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SPECIAL EDITION:

Reconciliation in Cyprus

Nicos Trimikliniotis (Guest Editor for this issue)

Introduction: Reconciliation and Citizenship in Cyprus:

A Trans Communal Concept for Social Action

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Laurie Johnson

Reconciliation and Peace Education in Cyprus:

What Will It Take?

17 - 41

This paper explores the need for and challenges involved in implementing peace education in a post-conflict region such as Cyprus. The author discusses the major components necessary to pursue systemic peace education in schools as well as the contentions associated with taking such actions in a divided society. The author provides a first-person account of her research observations in Cyprus while there in 2006 as a Fulbright Scholar and calls upon lessons learned during similar work in Northern Ireland, as a means of providing a comparative backdrop. Identified efforts in the Turkish-Cypriot and the Greek-Cypriot educational systems are discussed in the context of building the infrastructure necessary for peace education to take hold, as a societal stepping stone to reconciliation, in Cyprus.

Chara Makriyianni and Charis Psaltis

The Teaching of History and Reconciliation

43 - 69

The question of history teaching and learning in Cyprus often comes to the forefront of public debate, mainly in the daily press, as a contest between those who wish to change the school history textbooks and those who want them to stay as they are. Although such discussions are useful, in this paper they are of secondary importance to the question of what the aims are, the methodological weaknesses and, more fundamentally, the epistemological assumptions of the current way history is being taught and learned in Greek-Cypriot schools of Cyprus. As this paper shows, one of the most important problems of teaching and learning history today in Cyprus is the understanding of history teaching by many educators as a mere transmission of beliefs and the presentation of the past as heritage. Not only this state of affairs does not promote historical understanding, but it hinders reconciliation cementing division. We conclude with a call for urgent educational reform in the epistemology, aims and methods of history teaching and learning in Cyprus.

Erol Kaymak

Does Cyprus Need a Truth and Reconciliation Commission?

71 - 89

One of the unexplored questions in Cyprus relates to the means of reconciliation, prior to or in conjunction with a political settlement to the Cyprus problem. Now that bodies of the missing persons in Cyprus are finally being exhumed and identified through DNA testing, it is reasonable to ask whether there is a need to consider the establishment of bodies authorised to seek both truth and reconciliation.

The short answer is 'no'. The Reconciliation Commission that was envisaged in the failed Annan Plan would serve the end of reconciliation better than a full blown truth and reconciliation commission. The paper explores the matter and potential problems, offering some suggestions for a more fruitful future Reconciliation Commission that goes beyond the confines of the original mandate (as described in the Annan Plan) to write an official historical text to embrace the wider challenge of contributing to the construction and maintenance of a viable society and polity. Further, now that a settlement on the island is less imminent given the rejection of the Annan Plan, there is also a need to consider pursuing reconciliation independent of a comprehensive settlement.

Virginie LadischThe Challenge of Peacebuilding:
Cypriot Views on Reconciliation

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In the search for a solution to the 'Cyprus problem', the focus of debates and discussions has been on power sharing agreements, land exchanges, right of return, and economics, but there has been little to no focus on reconciliation. In the aftermath of the referendum in which Cypriots were given an historic opportunity to vote on the reunification of the island, this research places the concept of reconciliation at the centre of the debate about the Cyprus problem. Based on data gathered in 2005 through forty interviews with Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot politicians, businessmen, activists, academics, organisational leaders, economists, and members of civil society, this article presents Cypriots' views on reconciliation. Drawing from literature on reconciliation in conflict divided societies as a framework, it will analyse the various perceptions Cypriots hold about the definition of reconciliation, what initiatives can be used to promote reconciliation in Cyprus, the obstacles on the path towards reconciliation, and the sequencing of reconciliatory measures. Overall, this article seeks to present an alternative to strict political engineering projects that characterise the current debate about the Cyprus problem, by encouraging creative approaches to conflict resolution such as truth commissions, revised history curricula, and joint projects that foster mutual understanding and shared commitment to peace.

David Officer

Northern Ireland – Peace without Reconciliation

109 - 121

Recent events in Northern Ireland suggest that peace has finally been achieved and a new era of improved inter-community relations has commenced. However, the conditions within which the major communities experience antagonistic relations

have not been displaced but entrenched within the new political dispensation. Through an exploration of what reconciled relationships might demand it is apparent that whilst peace has been achieved the promise of reconciliation has yet to be realised.

Nicos Trimikliniotis

Reconciliation and Social Action in Cyprus:
Citizens' Inertia and the Protracted State of Limbo 123 - 160

This paper will attempt to chart a normative framework for action for a social politics of reconciliation via a course for citizens' action across the ethnic divide of Cyprus. It will attempt to consider the context and content of reconciliation in Cyprus at this time and examine the various 'routes' to reconciliation, in terms of locating their theoretical, philosophical and ethical points of reference. Whilst 'reconciliation' is something that normally takes place after a settlement, the groundwork (conceptual, political and societal) needs to begin whenever the potential is there: the protracted state of limbo that characterises the Cyprus problem as well as the opening of the checkpoints in April 2003 make the ideas of rapprochement, reconciliation and cooperation realisable en masse immediately. Also, the idea of 'anchoring' the reconciliation processes to the specific context of Cyprus is essential if the project is to survive, expand and be legitimised in the eyes of 'ordinary' people, institutions and political forces. The paper aims to locate the possible common threads that permeate the various 'routes'; whilst at the same time it locates the limits and boundaries of 'common' elements. Moreover, the paper attempts to 'demystify' and deconstruct the concept in terms of the potential for 'transformation' of this particular ethno-national conflict. In this, we need to appreciate (a) the multi-dimensionality of ethno-national conflict within class-divided societies which manifest themselves in tandem with other contestations and (b) evaluate the processes by which ideas about 'reconciliation' become hegemonic, the role of social forces and the state(s). The paper then examines the potential for action by citizens and examines the tension within the concepts of citizenship, community, ethnos/nation and any project of 'reconciliation'.

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Ari Sitas

Reconciliation and Transformation: Lessons from South Africa? 171 - 179

John Milios

"The Greek Nation": An Inherently Totalitarian Concept.
Concerns to be borne in Mind during the Reconciliation
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Book Reviews:

*Turkey and the EU: An Awkward Candidate for EU
Membership (2nd Edition)*

By Harun Arikian

(Ashgate Publishers: Aldershot, Hampshire, 2006) 302 pp.

(Tozun Bahcheli)

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*Dancing Fear and Desire: Race, Sexuality, and Imperial
Politics in Middle Eastern Dance*

By Stavros Stavrou Karayanni

(Wilfrid Laurier University Press: Canada, 2004), xv + 244 pp.

(Constantinos Phellas)

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