented a more challenging task. As mentioned in the beginning of this thesis, the lack of sociological data on Cyprus prior to the 20th century (and especially the Ottoman era) renders the task of reconstructing sociological processes difficult. Nevertheless, available evidence has permitted the construction of a solid foundation from which further researches can proceed.

This thesis has demonstrated that claims regarding the existence of a Greek Cypriot primordial identity are not valid. The fact that Greek and Turkish Cypriots have been able to coexist for centuries in relative harmony should be noted by

students, instigators, partisan historians and other participants of ethnic conflict in Cyprus. Moreover, Greek and Turkish Cypriots need to discard their allegiance to stereotypes and mythologies that serve little purpose beyond exacerbation of ethnic conflict. Current debates as to the manner of a viable political solution for the reunification of the island utilize various approaches, but most do not emphasize a serious effort to bring about a rapprochement between Greek and Turkish Cypriots that are promising for a future solution.

The concept of rapprochement exists, but there are many obstacles to its application. From time to time, there have been efforts to bring Greek and Turkish Cypriots together—usually initiated by foreign governments—but other events whose goal was rapprochement have not been welcomed by members of both ethnic groups. For example, the organization of a live concert in the spring of 1998 in which a Greek and Turkish singer performed together was supported by the Cypriot government. However, there was a lot of criticism against the concert by certain organizations and therefore many parents discouraged their children from going. One of the claims made against it was that such events should only take place after the withdrawal of the Turkish troops in Cyprus and the returning of the missing Cypriots since the Turkish invasion of 1974. Moreover, the event took place on the day that commemorated the genocide of the Greek population of Pontos, an emotional day for ethnic Greeks.

Despite existing arguments that support or do not support rapprochement between the two communities, one could still argue that the lack of organized protest in favor of rapprochement is a very important obstacle to future reunification of the island. For one thing, new generations since the invasion have not lived with one

another, and in the absence of any concrete steps toward rapprochement in effect supports the maintenance of ethnic stereotypes and mythologies by both groups. Social scientists have demonstrated that the pain brought on by the forceful division of the island exists on both sides (Hadjipavlou-Trigeorgis 1987; Killoran 1989). Many Greek and Turkish Cypriots who were of age at the time of the invasion recall a past where harmonious relationships between the two communities were the rule rather than the exception.

In conclusion, it is time that all those interested in the ongoing ethnic conflict among the two communities in Cyprus engage into a more objective assessment as to the origins of Greek Cypriot nationalism and the nature of identity. Blame-shifting has been a long time practice among Greek and Turkish Cypriots, while self-criticism and a better appraisal of one's history is yet to be attained.

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