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Cyprus: a divided island.

Economic and demographic gaps between North and South as a result of the unsolved conflict between Cypriot Communities.

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Abstract

The subject of this work is the Cyprus problem. The Greek and Turkish conflict on the island has given rise to far-reaching geopolitical transformations. An analysis of the economic and demographic imbalances of the country have been brought to our attention. The northern, Turkish part of Cyprus, is not recognized by the international community and has to struggle for its survival, whereas the southern, Greek part is flourishing. Demographic and economic figures, in particular related to tourism, are analyzed. The Greek side of the island has experienced territorial transformations more profound than those occurring on the Turkish side and has paid a higher price in terms of environment pressure. Tourism is causing a constant rise of land prices. Tourism, then, worsens the problem of water shortage and is directly responsible of coast erosion. The problems on the Turkish side are different. Tourism is still of no major importance, although a recovery of the structures abandoned after the war was started. However, the »TRNC« has been isolated on an international level and has been an off limits area for foreign tourists. For this reason, a change in the geopolitical realities, which caused the protracted stalemate, will likely affect developments in the tourist sector.

Keywords: political geography, economic geography, tourism, Cyprus, Northern Cyprus

Introduction

The subject of this work is the Cyprus problem. An analysis of the economic and demographic imbalances of the country have brought us to the conclusion that they are mainly due to the unsolved conflict between the Greek and the Turkish communities. In recent times this conflict has given rise to far-reaching geopolitical transformations. This paper is an overview of its most important stages.

A milestone of its recent history has been the conquest of independence, after nearly a century of British rule. The Republican Constitution, promulgated in August 1960, established the creation of a system in which the power was divided between the two ethnic communities of the island, a system so perfectly balanced that Cyprus began to be called the two-headed state or the republic of the two minorities.

A choice, which was evidently the result of a compromise, but unjustifiable from the point of view of the population density of the two communities. When independence was proclaimed the Greek-speaking Cypriots represented the 81 percent of the total population of the island. It might be due to the fact that the Turkish-speaking Cypriots were not a strong minority of a single region, which would more easily justify the reason to safeguard them as a national minority. Whereas the reason is to be found in the attempt to cease an old conflict, in which Greece and Turkey were involved: Sanguin reminds »pour son malheur, Chypre a toujours été la caisse de résonance de l'historique et atavique antagonisme gréco-turc qui remonte à la prise de Constantinople en 1453« (Sanguin 1994, p. 166).

With the Alliance and Guarantee Treaties, which became part of the Constitution, any activity aimed at dividing the island or uniting it to Greece was declared illegal. The status of the independence of Cyprus was guaranteed by the three foreign countries, each of which was allowed to take action even individually with the aim of re-establishing the conditions established by the agreement¹.

The contrast between the two communities was, however, a long way from being solved, even though several exponents of the Greek community

¹ »In so far as common or concerted action may prove impossible, each of the three guaranteeing Powers reserves the right to take action with the sole aim of re-establishing the state of affairs established by the present treaty« [Conference on Cyprus: 1964, Documents Signed and Initiated at Lancaster House on 19 February 1959, London, p. 11].

longed for a reunification with Greece (*Enosis*). For this reason, since 1964 the United Nations had organized a peace force to patrol the island². At the end of 1967 the Turkish-Cypriot community announced the establishment of a temporary administration to take care of its problems.

In the ongoing years the fighting intensified. The events came to a head in July 1974, when, undermining the policy of equilibrium set forth by Archbishop Makarios, some members of the Greek-Cypriot community launched a coup aimed at establishing *Enosis*. This event offered Turkey an excuse for military intervention. Within a few days Turkish troops conquered Kyrenia spreading toward the Turkish sector of the capital. After a period of harsh fighting and massacres on both sides, during which no agreement could be reached, on August 14 the Turkish troops launched another attack, conquering the northern area of the island, from Morfou to Famagusta.

In February 1975, in the occupied area, the autonomous Turkish-Cypriot Administration, which had been controlling the territory since after the invasion, became the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus (TRNC), the constitution of which was condemned by the UN (3/1975). In November 1983 the 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus' was unilaterally proclaimed. With the only exception being Turkey, the international community refused to recognize it. Two years later a new constitution came into effect in these territories (Fisher 1995; Bahcheli 1998).

In spite of this condemnation, the island was, *de facto* if not *de jure*, divided into two distinct areas, separated by a buffer zone controlled by a UN contingent³. So far, all attempts, made above all by UN, Great Britain and U.S., to find a solution to this knotty question, which involves political, economic, social and territorial aspects, have been to no avail. The two parties have refused to agree on the various solutions proposed: from the reunification of the

² Resolution 186, adopted on March 4 1964 from the UN Security Council, with which the establishment of UNFICYP is decided.

³ In the course of the years, UN have adopted several »resolutions« about this problem, to which we remand (http://www.kypros.org/Cyprus_Problem/Unresolution-list.html); also the European Commission of Human Rights, upon request of the Greek part, has intervened about it in many occasions. The buffer zone is a strip of earth 180 km long with a variable width (usually from 3 to 7 km, with the exception of Nicosia, where it stretches for a few dozens of meters), between the line of the Greek-Cypriot Civil National Guard and that of the Turkish and Turkish-Cypriot forces. At present (1997) the regular members of the UNFICYP, whose mandate has been regularly prolonged from 1964 to these days, are 1,215 (1,180 of which are soldiers), plus about 330 civilians, belonging to the following nations: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Canada, Finland, Ireland, United Kingdom, Hungary (www.un.org/french/peace/unficy.html, 3/2000).

island under a unique administration to the establishment of a federation, to a recognition of the *status quo*⁴.

Meanwhile, the impact that the partition has had on the territory has been extraordinary. The present economic structure, the population dynamics, the territorial organization of the island are in large part a consequence of this partition.

Changes in the population and in the territorial order

The partition of the island, which took place after the conflict of 1974, has caused a great change in the distribution of the population as well as in the settlement system. Before the partition the settlement system was still characterized by numerous rural settlements, mostly small in size. The main parts of this structure were the towns of Nicosia and Famagusta, which at the beginning of the 1970s were the principal poles of the island and playing a diversified and complementary roles. Nicosia was one of the most important political, administrative and commercial centers of the island as well as one of its industrial poles and headquarters the only airport; Famagusta was the chief port and boasted the best network of tourist facilities on the island. An intense flow of people and goods moved between the two towns.

The third most important urban center was Limassol, on the southern coast: an industrial and harbor town. With the development of the passenger port, it had increased its tourist opportunities. Larnaka, on the contrary, was a small town, slowly taking off thanks to the development policy of the government, which had planned to establish here the first industrial area of the island, the only oil refinery as well as a yacht marina. Kyrenia and Pafos were then no more than big villages (Lee et al. 1973; Péchoux 1991).

The first effect of the war and of the partition was a remarkable internal migratory movement, which changed considerably the distribution of the population on the island.

⁴ *After a long absence of negotiations, however, last December (1999) a series of separate meetings between the Turkish-Cypriot and the Greek-Cypriot delegations and the UN representatives were started in New York and carried on in Geneva. After the violent conflicts between the two communities at the half of the 1990s, it may be the right time for a solution of the problem, thanks to the progressive détente between Athens and Ankara; the old scenario is also altered by the OK given to Turkey's entry into EU at the summit of the 15 on December 11, 1999 in Helsinki.*

In the months immediately after the war, as well as in the following years, numerous Greek Cypriots living in the area occupied by the Turkish troops (from 180,000 - 200,000 people, depending on the different estimates) took shelter in the area left under the control of the government, an exodus only partly counterbalanced by the migration of the Turkish Cypriots (a rate which varies from 45,000 - 65,000 people).

The two sides of the island experienced a different population increases. In 1978, of a total population of about 648,000 people, over 77 percent lived in the Greek side (on less than two-thirds of the island territory). Most remarkable, the geographic division of the two ethnic communities took place very quickly. A process which has been strengthened in the northern portion by the immigration of the Turks coming from Anatolia, condemned as illegal by the Government of the Republic of Cyprus, the intent was clearly to eliminate the Greek Cypriot culture from this area, in favor of the Turkish culture. Further proof of the relative ease with which the naturalization has always been granted are evident in the systematic re-denomination of all the settlements with a Greek name or with a name of Greek origin (Ladbury and King 1988; Cucñ 1992).

The redistribution of the population had further effects on the settlement system. As a matter of fact, the Greek-Cypriot communities migrating to the south, were mainly directed at Larnaka and Limassol with the area around the capital left free, almost ignoring the mountain and rural villages. These events accelerated a process already underway, i.e., the depopulation of the marginal areas.

In the northern part, on the contrary, the Turks settled in the rural villages abandoned by the Greeks. Indeed, the principle rural areas of the island were concentrated here and it was therefore advisable to replace the lost population was replaced quickly. That is why the land owned by the Greek refugees was distributed among the newcomers. Furthermore, the inhabitants of a same village were usually settled in the same area to preserve, if possible, the social cohesion.

Thus, if on the Greek side the effects of the conflict caused a growth of the urban population, on the Turkish side they allowed for a preservation of the traditional distribution, largely rural. In the last twenty years these two models of settlement have consolidated and although the numerical balance has changed, the difference in population increase of the two sides continued to be mostly

the same: of a total population of about 850,000 people, the great majority lives in the southern part (76 percent)⁵.

In the same way, in the Turkish side the rural settlements are still predominant, even though the urbanization process has been started (in 1996 the urban population was only 40 percent of the total); on the Greek side, instead, it was 53 percent of the total in the second half of the 1970s and twenty years later it is 69 percent. Furthermore, the population in the mountain and marginal areas continues to decrease, while it increases in the nearby urban areas and villages (Péchoux 1991; Morvaridi 1993).

In this system Nicosia plays a special role. The city, split by the conflict, continues to be the most populous center of the island. In 1978 the dwellers in the northern sector were a little more than 23,000 (16 percent of the total), in 1996 about 39,000 (20 percent); in the southern sector they were a little more than 120,000 in 1976 (24 percent of the total) and over 190,000 twenty years later (almost 30 percent) (Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus: various years; Republic of Cyprus 1996a and 1996c). Nicosia, however, paid dearly for the separation and the effects of the conflict can still be seen in its historical center. Here the area in direct contact with the demarcation line, both in the northern and in the southern side, suffered depopulation and degradation, which only have been changed in recent years with reconstruction and recovery interventions, both for commercial and housing purposes (Papayiannis and Péchoux 1993; Doratly and Önal 1998).

It is remarkable that the old urban framework, with Nicosia and Famagusta as principal poles, was modified by the events of 1974. In the part left under the Greek-Cypriot control Limassol rapidly replaced Famagusta, becoming, together with the capital, the other strong knot of the net. In fact, the town has become the chief port of the island, has strengthened its industrial structure and is establishing itself as the biggest commercial and tourist center on the island.

⁵ *These figures are the result of the sum of data of official estimates and census carried out separately from the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot administrations. At present, there is no single census for the entire island or data on the population accepted by both sides. It is also to consider that a more precise estimate of the real population increase could be obtained adding an undefined number of Turkish soldiers on the northern side; English soldiers and clerks with their families in the two British sovereign bases situated on the peninsula of Akrotiri and around Dhékélia (about 8,500 people) (www.britain.org.cy/eng/bhc/defence/sba.htm) on the southern side, without counting UN »blue helmets« (about 1,200 people). On this problem, see also Cucñ (1992) and Péchoux (1995).*

But even the dynamics that drove the development of Larnaka and Pafos are strongly linked to the events of 1974 and to their consequences. At the beginning of the 1970s, Larnaka's growth was still slow, but the situation changed rapidly after the invasion. The town had to face the refugee emergency, and refugees are now the half of the population. Then, thanks to the loss of the port and of the tourist facilities of Famagusta and Kyrenia, and to the fact that the airport of Nicosia was closed (left in the buffer zone), the town became one of the focal points of the economic activity of the part of the island under the control of the Greek-Cypriot government. An international airport has been opened, the port infrastructures and the industrial structure have increased and tourism has developed.

Even Pafos's development is due to the changed geopolitical conditions, prior to 1974 the city and its district were in the most underdeveloped area of the island. The Turkish invasion and the occupation of the major tourist resorts have attracted considerable investments both from the government and from private enterprises. As a consequence, there was a rapid economic growth in all sectors, above all in tourism, which contributed to a new increase in population.

The coasts on the Turkish side have proved to be less attractive. In fact, the peninsula of Karpas, in the northeast, not very attractive, is thinly populated and has no important center; only in the small center of Kyrenia has the population growth been significant; a little more than a village after the partition (about 4,800 people), its population has tripled in twenty years. On the eastern coast, Famagusta, which after the war lost a great part of its population and suffered extensive damages, had to struggle for a long time before recovering. Compared to twenty years ago, however, the population (a little less than 28.000 people) is definitely more numerous (over 60% increase); moreover, the university, established in 1986, could play an important role in its economic and social development (Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus: various years).

Economic development and territorial changes

When it obtained its independence, Cyprus was still an agricultural country; manufacturing production was modest, there was a scarcity of energy, and the economy was mostly limited to the processing of minerals and agricultural products. Tourism, through the great potentials offered by the natural environment, used to be of moderate importance. Many factors underlined its weak

economic structure: the import value was twice as the export value and the latter mainly consisted of minerals and agricultural products; commercial exchanges took place almost exclusively with Great Britain. Unemployment and underemployment, with mass emigration, provided a complete picture of the situation.

However, thanks to a series of interventions within a five-year Economic Development Plan, accomplished also with the help of many UN agencies and the financial assistance of World Bank and International Monetary Fund, after ten years Cyprus strengthened its economic structure significantly. In 1973, before the conflict split the island, the percentage of workers in the primary sector had dropped to 38 percent (97,000 people); on the whole, the country had reached a living standard higher than most of the near countries, apart from Israel.

After 1974, in the two parts of the island, economic development took place independently and at very different paces. The Greek side experienced its first serious crisis, mainly due to the fact that most productive resources before the war (80 percent citrus fruit orchards, 60 percent tourist facilities and the main harbor) remained in the sector occupied by the Turks. To revive the economy, with the Emergency Economic Plans (1975-76 and 1977-78) and then the Development Plans, new tax and monetary policies were adopted and the government directly intervened in various economic sectors; besides, labor-intensive projects helped slow down unemployment. Afterwards, efforts were addressed towards industrial and tourist development and, with the Fourth Economic Plan (1982-1986), it was decided to expand capital-intensive projects.

Because the Greek side was able to overcome a difficult starting situation, its economic structure can enjoy today a strength and stability greater than the Turkish side. Workers in the primary sector, who in 1975 were 27 percent of the workforce (37,000 people), have been diminishing and in 1995 they were a little over 30,000 people (11 percent). The secondary sector, which employed 26 percent of the workforce, has absorbed higher numbers of the workforce (in 1980 it was 34 percent); later on, as in the other developed countries, that figure has progressively fallen (up to 25 percent in 1995). The tertiary sector, of course, has grown: in 1975 these workers were 47 percent of the total, today they are 64 percent (almost 180,000 people). In fact, tourism has become the driving sector of the Greek-Cypriot economy, thanks to which unemployment has decreased to 3% and labor, being constantly required, often comes from near countries. Not by accident, the growth of jobs has been particularly strong in the two districts, which offer clear tourist choices, Famagusta and Pafos (Republic of Cyprus 1995).

As a whole, the Greek side today is an economically developed country, which can aspire to enter the European Union in a reasonable short time.⁶ The economic situation of the Turkish side, on the contrary, is much weaker. On the other hand, besides coping with the problem of post-war reconstruction, from the very beginning it has been forced to live in a constant state of political uncertainty, due to international condemnation, and an embargo, all which have influenced its economic growth. In this part of the island, during the last two decades, the primary sector has continued to have an important role, even if the workforce has progressively diminished from 42 percent in 1977 to 21 percent twenty years later. According to the first survey, the workers in the secondary sector were 16 percent, while in 1996 they increased to 23 percent, though largely thanks to the growth of the construction sector⁷. But, even in this part of the island the most important development has concerned the tertiary industry: in twenty years, the workers in this sector has considerably grown from 40 percent to 56 percent.

Nonetheless, the economic structure remains rather weak and one of the reasons is definitely the difficult geopolitical situation of the country. On the other hand, it is evident that the extremely strong economic bond with Turkey, to which its survival has been linked for a long time, remains important. In 1995 53 percent of import value and 30 percent of export value is with Turkey. The weakness in the Turkish-Cypriot economic system is demonstrated by the fact that still today import values are five times higher than exports (Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, various years, and 1997b).

The following analysis of the tourist movement will help to understand that the differential economic growth originates from the special geopolitical situation. First of all, it shows the shift in the economic balance of the island. In the early 1970s tourism included the eastern (Famagusta) and northern coasts (Kyrenia); some years later, the beaches in the Greek-Cypriot side were visited by a significant number of tourists; whereas the traditional tourist resorts have almost completely lost that function.

⁶ The request was presented in July 1990. In June 1994 UE Council of Ministers, though the opposition of Netherlands and especially of Great Britain, has voted for it. Ever since, the Republic of Cyprus has been trying to re-enter the criteria set by the Community (the Economic Plan 1993 - 1998, in particular, has set as main objective the achievement of Maastricht criteria), complying with requests expressed by U.E., with which relationships have progressively been strengthened. Providing financial assistance, EU, for example, has promoted a building recovery in the hillside resorts, in view of a tourist development other than a seaside tourism.

⁷ Workers in the manufacturing have grown from about 4,800 in 1977 to almost 8,400 in 1996; those working in the building field from less than 2,400 to more than 9,800.

The creation and tourist upgrading of some areas and the involution or total disappearance of others are extraordinary territorial changes that originated with the partition of the island. Indeed, after the war, the destruction of existing infrastructures and above all the geopolitical consequences of such events had to be taken into account. While the Greek Cypriot side could and can enjoy favorable conditions, the Turkish side has been crushed by all that. Therefore, southern beaches have experienced extraordinary tourist development, while on the Turkish side tourism has remained moderate for a long time and only in the last decade it has undergone a noteworthy growth. It is meaningful to note that the number of arrivals on the Turkish side does not reach 400,000 people a year; by contrast there are more than two million tourist movements on the Greek side (Cyprus Tourism Organization, various years; Republic of Cyprus, various years; Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, various years).

The reason for that increase lies in the development of mass tourism, a natural consequence of the improvement of living standards in western countries. But many factors have directed tourism toward the Greek side: obviously, they are not to be found only in the favorable climate and environmental conditions or in the presence of archaeological and artistic sites, which the northern side is also rich; but they are to be found in the quantity and quality of infrastructure, in a legislation favorable to the tourist development, in political stability, in the positive image that the Greek side has managed to convey abroad, in its being included in low-price package tours of international tour operators.

As matter of fact, since the Emergency Economic Plans were implemented on the Greek side of the island, major effort has been made to boost tourism. The infrastructure has been created or improved and private companies have been granted economic and tax benefits. Efforts to re-establish the island's role as an international tourist destination have been made by strengthening the relationships between tour operators and foreign airlines. In the course of time, the influence of large international operators on the tourist development has grown (imagine that by the end of 1980s more than 60 percent of tourists had purchased package tours) and the difference with the Turkish side, ignored by tour operators, has even worsened (Ioannides 1992; Apostolides 1995). In the early 1980s there were more than two million foreign tourists a year visiting, five years later they exceeded 4.5 million. With a constant growth in the 1990s, they reached 14.5 million per year.

Areas under Turkish rule, on the contrary, have paid a high price for international condemnation for the invasion and the unilateral proclamation of the Republic. The constant state of tension, in which the country have been living

in the last two decades, has not worked in favor of the tourist development; in fact quite the opposite. A possible geopolitical interpretation of the tourist development is confirmed also by the fact that an event like the Gulf War, even if not of interest directly on the island, had the immediate effect of reducing the number of arrivals, particularly significant on the Greek side, the only side involved in a notable foreign tourist movement. Also the decline registered in 1996 (-7 percent decline in arrivals from the previous year), is not only due to the difficulties from the international tourist market, but again to the negative effect of media coverage on some unpleasant episodes that occurred on the island (Cyprus Tourism Organization 1996).

Obviously, the accommodation facilities are extremely different on the two sides of the island and, if the year prior to the conflict 45 percent of beds were in Famagusta. After the war accommodation facilities and tourist development were concentrated in the side of Greek coast: Limassol, Ayia Napa (until then a small, almost unknown village), Larnaka and Pafos. During the last decade this trend has become stronger. On the Turkish side development has not been relevant and has increased only the small center of Kyrenia. On the Greek side, accommodation facilities have been created at main resorts; nevertheless, tourism is strongly concentrated in a few coastal areas (Figure 1).

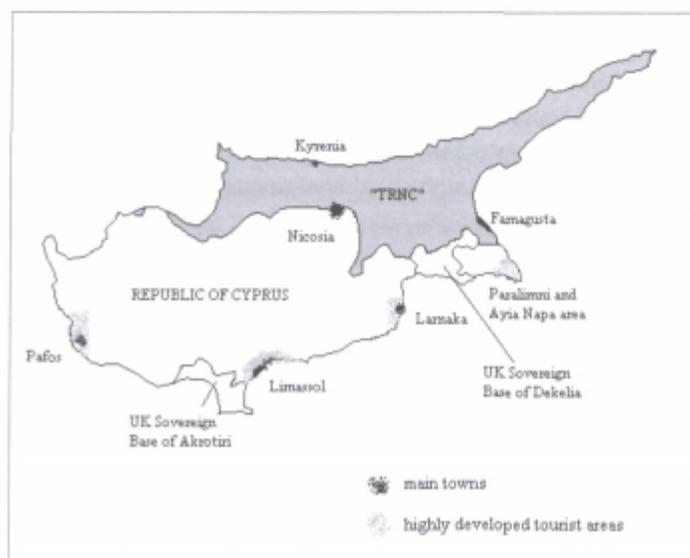
The most extraordinary development occurred in the side of the Famagusta district under the rule of the Republic of Cyprus (Ayia Napa, Paralimni, Protaras) In a few years it has become an «urban area with a clearly defined recreational business district catering almost exclusively to »sunlust« tourist» (Ioannides 1992, p. 722). Here, the accommodation capacity is definitely higher than the national average (about 150 beds/sq.km in 1996) and there is the highest percentage of second homes and holiday houses of the total houses (one-third); besides, the number of tourist presence (increased by more than four times in the last decade and today exceeding 5,600,000 annually) is the highest on the island.

According to an analysis of the geographical origin of tourists, the fortune of this place lies with seaside tourism and the »safe« Greek-Cypriot coasts, which are much closer culturally to old Europe than the coasts where Turks live. Before the war they mostly came from Europe (79 percent of the total), and especially from United Kingdom (44 percent), thanks to the strong bonds that UK used to have with the island, a former colony recently became independent, and still having two British sovereign bases within its territory. But, after the partition the tourists' geographical origins visiting Greek and Turkish Cyprus have revealed sharp differences. On the Greek side the Northern-

European connection, and the British in particular, has been maintained. Still today, most tourists (37 percent in 1996) come from Great Britain (of which a part, obviously, consists of Cypriots emigrants), followed by other European countries (a further 37 percent), especially from the North. What is new, indeed, is the extraordinary growth of Russian tourism, insignificant twenty years ago (a thousand people) and exploded in the 1990s; in 1996, with 130,000 arrivals, Russia represented the third country of tourist immigration (7 percent) (Cyprus Tourism Organization, various years).

The analysis of tourist flows on the Turkish side is just as interesting and is a further confirmation of what have been said so far. Indeed, Turkey is the country where most tourists come from: out of little more than 300,000 arrivals in 1990, for example, 48 percent were Turks; five years later, out of less than 386,000 people, they are even 77 percent of the total. The other two tourist communities are the English and the German and, here again, the Russians. They have been growing in numbers: still very few in 1990, they are today the seventh community in regard to the number of arrivals (about 3,300) (Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, various years' issues). Of course, these facts have had, and still have, extraordinary effects on the economy and on the tourist management of the island, as the different places of tourist origins also correspond to customers with strongly differential needs and financial means.

Figure 1. The current situation



Conclusions

The greater international visibility and the livelier economic development in the Greek side have had not only positive effects. This side of the island has indeed experienced territorial transformations quite more profound than those occurring on the Turkish side and has paid a higher price in terms of environment pressure. The responsibility lies, among others, with tourism. It has had a much stronger impact on the models of land use and on the local economies, causing a constant rise in land price and a clash with industrial and agriculture usage. The building construction on the coastal areas contributed to the development of the present settlement structure on one hand and a linear urbanization along large stretches of coast and on the other. Small settlements in the interior outside the capital city area are in demographic crisis. Tourism, then, worsens the problem of water shortage and is directly responsible of coast erosion caused by erecting buildings close to the waterfront, not to mention its role in massively changing local traditions and culture (Apostolides 1995). On the Greek side therefore, tourism should be developed in the interior as well, which is still much unknown. It should be managed showing respect both - for the exigencies of economic growth and for safeguarding the territory.

The problems of the Turk side are different. Thanks to its richness of environmental, climatic and artistic and cultural resources, tourism could become a strength of the economic growth. At present it is still of no major importance, although a recovery of the structures abandoned after the war was started at the end of the 1980s, giving a stimulus to the building of new structures and the improvement of the infrastructures. Actually, the accommodating facilities remain an extension of the Turkish facilities, used as holiday resorts for the member of labor organizations or the Turkish army (Bandarin and Miglioli 1995; P  choux 1994). Above all, however, the »TRNC« has been isolated on an international level and has been an off limits area for foreign tourists. In this way, it has become an unusual reality in the Mediterranean area, with a great natural, environmental and historic and archaeological potential to exploit. For this reason, a change in the geopolitical realities, which caused the protracted stalemate, will likely affect developments in the tourist sector.

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Ciper: razdeljeni otok

Pregled izbranih ekonomskih in demografskih značilnosti obeh ciprskih entitet.

Povzetek

Osredje razprave zadeva razlike v ekonomskem in demografskem razvoju v obeh entitetah na Cipru. Grško-turški konflikt je namreč povzročil občutne geopolitične spremembe na celotnem otoku. Začetni kamen nesporazumov sega namreč v leto 1960, ko je bila, po stoletni vladavini Britanije, Cipru dodeljena samostojnost. Ustava republike Ciper je bila izrazito uravnotežena in ni dajala prednosti nobeni etnični skupnosti. To ni bilo v skladu z željami predvsem nekaterih Grkov, saj so bili v državi Ciper zastopani z 81 odstotki. Najprej so polglasno, nato pa odkrito pozivali k združitvi z Grčijo (Enosis). V bojazni pred eskalacijo so Združeni narodi že leta 1964 tja poslali mednarodne čete, ki pa vedno globljega razhajanja med narodnostma niso mogli preprečiti. Tri leta kasneje je severni, turški del Cipra proglašil avtonomijo, leta 1974 pa je skupina Grkov okrog predsednika Makariosa razglasila pridružitvev otoka in države k Grčiji. To dejanje je vzpodbodlo Turčijo, da je zasedla severni, pretežno s turško narodnostjo poseljen del otoka. Nastala je Republika Severni Ciper, ki jo danes priznava le sosednja Turčija. Odtlej se obe entiteti razvijata drugače: zaradi bojkota mednarodne skupnosti se mora Severni Ciper boriti za preživetje, v grškem delu otoka pa ekonomija cveti kot še nikoli. V nadaljevanju se avtorica posveča analizi demografskih in ekonomskih razmer, predvsem turizma. Grški del otoka je deležen intenzivnejše prostorske preobrazbe kot turški del Cipra. Razvoj je bil dosežen deloma tudi na račun okolja. Turizem (14.5 milijona obiskovalcev letno) je že dodobra preoblikoval avtohtone vaške skupnosti in je neposredni krivec za izjemno visoke cene zemljišč. Intenzivna je pozidava predvsem obstoječih urbanih območij in obale, kjer se verige hotelov vrstijo druga za drugo. Notranjost, z izjemo glavnega mesta Nikozije, pa je podvržena depopulaciji in propadu vaških struktur. Turizem je še poslabšal oskrbo z vodo, obenem pa je posredni krivec za številne primere intenzivne obalne erozije. Problemi so na turški strani Cipra povsem drugačni. Turistična ponudba je brezpredmetna, saj je Republika Ciper mednarodno izolirana entiteta (0.4 milijona obiskovalcev letno). Prihodnost turizma in celotne ekonomije je težko napovedovati, saj je gospodarska prihodnost v tesni povezavi z geopolitično realnostjo.