

# STATE, SOCIETY, AND HIGHER EDUCATION IN CYPRUS: A STUDY IN CONFLICT AND COMPROMISE

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**Abstract** – *This paper, beyond being a study of post secondary education in the Republic of Cyprus, explores the connection between the State and society as they impact post-secondary provision. The work initially focuses on the development of the University of Cyprus, the first public University in the Republic, followed by a study of the nature and structure of higher education as a whole. Of particular interest is the proportionally large private post-secondary sector which is purely market driven and provides educational opportunities to Cypriots and foreign students in mostly English language programmes. Post-secondary education in Cyprus is further examined within the context of 'Knowledge Traditions'. Such 'Knowledge Traditions' have influenced both the construction of the post-secondary sector and societal perceptions of post-secondary education.*

## Introduction

**W**hen in 1992, the first public university in Cyprus opened its doors, the institution was heralded with high expectations. As the university of a small island republic, this university was also in the midst of the island's on-going division along ethnic lines. The occupied North is inhabited by Turkish-Cypriots, and the Republic is predominantly Greek-Cypriot. Since the internationally recognised 'Republic of Cyprus' is the focus of this paper, only development in this part of the island will be primarily focused on.

Apart from the fact that the university is located in the midst of a divided island, from its very inception it was faced with a series of challenges coming from both ideological foes, as well as ideological friends. What in fact was happening in Cyprus since the fall of 1992 and even before the opening of the University of Cyprus, was an on-going debate over what the university would teach, in what language, and whether students would pay or not. How would it be governed and organised? And what role would the state play in university affairs? This along with other issues became fundamental reasons not only for debate, but also for an enduring conflict regarding what Cypriots were defining as worthwhile knowledge to be taught in institutions of higher learning, and conflict over the role of higher education in society.

This paper will begin by focusing on the major structural features of the Cypriot system of higher education as well as its slow but steady expansion over the last twenty years. Following structural features, the paper will develop a construct of the various knowledge traditions which have dominated Cypriot notions of higher education. These knowledge traditions have been a by-product of the influencing effect of both decades of reliance by Cypriots on overseas study as well as the ensuing expansion of the private English language sector of higher education. These private institutions in particular have been bringing to Cyprus knowledge tradition constructs from British and North American auspices. Following the discussion in knowledge traditions is a section on future implications and the future development of higher education in Cyprus in light of Cyprus' desire to enter the European Union.

### **Nature and structure of higher education in Cyprus**

The first institutions of post-secondary education established in Cyprus were two teacher training colleges, one for male students in 1937, and a second one for female students in 1940. Both of these institutions were started by the then British Colonial Office of Education. It enrolled both Greek and Turkish students. The language and curriculum was exclusively English. These institutions' goal was to prepare elementary teachers for the government elementary schools.

On January 1958 both the above mentioned institutions were combined in the co-educational Pedagogical Academy of Cyprus, and by 1959 the institution was turned over to the Greek community of Cyprus preparing for independence from Britain in 1960. In 1960 an equivalent Turkish Teacher's College also began. In 1958 the Pedagogical Academy had adopted the 2 year curriculum of the pedagogical academies of Greece. A third year was added to the curriculum in the early '60's. At this time mandatory teaching of English was added to the curriculum.

By 1992-1993, the Republic of Cyprus was providing post-secondary education to 33% of all Cypriot students in post-secondary education. These students were 58% of all secondary school graduates who continued beyond the secondary level. The remaining 25% were studying abroad. This was a significant decline in the percentage of students studying abroad compared to the students studying abroad in the mid-1980s. This was primarily due to the founding of the public university in 1992, and the expanding of the private sector of higher education. The number of students studying abroad was still relatively high: 9,066 in 1992-1993, which has dropped from 10,312 in 1985-1986 (see Table 1).

TABLE 1: Cypriot students abroad by country

	<u>1985-'86</u>		<u>1992-'93</u>	
	Number	%	Number	%
Greece	4,027	39.1	3,581	39.5
U.K	1,668	16.2	2,391	26.4
Other W. Europe	1,668	17.7	908	10.0
U.S.A.	2,231	21.6	1,775	19.6
E. Europe	443	4.3	322	3.5
Other	<u>118</u>	<u>1.1</u>	<u>89</u>	<u>1.0</u>
Total	10,312	100.0	9,066	100.0

Source: *Statistics of Education 1985-86, 1992-93.*

The 33% of the students attending post-secondary institutions in Cyprus were attending 31 public and private institutions with a total enrollment in 1992-1993 of 6,263, compared to 5,952 in 1991-1992. At this post-secondary level in 1992-1993, 29.6% were enrolled in public institutions and the remaining 70.4% in private institutions. Males accounted for 50.7%, and females for 49.3% (See Republic of Cyprus *Statistics of Education 1993/93*: 21).

TABLE 2: Enrollment in public and private institutions, 1992/1993

<b>Public</b>	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Total</b>
University of Cyprus	58	428	486
Higher Technical Institute	500	117	617
Pedagogical Academy	49	174	223
School of Nursing-Midwifery	77	218	295
Hotel-Catering Institute	76	35	111
Forestry College	34	0	34
Mediterranean Inst. of Managmt	20	7	27
Cyprus Intl. institute of Managmt	<u>47</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>62</u>
Total	861	994	1,855
<b>Private</b>			
Total	2,314	2,094	4,408
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>3,175</b>	<b>3,088</b>	<b>6,263</b>

TABLE 3: Enrollment in public and private institutions, 1993/1994

<b>Public</b>	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Total</b>
University of Cyprus	132	842	974
Higher Technical Institute	495	127	622
Pedagogical Academy	—	—	—
School of Nursing-Midwifery	88	342	430
Hotel-Catering Institute	51	47	98
Forestry College	48	1	49
Mediterranean Inst. of Managmt	16	7	23
Cyprus Intl. Institute of Managmt	49	20	69
<b>Total</b>	<b>879</b>	<b>1,386</b>	<b>2,265</b>
<b>Private</b>			
<b>Total</b>	<u>2,249</u>	<u>2,218</u>	<u>4,467</u>
<b>Grand Total.</b>	<b>3,128</b>	<b>3,604</b>	<b>6,732</b>

Source: *Statistics of Education 1992-1993*.

It should be noted that the 1992-1993 academic year was the first full year for the University of Cyprus. The university's enrollment was purposely kept at 486, and by 1993-1994 had increased to 974. It is estimated that by 1996-1997 the enrollment would increase to slightly over 1000 students. In addition the Pedagogical Academy has been absorbed by the university. This has resulted in the creation of the Department of Educational Sciences. The 1992-1993 statistics show the last year of enrollments at the Academy (see Table 2).

What is significant about higher education in Cyprus is the large private sector of higher education which enrolls three times more students than its public sector. This is not anticipated to change in the future, unless fewer Cypriots choose to study abroad, which may in effect increase private enrollments even further. The significance of the private sector is that it not only enrolls three times as many students as the public sector, but it exclusively provides higher education to Cypriots in English, and models its curricula and courses of study on British and North American institutions.

These 23 private sector institutions rely exclusively on British or North American accreditation and degree validation auspices and offer programmes in business studies, computers and information sciences, hotel management,

engineering and technology, secretarial studies, and to a very limited extent social sciences (see Koyzis 1989).

The public sector of higher education includes the University of Cyprus which includes: Schools of Humanities and Social Sciences (with Departments of Greek Studies, Turkish Studies, Foreign Languages, Educational Sciences, Social and Political Sciences), a School of Pure and Applied Sciences (with Departments of Mathematics/Statistics, Computer Science, and Natural Sciences), and the School of Economics and Administration with a Department of Economics, Public and Business Administration (see Koyzis 1993). Other public sector institutions include a School of Nursing and Midwifery, which offers two and three year certificate programmes in nursing or midwifery. The Hotel and Catering Institute offers short term programmes in a variety of areas such as cooking, waitressing, front office management, and so on. The Higher Technical Institute founded in 1966 provides three year programmes in various engineering and technology fields and is the largest public institution on the island.

The Forestry College is a rather small institution focusing on training foresters. The Forestry College trains foresters from all over the Middle East. The two Management Institutes also offer specialised programmes for Cypriot and Middle Eastern managers. Courses are offered in short term managerial training, much like American post graduate management programmes similar to the MBA. It should also be noted that the Nursing School and the Hotel and Catering Institute conduct their classes in both Greek and English. The Forestry College, the Higher Technical Institutes, and the two Management Institutes offer most of their courses only in English.

The University of Cyprus' official languages of instruction are Greek and Turkish as primary languages, and English as the secondary language. But due to the political situation on the island, Turkish is only used in the Turkish Studies Programme. Since 1992 Greek has become the *de facto* language of the University of Cyprus. However all programmes require some English instruction as well.

The University of Cyprus' enrollments shows a high number of female students in education (primary and early childhood), which is a carry over from the Pedagogical Academy with business, computer studies, and economics following. Sciences and mathematics are a close third, with the humanities and social sciences fourth. English language studies attract most students classified as humanities students (Republic of Cyprus, *Statistics of Education 1992-1993, 1993-1994, 1994-1995*).

The relatively large private sector of higher education developed in Cyprus since the mid-1970s. Most institutions were set up by individual academic entrepreneurs. Many institutions were originally English language institutes or exam preparation centers (for GCE's, TOEFL etc...). Responding to increasing

social demand for higher education in the late 1970s and 1980s, these institutions began offering 'post-secondary' level programmes. These 'post-secondary' programmes were initially connected to various British professional licensing bodies (i.e., Institute of Marketing, U.K., Institute of Bankers, U.K., Association of Certified Accountants, U.K.). Later some institutions began offering programmes preparing students for course and degree examinations given by the State of New York Regents Universities-USA, Thomas Edison State College- USA, University of London External Studies-U.K., and so on.

Other Institutions functioned as Cyprus campuses for American institutions, such as Intercollege's connection with the University of Indianapolis, or Frederick Polytechnic's connection with Empire State College of New York. In addition, institutions like Cyprus College were able to begin as autonomous institutions, giving their own degrees, and seeking accreditation and legitimacy from American and other institutions and accrediting agencies (see Koyzis 1989).

As of early 1996, private institutions of higher education were in a semi-permanent limbo, awaiting a re-institution of a once failed accreditation process. The originally instituted Council of Accreditation has been disbanded. New legislation is underway. The issue of legitimacy for the private sector is at stake here with the government and institutions seeing the accreditation issue as a potentially conflicting endeavor with enormous political implications.

### **'Knowledge traditions' and notions of the 'educated Cypriot'**

Cypriot Greeks have been relying on overseas study for attaining post-secondary qualifications since the advent of universities in medieval times. Numerous Cypriots would travel to Constantinople, Alexandria, Salamanca, Venice, Rome, and Paris for higher education during the years following the fall of Constantinople to the Ottomans in 1453. Cypriot Greeks would continue this tradition even more with the creation of modern Greece in 1830. With the founding of the University of Athens in 1837, many Cypriots travelled to Athens for an education in the 'national ideals'. This was especially true since Cyprus was under Ottoman control long after the creation of the modern Greek state. Even after Cyprus became a British colony in 1878, Cypriot Greeks continued looking towards Greece for education and culture (Persianis 1978).

Even though in the more recent past the percentage of Cypriots going to Greece stayed at a relatively steady rate (35-40% of the students studying abroad), more Cypriots have been going elsewhere for post-secondary education (Republic of Cyprus, *Statistics of Education 1992-1993*).

Cypriots receiving their education in Greek universities have traditionally had the exclusive monopoly on positions in Greek secondary schools in Cyprus, in the Inspectorate, and in the Ministry of Education. A one time favorite area of study was philology. The term 'philology' was a catch-all area combining classical Greek literature, philosophy, and history, a concept which the University of Athens developed from the German concept of building. Philology became an influencing factor of Cypriot knowledge tradition (McClelland 1980).

The education of a philologist in the School of Philosophy at the University of Athens blended a concept of what is worthwhile knowledge with a uniquely Greek version of educational humanism. This Greek version of educational humanism combines Greek Orthodoxy, classical Hellenism, and an emphasis on literary humane studies. A goal of this Greek educational humanism is to create the 'Greek Christian person'. This Greek Christian person sees himself/herself as an adherent to this modern Hellenic authenticity. Modern Hellenic authenticity combines classical Greek ideals with Greek Orthodox Christianity. According to McLean:

*"The School of Philosophy of the University of Athens (where languages, literature, and history are taught as well as philosophy) has been the center for the preservation of the humanist tradition. It has maintained links with the secondary school teachers' union, whose members have been trained largely in this university school. There is also a wider consumer for humanist education. The School of Philosophy at Athens retains the highest prestige."* (McLean 1990: 108).

Even though based on today's data, when less Cypriots attending universities in Greece specialise in philology, the influence of the philologist is felt in a number of ways (Republic of Cyprus, *Statistics of Education 1992-1993*). First and foremost, up to 85% of all secondary school teachers in the Greek secondary schools are graduates of Greek universities, with philologists making up over 60% of all secondary teachers. These teachers teach in a variety of areas. They do not teach exclusively in literature and classics, but also in the social sciences, foreign languages, and occasionally religious classes. Philologists also make up the majority of secondary principals. In addition these philologists make up to 70% of the personnel in the Ministry of Education. Claire Angelidou, a philologist, was appointed Minister of Education with the election of the Clerides administration in 1993 (Republic of Cyprus' *Labour Statistics, 1992*).

This philologist-humanist knowledge tradition has effectively become a dominant factor in the State's conception of what is worthwhile knowledge. This is particularly crucial in the way that the Ministry of Education sees its role as a major player in formulating Cypriot higher education policy. Of importance is

the Ministry's view of the role of the University of Cyprus. In particular, someone from a philologist-humanist knowledge tradition sees the role of the University of Cyprus as an institution committed to reproducing a Hellenic national character by emphasising classical humanistic learning. A philologist-humanist would include 'Hellenic ideals' in all aspects of the university's curriculum. In many ways this position tends to be anti-modern and authoritarian. The philologist-humanist perceives such 'modern' Western ideals as liberalism, academic freedom, and critical inquiry as antithetical to the role of the university. The philologist idea sees the university as an arm of the state, and wants the institution to reproduce the disciplined, cultured, and moral Christian-Greek (Maratheftis 1984).

Another knowledge tradition which has influenced Cypriot intellectual life and invariably the development of higher education has been English essentialism. Even though English essentialism resembles Greek humanism, it does not share its ethnonationalist flavour. This knowledge tradition has been influential in Cyprus, through the influence which Britain had over Cypriot life during colonial times (1878-1960), and continuing to the present. This is especially true due to the fact that Cypriots continue to go to Britain (primarily England) for post-secondary studies. According to McLean (1989: 32),

*"The continued domination of essentialist views in the secondary school curricula has been aided by the survival of a narrow and elitist system of higher education and by forms of technical/vocational education which remain specialised and separate from mainstream education."*

The English essentialist tradition which Cypriots encounter tends to be highly specialised. It either fits the tradition of educating civil servants, lawyers, and accountants or in the more recent years the more vocationalised version found in the education of engineers and technologists at colleges of further education, polytechnics, or technological universities.

The English essentialist knowledge tradition comes to Cyprus, both in the form of a remnant of a colonial legacy, and also through Cyprus' continuous reliance on England as a major trading partner, a source of overseas study, a major source of tourism, a place for Cypriots to emigrate to, and a political guarantor of stability on a divided island. This knowledge tradition tends to create a non-articulate Anglophilia among more urbane middle class Cypriots. These Cypriots prefer things that are 'English' and cosmopolitan to things that are 'Greek' and thus perceived as more parochial. Anglophilic Cypriots tend to argue that English liberalism, free markets, and English culture are more natural to middle class Cypriots than the sentimental 'backward' Greek-Christian/Hellenic ideals (Attalides 1979).



Another group of Cypriots influenced by the English essentialist knowledge tradition sees the role of English language as a potential unifying force for Greek and Turkish Cypriots. This group of Cypriots tend to be critical of educational philosophies which are ethno-nationalistic. These Cypriots argue that the role of the university would be to provide a specialised curriculum to students by focusing less on classical and nationalist issues, and more on 'modern studies'. Other than a curriculum emphasising specialised study, it would also incorporate moral education and individualism (McLean 1990).

Keeping with the English essentialist tradition of separating academic from vocational education, another segment of higher education (i.e., technology institutes, colleges, etc.) would provide a specialised higher education in such fields as engineering, technology, business, and so on. Cypriots influenced by English essentialist knowledge traditions see higher education in Cyprus as a system of institutions which function independently from the state and tend to respond to professional associations, labor markets, and social demand as only one guiding force in the provision of higher education. It does not rely on them exclusively. Academic tradition, professional and guild associations are also important players in shaping higher education.

A third knowledge tradition which influenced the development of higher education in Cyprus is North American educational utilitarianism. This influence has been quite influential in recent Cypriot circles. It has been a product of the last two decades where increasing numbers of Cypriots have been studying in the U.S.A (see *Table 1*). This knowledge tradition has also entered Cyprus through the American-style private colleges which emphasise American-modelled programmes and curricula (Koyzis 1989). This American educational utilitarianism resembles less the American liberal arts tradition of utilitarianism found in U.S. or Canadian undergraduate programmes, but resembles more the vocational/professional school version of North American educational utilitarianism (Rothblatt, in Rothblatt and Witrock 1993).

This knowledge tradition sees higher education and higher learning directly linked to the needs of occupations and labor market needs. It also accepts the fact that voluntary accrediting agencies such as the ones accrediting business, engineering, education, and other programmes are the major curricular guiding forces. This implies of course that these voluntary accrediting bodies respond to occupational and labor market needs. In most cases this version of educational utilitarianism sees as worthwhile knowledge the combining of general 'core' knowledge to more specific skill based knowledge (Burrage, in Rothblatt and Wittrock 1993).

Cypriot educational utilitarians, who are graduates of North American institutions based either in Cyprus or abroad, tend to see the role of higher

education as one preparing persons for occupations. Voluntarism, free markets, and choice are stable concepts in their views of curriculum for higher education. Many Cypriot educational utilitarians tend to prefer education in general to be less tied to 'national' and 'ethno-national' interests, and more concerned with economic and social development.

Some Cypriot educational utilitarians tend to support private sector institutions of higher education which have been accredited by voluntary accreditation entities. Some of these accreditation entities have been from the U.S. They tend to mistrust fellow Cypriots as accrediting/evaluating entities. The University of Cyprus for educational utilitarians should be much like North American state or private institutions, which are autonomous, and voluntarily accredited institutions receiving public funding with few strings attached (Lanitis 1990).

In addition to the three above mentioned knowledge traditions found in Cyprus, other traditions such as the polytechnic one, from the ex-Soviet block, a version of French encyclopaediasm, and German naturalism, are found among some Cypriots. The influence of these traditions remains limited, since their particular voice has not surfaced in the recent debates over education in Cyprus.

The Higher Technical Institute, the Forestry College, and the two other Management Institutes are not under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education. The existence of these institutions has reinforced the prominence of the educational utilitarian knowledge tradition. The Higher Technical Institute and the two post-graduate Management Institutes are public institutions under the auspices of the Ministry of Labour, whereas the Forestry College is under the control of the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources. All four of the above mentioned institutions use English as their language of instructions. This leads to a set of inter-related questions: What role does the state play in the development of higher education? And how have knowledge traditions become a point of conflict over what is perceived as worthwhile knowledge and the definition of the 'educated Cypriot'? More broadly what is the role of higher education in Cypriot society? These questions are addressed in the next section.

### **State, markets, and higher education**

Many of the recent debates over higher education in Cyprus – whether they have to do with the role of the state as an accrediting/evaluating entity, the role of Greek language and the university, the incidents involving Parliament's education committee members questioning the role of Turkish textbooks at the university, or the debate over the incident surrounding the exclusion of the Greek Orthodox Archbishop from the opening ceremonies of the university – all invariably have

to do with the role of the state and higher education. More specifically it tends to reflect the conflict between Cypriots who see higher education as an arm of the state versus Cypriots who want higher education to respond to the presumed needs of labor market and occupational needs.

Without entering into the long debate over what is the Cypriot State (Attalides 1979; Polyviou 1980) one can assume that the liberal democratic nature of Cypriot politics has developed a state relying on élites and élite structures for survival (Attalides 1979). According to Dale (1989: 57),

*"The state, then, is not a monolith, or the same as government, or merely the government's executive committee. It is a set of publicly financed institutions, neither separately nor collectively necessarily in harmony, confronted by certain basic problems deriving from its relationship with capitalism, with one branch, the government, having responsibility for ensuring the continuing prominence of those problems on its agenda."*

In particular the nature of the Cypriot élite tends to be two-fold. On the one hand there is the cultural élite, and on the other is the economic élite. The economic élite tend to be urban and associated with business and professions (Persianis 1981). The cultural élite is primarily made up of Cypriot Greeks who have either been educated in Greece, or have adhered to the dominance of Greek culture (language and religion) as the driving force behind the Cypriot state. In its most symbolic sense this cultural élite supported, and was in turn upheld by the late Archbishop Makarios, who was both the President of the republic as well as the head of the Greek Orthodox Church of Cyprus (Panteli 1990). Due to historical circumstances this cultural élite dominated and dominates Cypriot Greek public education, as well as the educational bureaucracy. But their influence has primarily remained up until 1992 at the elementary and secondary educational level. (Persianis 1981, 1994). It stemmed from the fact that since the late 1890s, Greek secondary education (Gymnasium) was in the hands of the Greek Orthodox Church. On the other hand, post-secondary education, with the exception of teacher education, was neither under the auspices and influence of the educational bureaucracy (Ministry of Education) nor under the influence of cultural élites. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, post-secondary institutions under other than Ministry of Education auspices, were influenced by economic élites (Persianis 1981). In addition, the large private sector of higher education was an exclusively market driven sector, and undoubtedly under the auspices of the economic élite.

Under these circumstances, the Cypriot higher education experience resembles the experience of the public-private conflict over higher education found in some Latin American nations (e.g., Brazil) with large private market-

driven higher educational sectors (Levy 1986). Specifically economic élites in the recent past have opted to argue that:

- (1) The University of Cyprus should be free from the influence of the educational bureaucracy and the cultural élites' insistence on Hellenocentric higher education;
- (2) University and higher education in general should be market-driven, rather than culture-driven. In this regard they would favour English language instruction and a more utilitarian curriculum since it would presumably lead to economic development;
- (3) Private higher education is a necessary sector which needs to be allowed to be flexible in order to respond to labor market needs;
- (4) Private higher education needs to be legitimised through state recognition, (i.e. accreditation) but should not be regulated. Its regulation comes from market forces, as well as connection with British and North American post-secondary institutions;
- (5) Cypriot higher education has not and should never be perceived as a part of higher education in Greece since the Cypriot state and Cypriot society are separate and distinct from the Greek state and Greek society ( Koyzis, 1993, 1989; Persiannis 1994).

On the other hand, cultural élites in the recent past have tended to argue that:

- (1) The University of Cyprus is a state institution and it should serve and respond to the needs of a Greek-Cypriot state;
- (2) Market-driven higher education would lead to an overemphasis on narrow utilitarian ends, rather than the preservation of Hellenic identity and culture;
- (3) Private higher education is an anomaly since it solely depends on American and British imported curricula, and undermines the Hellenic character of Cypriot society;
- (4) Private higher education should be either tightly regulated by the Ministry of Education, or as in the case of Greece, simply not recognised;
- (5) Cypriot higher education, much like Greek-Cypriot society should see itself as part of the broader Hellenic world. This is imperative in order to survive in Europe and against cultural enemies. This may entail regulation and control of curriculum, extra-curricular activities, and the overall post-secondary experiences (Koyzis 1993; Persiannis 1994).

It appears that the conflict between the economic market proponents versus the state cultural proponents tends to also be overshadowed by their perceptions of what should be taught at institutions of higher learning. This then takes us back to the question already discussed earlier in this paper when discussing the issue of

'knowledge traditions'. It also appears that at the moment neither the economic market proponents nor the state cultural proponents have a thorough understanding of issues such as academic freedom, institutional autonomy, and other characteristics found in amore mature system of higher education. Furthermore, Cyprus' bid for European Union membership will force the higher educational sector to re-adjust to broader European realities. It may imply re-defining the role of the state and higher education as well as the private sector's consumerist market orientation.

Cypriot higher education is still relatively young, and it will take several decades before both the state and society as a whole begin seeing it as separate from school education, or something beyond simply education for vocational preparation. In addition, due to the relative newness of higher education, Cyprus lacks an authentic intellectual culture which would be uniquely developed on Cypriot soil which means that Cyprus will still rely on-'importation' rather than autonomous creations (Persianis 1990). In addition, higher education in Cyprus would inevitably have to deal with the issue of the role to be played by Turkish-Cypriots in higher education. This has been overshadowed by the division and the narrower 'ethnonationalist' feelings projected by the current administration. This is an imperative dilemma in the light of any future settlement of the 'Cyprus problem', regardless of how it turns out.

## Conclusion

Cypriot higher education, even though it is in an embryonic state when compared to the higher education systems of Germany, Britain, or the U.S.), is facing a series of dilemmas. As a society Cyprus has been ready for a full system of higher education, but due to political circumstances, it was not until 1992 that a public university opened its doors. This university found itself amidst not only problems stemming from the aftermath of the 1974 Turkish invasion, but also amidst conflicts within Cypriot society. These conflicts have been explored in this paper, by being categorised as either conflicts stemming from the different 'knowledge traditions' (or what is perceived as worthwhile knowledge in higher education) existing in Cyprus, or as conflicts between proponents of state versus market control in higher education.

Underlying both sets of conflicts are questions that relate to culture. Among such questions are: What is the nature of Cypriot society? Should this be perceived as an extension of Greek society? Or rather is it unique and pluralistic enough to be able to be considered as a separate entity? Private and public higher education appear to be in the middle of this debate.

With the absence of a full system of higher education, Cyprus has not yet developed traditions of intellectual and academic culture, or perhaps a cadre of academic mandarins, similar to the German mandarins that Ringer (1990) writes about, which could articulate the role of higher education in Cypriot society.

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