Abstract
Taking the Cyprus conflict as a case study, this article aims to utilise the literature on EU bordering practices to explain the EU’s ability to manage and resolve conflict and to explore more precisely how perceptions of the EU as a normative construction by conflict parties affect the EU’s ability to transform EU hard borders with negative influence, into open frontiers, with potentially more positive influence in conflict situations. It argues that such a dual approach can capture, in a more complex way, the dynamics of EU impact through providing an understanding of precisely how differentiated interpretations of EU norms amongst conflicting parties, inside and outside, hinder or enable the movement to open frontiers. Through locating the Cypriot conflict in such a way, more specificity is provided in analysing the conditions under which the EU can intervene positively to resolve conflict.


First Draft. Comments welcome!

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Introduction

The European Union (EU) faces a number of challenges in resolving conflicts within its borders in which insider and outsider dynamics are at play. The Cyprus issue represents a unique challenge given the involvement of the two communities in Cyprus, Greece and also Turkey, a candidate for EU accession. It has had negative consequences for internal EU governance across a diverse range of issues, as well as for the parties involved in the dispute, and the broader EU objective of achieving relative stability in the eastern Mediterranean. Moreover, it has clear ramifications for the Turkish accession process and the future enlargement of the EU, as well as the broader security implications in terms of the evolving NATO-EU relationship. In the words of Olli Rehn, EU Enlargement Commissioner, it is ‘a real European problem…hurting the European Union’ (cited in Cyprus: Reversing the Drift to Partition, Jan 2008; p.7).

Cyprus joined the EU on the 1 May 2004 as a divided island following the rejection by the Greek Cypriot community\(^1\) of the United Nations (UN) sponsored plan for reunification\(^2\). Whilst this plan, advocating a bicomunal, bizonal federal solution with equal political rights for each community was supported by Turkey and the Turkish Cypriot community, the latter remain outside the EU. They are institutionally excluded and have been unable to fully benefit physically from EU initiatives designed to bring the Turkish Cypriots ‘out of isolation’. It has also had a negative impact on their sense of ‘European’ identity. However, the EU, despite being embroiled in the dispute, has been unable to transform it. A significant reason for this was its politicisation\(^3\) within the EU governance milieu. Indeed, the approach of the Cypriot government under the hardline President, Tassos Papadopoulos (2003-2008), was to pursue a ‘European solution’\(^4\) inside the EU with the goal of securing a tight federal solution (unitary Cypriot state) and the rule of the majority community, using a narrow definition of the EU’s normative construction to legitimate and reinforce his position.

Furthermore, progress within the primary mediating process under the UN umbrella has been slow. Despite agreement between the leaders of the two communities under the ‘Gambari process’ (8 July 2006) to accelerate resolution efforts\(^5\), and agreement on a common framework\(^6\), the reality was more reflective of a ‘creeping divergence’ (Cyprus After Accession 2007). This placed limitations on the EU’s mechanisms for intervention and subsequently, its ability to facilitate movement to a EU open frontier.
in Cyprus. The election of a more moderate Greek Cypriot leader, Dimitris Christofias, in the Presidential elections on the 24 February 2008, has renewed optimism that the EU hard border separating the conflicting parties can be transformed into an open frontier through reinforcing the positive climate created by the new domestic dynamic.

Given this context, the purpose of this article is to: first, test Rumelili’s model of EU bordering practices (2007a) to locate the Cypriot dispute and explain how the EU has impacted on the conflict; second, it proposes to extend this framework in order to explore more precisely how perceptions of the EU as a normative construction impact on its ability to transform EU hard borders into open frontiers in conflict situations. It shows that during the Papadopoulos era (2003-2008), a narrow interpretation of EU norms led to a situation whereby the hard EU border that separates the Greek Cypriots and the Turkish Cypriots did not become an open frontier conducive to constructive cooperation and reconciliation. In relation to Turkey, whilst there was a shift towards more open frontiers after acceptance of its candidacy in 1999, impacting positively on Greek-Turkish relations, this did not lead to similar movements in terms of the Cyprus issue. Indeed, the inevitable interconnection and conflict between Turkish accession norms and the EU’s conflict resolution policy in Cyprus complicated the negotiating context, and perpetuated conflict enhancing rather than reducing dynamics.

The next section of the paper will provide an overview of the conceptual literature on the EU and conflict resolution and outline the approach to be utilised in the paper. Section three will provide a review of the EU context in which policy towards Cyprus has evolved. Section four will assess how perceptions of the EU as a normative construction by conflict parties in the Cypriot dispute have affected EU bordering practice in Cyprus from 2003-8. The final, concluding section, will draw out the main implications of the analysis.

**The EU and Conflict Resolution**

Many scholars over the last few years have been engaged in explaining and providing a more complex understanding of the EU’s role in conflict resolution. Such analyses have focused on enlargement, and the conditions under which the EU’s power of attraction can facilitate conflict transformation (Christou 2004, 2002), as well as Europeanisation (Coppieters et al, 2004) as a conflict resolution tool, the latter being
defined as ‘a process which is activated and encouraged by European institutions, primarily the European Union, by linking the final outcome of the conflict to a certain degree of integration of the parties involved in it into European structures’ (pp22-3). Such a perspective emphasises the EU’s potential as a third party actor and framework in mediating disputes, influencing conflict dynamics through conditionality or socialisation (Tocci 2004; Coppieters et al 2004). Tocci (2007; p17) has also, more recently, promoted the idea of conflict resolution through passive enforcement of rules that emanate from the EU. She argues that conceptually, this is distinct from conditionality, in that it is not based on changing behaviour based on reward and punishment, but rather, on an in-built system of incentives and legally based rule-bound cooperation.

Others have focused on both the direct and indirect effects of the EU actions in conflicts (Hill 2001, Diez et al 2006). For example, in relation to direct effect Diez et al highlight a ‘compulsory’ impact, referring to the employment by the EU of carrots and sticks related to membership prospects and association, in order to induce a change of behaviour amongst the (elite) actors in the conflict, towards resolution. They also identify a ‘connective impact’, which relates more to the EU’s impact within the societal/civil society dimension, through both its material resources but also its normative influence. In relation to indirect effect, they identify an ‘enabling’ impact and a ‘constructive’ impact. The former refers to the potential ideological and normative impact of the EU framework in terms of legitimising alternative options for foreign policy and resolution of conflict at elite level, and the latter, on the EU’s discursive ability, in terms of transforming identities at societal level and desecuritising the conflict.

Whilst such analyses of the EU’s role in conflict resolution provide invaluable insights into the strengths and limitations of the EU as an actor and framework in conflict situations, they have been less successful, as pointed out by Rumelili (2007a; p109), in sufficiently addressing the ‘interactive dimension of conflict resolution, particularly the question of how the EU can simultaneously influence the insider and outsider states to promote conciliatory policies on both sides’. She suggests that the most fruitful way of achieving this is through a systematic evaluation of the EU’s bordering practices, which are seen as a significant condition for the EU’s impact beyond its boundaries.
Rumelili (2007a; p109) posits that EU borders can be understood within a multidimensional framework – and drawing from Smith (1996), distinguishes between the EU’s institutional, physical and identity borders (Table 1 below). It is argued that the EU’s bordering practices can be understood within a spectrum (ideal-type) of hard borders on one end and open frontiers on the other, with several implications for EU impact (as conceptualised by Diez et al above).

**Table 1: EU Borders**

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<tr>
<th>Institutional Borders</th>
<th>Physical Border</th>
<th>Identity Border</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Separating members and non-members and demarcating institutional benefits and voice opportunities. Such borders can take different forms: zones in terms of enlargement and lines in terms of non-membership.</td>
<td>Relate to goods, services and people and the barriers to the flow of these. There is variation in terms of the degree of openness of such borders, with in most cases the flow of people being closed.</td>
<td>Such a border demarcates self from other, which can be simultaneously fuzzy and strict. The former, in the sense of its contested nature and the latter, because of the continually reconstruction of discourses that differentiate self from other</td>
</tr>
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*Source: Derived from Rumelili (2007a; pp109-10)*

In terms of the outsider state or community, a hard EU border first, restricts severely the EU’s compulsory impact because effectively, it impedes the development of dense institutional relations and other bilateral and transnational links from evolving beyond a low-level dynamic. Second, it negates the enabling impact, as the legitimacy of the EU and its policies, as well as identification with the EU, is low. Finally, hard borders also have a negative (non-constructive) effect in terms of connective and constructive impacts in the outsider state. It is difficult to engage in transnational or trans-community interaction and contact with a hard border, and it also reinforces ‘the conflict-enhancing self versus other identity distinctions between the conflict parties by superimposing on them the more authoritative distinction of European versus non-European’ (Rumelili 2007a: p111).

Conversely, with EU open frontiers, impact is much stronger and the EU’s ability to influence positively, movement towards resolution of a conflict is enhanced. In this sense, the compulsory impact on the outsider state is stronger, both in terms of the increased density of institutional relations and increased links between governments
and communities creating a greater sense of common identity between the inside state and the outside state. The EU’s enabling impact is also enhanced through more positive identification with the EU and its policies at community and governmental level, thus providing a more legitimate basis for implementing changes emanating from the EU. Finally, there is a more effective connective and constructive impact through open EU frontiers. Enhanced contact across all levels builds mutual trust and cooperation, and is underpinned by shared EU values and an interest in resolving the conflict. It also weakens the fractious and divisive discourses of self versus other in the two communities thus promoting a conflict reducing rather than conflict enhancing milieu (Rumelili 2007a; pp108-12).

In terms of the insider state, a hard EU border allows the empowerment of hardliners at domestic level that wish to utilise the EU milieu, and the instruments within it, against the outside community or state, in order to promote a divisive rather than a reconciliatory approach. This in turn, creates a perception within the outside state or community of a non-neutral EU, captured by the insider state for the pursuit of its own interest. Such a perception further reinforces a negative identification with the EU amongst elites and societal actors in the outsider state or community. Conversely, with EU open frontiers there is more likely to be a reconciliatory approach and a greater possibility that the conflict will be transformed through being part of the same EU community, in this case the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities enjoying the same benefits from the EU, within a common Cypriot state. Such open frontiers, it is argued, allows for the empowerment of more moderate domestic actors and the incapacitation of ‘maximalist’ elites seeking to utilise the EU to secure concessions from the outsider state or community. Indeed according to Rumelili (2007a; p112), ‘the instruments of power possessed by virtue of EU…and become less convenient and more costly…for the insider state’. In turn, the perception of capture becomes less significant, with an increasing willingness between the conflicting communities or states to reconcile through the use of EU norms and principles.

More recently, there has been a proliferation of work on the utility of the concept of normative power Europe (Manners 2002, 2006) in understanding the EU’s role in conflict resolution. Such work has sought to critically assess the construction of the EU as a ‘force for good’ in world affairs and in particular, whether such a construction allows the EU to be more successful in its conflict interventions (i.e.
transformation of conflict), or actually disempowers it as a global actor (Pace 2007, Diez and Pace 2007). Such analyses are significant markers for highlighting the potential limits and strengths of the construction and projection of the EU as normative power and for extending Rumelili’s framework, in particular in relation to the idea of conflicting states and communities reconciling through common affiliation to the EU’s norms. Importantly, they provide more specificity on the interpretation of the EU’s construction as a normative power by actors within insider and outsider states, and in turn, the prospect of movement to open frontiers in conflict situations.

Diagram 1 – Bordering Practices and Normative Power Europe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EU direct and indirect impact</th>
<th>EU direct and indirect impact</th>
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<tr>
<td>weak/negative</td>
<td>strong/positive</td>
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<tr>
<th>Insider/outsider community/state</th>
<th>Insider/outsider community/state</th>
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<tr>
<td>EU Hard Border</td>
<td>EU Open Frontier</td>
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<tr>
<th>EU construction as ‘force for good’ not shared by conflict parties</th>
<th>EU construction as ‘force for good’ shared by conflict parties, but EU norms not to enhance conflict</th>
<th>EU construction as ‘force for good’ shared by some conflict parties</th>
<th>EU construction as ‘force for good’ shared by all conflict parties</th>
</tr>
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Sources: Derived from Rumelili (2007a) and data from Diez and Pace (2007)

This article aims to utilise Rumelili’s framework to demonstrate EU impact on the Cyprus conflict and the possibility of the movement to open frontiers or ‘interdependent borderlands’ (Newman and Paasi 1998; Newman 2000). It also argues, however, that extending this framework can capture further the dynamics of EU impact through providing an understanding of precisely how differentiated interpretations of EU norms amongst conflicting parties, inside or outside, hinder or enable the movement to open frontiers. In this way, more specificity might be added to where on the spectrum between open frontiers and hard borders we can locate the Cyprus conflict, and how and at what stage the EU can intervene positively to resolve conflict (see Diagram 1). Moreover, we can determine the credibility and plausibility
Pre-accession: EU Bordering Practice and Cyprus

The maintenance of a EU hard border with Turkey up until 1999, when it was granted candidate status, had a direct and indirect impact on the EU’s ability to transform the Cypriot conflict. Greece, whilst supporting the Greek-Cypriot cause in different ways at different times, took a strong and more aggressive line under Andreas Papandreou’s leadership in the 1980s and 1990s. In this context the Turkey-EU Customs Union Agreement signed in 1995 was perceived by the Turkish government and the conservative Turkish Cypriot leadership under Rauf Denktash, as evidence of ‘Greek’ capture in order to secure greater leverage over Turkey in the Cyprus dispute. Effectively, Greece had agreed to lift its veto on the agreement in return for a deal which secured the start of accession negotiations with Cyprus six months after the conclusion of the Intergovernmental Conference in 1996.

From a Greek Cypriot perpective, Greek support inside the EU, and the subsequent decision to accept it as a candidate and begin accession negotiations, served to further legitimise its longstanding approach to resolving the Cyprus issue through involving international organisations and sympathetic third parties. For the Greek Cypriot leadership, the EU platform, with Greece as the supporting ‘insider’ state, provided additional leverage and mechanisms for resolving the conflict through agreed and established UN agreements on the parameters and principles of a solution. From a normative perspective, it was justified on the grounds that the EU could not punish the Greek Cypriots for what was a violation of international law by Turkey: adherence to and observation of international law being a central element within the EU’s normative power construction (Diez and Pace 2007; p8, see also Pace 2007).

Acceptance of Cyprus as a membership candidate reaffirmed the European identity of the Greek Cypriots, whilst reinforcing the image of Turkey and the Turkish Cypriot leadership as the main threat to a secure and sustainable solution in Cyprus. Moreover it served indirectly, to superimpose the European versus non-European distinction between the Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots/Turkey, thus perpetuating the conflict enhancing dynamics on the island, and limiting the promotion of intercommunal projects and links at elite business and civil society level independently and through EU financial measures. Indeed, through accepting the
application of the (Greek) Cypriot government, the alternative Turkish Cypriot voices in the north that supported a European orientation, were effectively marginalised and their European identity devalued through exclusion. This reinforced the position of the hardliners in the north under the longstanding leadership of Rauf Denktash. EU actions, by confirming their ‘outsider’ status, strengthened the hand of the Turkish Cypriots in the north and those in Turkey, that neither supported EU membership or a federal solution to the Cyprus question mediated by the UN. Indeed, the conflict enhancing dynamics between the two communities were perpetuated by EU policy, with Rauf Denktash, as a direct consequence, proposing a confederal solution and effective separation as a solution to the Cyprus issue in 1998. Denktash did not perceive the EU to be normatively ‘good’ for the Cyprus conflict, nor did the more conservative voices within the Turkish establishment that supported the status quo situation on the island and that believed the conflict was resolved in 1974 (see Bahcheli 2006; Kaliber 2005; Robins 2007; Tocci 2007).

The situation after 1999, triggered by improved Greek-Turkish relations bilaterally (see Rumelili 2007a, 2007b for detailed analysis), was sustained and consolidated by the EU through its decision to grant Turkey candidate status, and led to enhancement of the EU’s institutional and identity borders towards Turkey (a shift towards open frontiers). In turn, this affirmation of Turkey’s identity as a potential EU candidate state and the subsequent decision at the Copenhagen European Council in December 2002 to set a date for discussing when accession talks could actually begin, complemented by the victory of a more moderate Turkish government in November 2002 led by Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, triggered a fundamental change in Turkish policy towards support for the Annan Plan. Indeed, Erdogan and the Justice and Development Party (AK Party), by February 2004, had altered the traditional Turkish position on Cyprus espoused by the hardliners, and consolidated support for resolution of the Cyprus conflict through the UN Plan, providing the basis for movement to EU open frontiers and transformation of the conflict. It also provided a basis for the mobilisation and empowerment of Turkish Cypriots that identified with the EU’s normative framework (the possibility of a conflict reducing identity border) and resolution of the Cyprus conflict within a bizonal bicommmunal framework. Most importantly, following mass demonstrations, it led to the opening of the ‘physical’ border between the north and south in April 2003, allowing for the first time after 1974, movement and exchange on a cultural and
socio-economic level, between and within the two communities (albeit not entirely free or open). Fundamentally, the EU normative framework also provided a reference for the mobilisation of moderate and liberal voices in the north, replacing the approach of the nationalist hardliners, in particular Rauf Denktash. Moreover, as part of this movement, the more moderate Mehmet Ali Talat was elected as Prime Minister in December 2003, and President on 17 April 2005 (with 55% of the vote) on a pro-EU membership and pro-reunification platform, in support of the Annan Plan.

The Greek Cypriot leadership, under Clafkos Clerides, oscillated between a hardline approach at the beginning of his Presidency (1993), to a more moderate stance towards the end (2003), triggered in large part by ‘the perceived value of...EU membership...[which] imbued the Greek Cypriots with an enhanced sense of security and the former leadership to accept hitherto unthinkable concessions’ (Tocci 2007; p79). However, whilst the Clerides government perceived the EU as a ‘force for good’ in Cyprus, the election of President Tassos Papadopoulos (right wing DIKO party) in February 2003 led to much narrower interpretation of the EU’s normative construction with consequences for the possibility of moving towards EU open frontiers and creating a conflict reducing environment. It enabled it to call for a ‘European solution’ and legitimate its position through reference to the implementation of the four freedoms (services, goods, capital and labour), thus preventing a successful transformation of the conflict through EU intervention. Indeed, it can be argued that this narrow interpretation of the EU normative power construction by the Papadopoulos government allowed it to strengthen and reinforce its hardline position (Diez and Pace 2007; p9).

The Accession of Cyprus: Maintaining Hard EU Borders

How then did this manifest itself at EU level and what has the EU bordering impact been as a consequence? The clear failing of the EU’s catalytic effect through the process of accession, despite the hope that was attached to it, led to a re-evaluation and upgrading of EU policy towards the Turkish Cypriots in order to facilitate the movement towards EU open frontiers in the Cyprus conflict. Whilst EU policy towards Cyprus remained unchanged on a macro level in the post-accession period (after 1 May 2004) - to engage and intervene to facilitate the main UN process of mediation between the Greek and Turkish Cypriots (Interview, European
Commission, 2006) - on a micro level, measures were introduced reflective of the shift away from the previously dominant discourse for blame which rested with Turkey and the hardline Turkish Cypriot leadership.

The EU sought to reward the positive referendum result in the north with ‘Regulations’ aimed at reinforcing the Turkish Cypriot identification with the EU as force for good, and opening up institutional and physical borders. The consequence, however, was the reinforcement of the EU hard border towards Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots as the Papadopoulos government strategy was to maximise its leverage within the EU to force concessions compatible with a tight federal (unitary state) solution, rather than a more flexible bizonal, bicommmunal federation (with two constituent states).

Most significantly, the EU sought to open the institutional and physical border and transform the identity border through enhancing an existing package (agreed in June 2003) of measures for northern Cyprus worth a total of €12 million that was aimed at promoting economic development and bringing Turkish Cypriots closer to the EU. The Green Line Regulation (GLR) (EC No 866/2004) was adopted and implemented prior to the accession of Cyprus on 1 May 2004, in order to secure its passage unchallenged. The Financial Aid Regulation (FAR) (EC No 389/2006) and the Direct Trade Regulation (DTR) (Proposed Council Regulation, COM 2004) that followed, were proposals put forward by the European Commission in July 2004 with the objective of enhancing the EU’s direct and indirect impact and transforming the economic status of the Turkish Cypriot north, with the aim of simultaneously removing one of the significant barriers to finding a solution. The FAR involved a disbursement of funds, totalling €259 million, and was agreed by all member states with one Greek Cypriot provision – that funds should not be utilised to build on land owned by the Greek Cypriots or on public organisations or bodies.

The DTR, however, was more controversial, with its main purpose to allow direct trade between the EU and the north, with the potential of opening up the physical and institutional border, as well as reinforcing the European identity of the Turkish Cypriots. In relation to Turkey, the positive decision to recognise her as a candidate for membership in 1999 was followed by an offer to review progress at Copenhagen in December 2004. The terms for Turkish accession were eventually defined, formulated and agreed in December 2005, committing Turkey to fulfil the contractual
obligations (implement accession norms) of the process leading to eventual membership of the EU (discussed below).

Despite international as well as internal institutional pressure, once Cyprus entered the EU on the 1 May 2004, an additional platform was provided on which the Papadopoulos government could project and reinforce its approach, based on a narrow, yet legitimating, interpretation of the EU’s normative construction. Indeed, one can observe that the Greek Cypriot leadership projected its self-interested preferences in line with EU community norms in order to exploit the opportunity to add legitimacy to their position (Schimmelfennig, 2001). However, the Greek Cypriot interpretation of the EU norms based effectively, on the strict requirements of the *acquis*, were not necessarily compatible with the broader EU norms relating to cooperation, equality, and peace, with the consequence that EU impact was minimised in terms of its direct compulsory and enabling effects, but also its indirect connective and constructive effects. There existed a paradox: the Greek Cypriot solution did not necessitate embedded change in relation to key EU norms on the ground (see Richmond 2005, 7), despite its compatibility with the four freedoms. Although opposition existed in the south to the approach taken by Papadopolous from more moderate right wing quarters represented by the Democratic Rally (DISY) and the United Democrats (EDI), this was effectively marginalised, especially as the Cypriot government had considerable support for its policies within Greek Cypriot society and significantly, from the communist party AKEL (Progressive Party of the Working People), which held the support of a third of the electorate. AKEL, traditionally at the forefront of reconciliation initiatives and maintaining intercommunal links with Turkish Cypriots in the north, was until February 2004, associated with a more moderate position in relation to the ‘terms’ for a solution of the Cyprus conflict. It can be argued that AKEL’s no vote in the referendum, and the coalition formed with the Papadopoulos government, was critical in shifting the opinions of the Greek Cypriot public towards a negative vote in the Annan Plan referendum. Indeed, AKEL’s importance to the continuation of a the policy of the Papadopoulos government on the Cyprus conflict was reinforced by parliamentary elections in the south in May 2006, where they received 131, 066 of the votes (31%) compared to 75, 458 of the votes (18%) for the Democratic Party (DIKO) of Tassos Papadopoulos (Cyprus ruling coalition wins poll, May 2006).
Cyprus, as the insider state, aimed ‘to make the Cyprus problem a European problem...believing in this way that we can increase our possibilities of seeking a solution’ (Interview, COREPER, 2006). This meant manipulation of the available EU mechanisms and tools to achieve a ‘European solution’. For Tassos Papadopoulos, the hardline approach of the Cypriot government, which resonated with the concerns of a majority within Greek Cypriot civil society, reflected a long-term belief that power with the Turkish Cypriots could not be shared on the basis of equal political status. Whilst the Cypriot government was willing to share prosperity in a socio-economic sense, as demonstrated by domestic measures allowing increased freedom of movement for Turkish Cypriots to live and work in the south, it was unwilling to allow any initiative that impacted directly on the ‘sovereign’ power and (Greek) identity of the Cypriot state, before a solution securing its rights as a majority, was agreed. Thus, whilst the FAR in principle, and as a separate tool for potentially opening up the physical and institutional border between the EU and the north was agreed separately in February 2006, the DTR was rejected for fears that it would result in an increased ‘international presence for the administration in the north and the overt recognition of the secessionist entity’, subsequently impacting negatively on ‘Turkish Cypriot aspirations for movement towards reunification’ (Interview, COREPER, 2006).

The new and ambitious FAR and DTR proposals raised the expectations of Turkish Cypriots that perceived the EU to be ‘normatively’ beneficial in Cyprus in terms of process. There was an assumption that the Turkish Cypriots, having voted positively for the Annan Plan, would be rewarded through measures to extend EU benefits to the north, with the aim of facilitating growth and prosperity, and providing a more cooperative basis for moving towards an more open frontier and negotiated settlement. Within the moderate leadership circle, Mehmet Ali Talat, and officials within his Republican Turkish Party (RTP), expressed the importance of establishing voice opportunities for the Turkish Cypriots institutionally; enhancing the economic status of the north and opening up the physical borders between the north and the EU through the FAR and DTR; and providing a platform for reinforcing the sense of ‘European identity’ that evolved in the north in the pre-accession process.

The consequence of the Greek Cypriot strategy inside the EU, however, prevented an inclusive EU approach that would allow the necessary inter-communal links and interdependence and exchange between the two communities to evolve through EU
initiatives. The necessary climate for cooperation was not created, leading to the incomplete implementation of the GLR because of its unpopularity with Turkish Cypriots reluctant to entrust more than 3 per cent of their trade to Greek Cypriots, and because of obstructionist legislation put in place by the Greek Cypriot government for its effective working. The implementation of the FAR has not led to a more open physical or institutional border with the EU because Commission officials have been constrained from formally developing working relationships with ‘entities in the north’ because of the issue of ‘political recognition’. The DTR still remains on the EU negotiating table without agreement to implement it, and has the potential to unlock substantive conflict reducing and desecuritising dynamics and a movement to EU open frontiers.

The overall bordering impact of EU initiatives on pro-solution and pro-European elites and civil society actors and groups in the north, has been negative, directly and indirectly. Indeed, polls indicate that disappointment has manifested itself in different ways (see Lordos 2006), with evidence suggesting a decrease in the support for the EU as a ‘force for good’ and its credibility in relation to lifting the isolation of the Turkish Cypriot community (Senyigit 2006; Lacher and Kaymak 2005). From a Turkish Cypriot leadership perspective, the lack of progress in the development of the north was directly attributable to the failure of the EU to turn its rhetoric into action – with criticism of EU officials and (Greek) Cypriot government tactics inside the EU that constrained progress. The alternative voices within liberal-leftist circles (known as the Jasmine coalition)\textsuperscript{15}, although critical of the Cypriot government’s unilateral use of the Cypriot state to further Greek Cypriot interests within the EU (perception of capture) and undermine those of Turkish Cypriots – argue that the best way to overcome this is through the manipulation of the EU’s normative framework – as citizens of the EU and the rights that this accrues to them. From the perspective of nationalist and conservative forces in the north, which do not perceive the EU as a ‘force for good’, Cypriot membership of the EU is viewed as illegal – thus the lack of any impact with regard to EU measures and the scepticism this creates, serves as fuel for their arguments of secession, although there is still only minority support for their position within civil society.

The refusal of the Papadopoulos government to discuss the DTR within the EU also had implications for creating a EU open frontier between the Greek Cypriots and Turkey. The Turkish government’s perception of capture by the (Greek) Cypriot
government in order to achieve its aims, led to the linking by Turkey of the EU’s normative commitment to end the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots, and Turkish contractual obligations relating to the diffusion and implementation of the norms associated with the accession process. This effectively, hardened the border between the EU and Turkey and the possibility of further cooperative movement on Cyprus policy within Turkey.

A critical obligation has been that of the extension of Turkey’s custom union with the EU towards the ten new member states that joined in May 2004, which included Cyprus. The terms of the accession negotiations that were agreed in December 2004 committed Turkey to the ratification of an Additional Protocol for the extension of the Customs Union, which in relation to Cyprus meant opening Turkish ports and airports to (Greek) Cypriot ships and planes. However, the Turkish government has asserted consistently that it will not fulfil any such obligations because of the issue of recognition, and the fact that the Greek Cypriot leadership has blocked EU initiatives aimed at lifting the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots in the north i.e. the DTR in the Council of Ministers\textsuperscript{16}.

Moreover, the perception of the EU as a force for good in Cyprus amongst pro-EU reformists in Turkey has dissipated given the inability of the EU to create the necessary environment or mobilise the necessary mechanisms and processes in order to turn its rhetoric into action in Cyprus. Whilst informal efforts have been made by various EU Presidencies\textsuperscript{17} to resolve the DTR issue (see Christou 2006a), the lack of agreement has served to enhance the support of the hardline conservative voices in Turkey within the military and bureaucracy that are sceptical of the EU’s normative construction, and the EU-orientated AKP policy on Cyprus. Even though such voices, and parallel to these, a neo-nationalist sentiment, has grown in Turkey against ‘Western’ interference (Turkey and Europe: The Way Ahead 2007), it has not, thus far, despite support from the Kemalist CHP, the Democratic Left Party and the right wing Genç Party, emerged as a dominant political ideology or discourse supported by a majority in civil society. Significantly, whilst such opposition has stalled the implementation of EU accession norms, it has not resulted in the defeat of the more moderate AK Party, who won 46.7% of the vote in the parliamentary elections in July 2007, with former Foreign Minister, Abdullah Gül, also being elected as President of Turkey in August 2007, despite the objections of the armed forces and its leadership under General Yasar Büyükanit. Such hardline opposition to the EU normative
construction, and granting any further concessions on Cyprus via the EU process, however, cannot be underestimated, and is a major constraint on the manoeuvrability of the AK Party domestically and on the Cyprus issue\textsuperscript{18}.

In this context, the use of negative conditionality by the Papadopolous government to secure concessions from Turkey on Cyprus whilst simultaneously claiming to support Turkish accession to the EU, has led to a perception of bias and capture by the Turkish government which supported the Annan Plan and a bizonal, bicomunal solution to the Cyprus problem. This only served to perpetuate the conflict enhancing dynamics in Cyprus, with a fundamental conflict between Turkish implementation of the EU’s accession norms (in the form of the Additional Protocol provisions), and the Turkish government’s interpretation of those norms in relation to the Cyprus conflict and the movement to EU open frontiers with the north (through the DTR). Moreover, this has served to impede the evolution of trustful and cooperative relationships between Turkish and Greek Cypriot elites, business representatives, tourist organisations, and civil society groups. The issues of the DTR and the Additional Protocol, therefore, remain a major constraint on movement to an open frontier, with the latter representing ‘the main obstacle for significant progress in Turkey’s accession process’ (Barroso 2008, 10 April 2008). Moreover, it hinders both the potential direct and indirect impact that the EU might have in Turkey in relation to the Cyprus conflict. It also promotes and reproduces discourses that reinforce division, and identities in Turkey and southern Cyprus that emphasise difference and antagonism, in particular in relation to being ‘European’.

**Transforming the Cyprus Conflict: Towards Open Frontiers?**

The election (with 54% of the vote in the second round) of the more moderate Dimitris Christofias, as President of Cyprus on the 24 February 2008, created a similar potential dynamic for conflict transformation to that of the earthquake diplomacy between Greece and Turkey in 1999, which triggered the subsequent EU decision to reinforce the positive climate that evolved between the two countries. After splitting from the governing AKEL-DIKO-EDEK coalition in July 2007, Christofias, the leader of AKEL, campaigned on a more constructive strategy to finding a solution to the Cyprus than the hardline approach of Tassos Papadopolous. Indeed, on his election, he pledged that it would be ‘a Presidency for all Cypriots’ with the aim of delivering ‘a just solution to the Cyprus problem’. He also stressed
the importance of the UN (Gambari) process, providing for bicommunal talks at technical and working group level, as an important ‘starting point’ for breaking the deadlock with the Turkish Cypriots. The change of government has seen the removal of hardline ministers from key positions, with only one member of the previous Cypriot Council of Ministers remaining in post (see Cyprus News No.222, Feb 2008). Importantly, the Foreign Minister position went to the more moderate Markos Kyprianou, who has both experience and knowledge of working within the EU machinery after resigning his post as EU Health Commissioner to take up this responsibility. Other changes indicating a more proactive approach to reaching solution have included the establishment of a Turkish Affairs Bureau at the Presidential Palace.

Christofias’ victory suggests that civil society attitudes have become less militant within the Greek Cypriot south over the last four years. Sixty five percent of Greek Cypriots voted for pro-solution candidates in the first round of the election (Lichfield, 18 Feb 2008), indicating the dissatisfaction with the divisive ‘us and them’ approach to the Cyprus issue pursued by the Papadopoulos government. This significant domestic change has certainly marginalised the hardliners and provided a more positive and cooperative climate for movement towards a solution to the Cyprus issue. The Christofias approach has, within a month of election, led to substantively more progress than his predecessor in the UN process. A meeting between Christofias and Talat on the 21 March 2008, yielded agreement on the establishment of technical groups to deal with power-sharing, EU matters, security, territory, property and economic matters and working groups to address everyday issues such as crime, commerce, cultural heritage, crisis management, humanitarian matters, health and the environment.

Furthermore, pro-solution parties such as DISY, and their leader Nicos Anastassiades, have also taken advantage of the goodwill momentum created by Christofias’ election, creating further cooperative links through the establishment of sub-committees with the Cypriot Republican Turkish Party led by Ferdi Sabit Soyer in the north, to discuss the Cyprus issue. In addition, the symbolic Ledra Street crossing point, which had previously been the subject of much political rancour and resulted only in conflict enhancing dynamics on the island, was also opened, to allow the further socio-economic, cultural and political evolution of trans-communal links.
It is unclear at the time of writing of this paper whether there has been a reinterpretation by the Christofias government of EU norms (the meaning of Europeanisation), beyond the ‘narrow’ application of the Papadopolous era. Whilst he has rejected the accusation of being a Euro-sceptic, and indeed asserted that he is a ‘Euro-fighter…[working] for Cyprus’s best interests within Europe’, it is not yet clear how this will translate into strategy in relation to EU norms. Comments on how the EU might reinforce and structure the positive momentum created in Cyprus towards open frontiers can therefore only be tentative at best, at this stage. Early indications suggest that the more conciliatory approach will, in time, be reflected in relation to EU issues, in particular the ‘Regulations’ designed to stimulate the Turkish Cypriot economy. An example here is the amendments to the Green Line Regulation that were approved by the European Commission following the momentum created by the Ledra Street opening. The changes, which Cypriot government officials have indicated they will not raise any objections to, provide for a blanket lifting of the duties on agricultural products originating in the north when being traded across the Green Line, and an increase in the value of goods contained in personal luggage of persons crossing the line from 135 euros to 260 euros (Cyprus Weekly, 11-17 April 2008).

If the amended GLR is adopted, this could provide for a more open EU frontier and strengthen the compulsory impact through removing what was previously a significant financial and administrative burden on Turkish Cypriot traders, and by creating a greater sense of common identity between the Greek and Turkish Cypriots. The EU’s enabling impact could also be enhanced through more positive identification by the Turkish Cypriot community with the EU and its policies to stimulate the economy in the north. In turn, this could provide a more legitimate basis for implementing changes emanating from the EU. There could also be a more effective connective and constructive impact as contact is enhanced between traders, shopkeepers and individual citizens, building trust and cooperation between the conflict parties. This would be especially true if the Turkish Cypriot authorities were to reciprocate by increasing the ceiling (the GLR only covers trade moving north to south) on purchases made in the south by Turkish Cypriots, which would also then benefit Greek Cypriot shopkeepers. Finally, it could also lead to the reduction in divisive discourses between the two communities, thus promoting a conflict reducing rather than conflict enhancing milieu.
However, simply amending the GLR, whilst a step in the right direction, is not symbolic of a historic shift that indicates transformative change in the interpretation of EU norms and subsequently, potential movement on the important issues of the DTR or indeed the implementation of the Additional Protocol to the EU-Turkey Custom Union. Whilst the EU continues to warn Turkey that the Additional Protocol must be implemented by 2009 for it to make any further progress on its accession path, the EU hard border between Turkey and the Cypriot government prevents any direct or indeed indirect EU impact in changing the Turkish government approach. Indeed, movement to a EU open frontier will not materialise unless these issues are resolved.

Here, a more flexible and pragmatic approach by the Turkish government towards opening its ports and airports, as a goodwill gesture within the prevailing positive climate, could provide the stimulus and milieu for agreeing the DTR inside the EU, and a more effective EU role in structuring and reinforcing the domestic dynamic towards comprehensive settlement. It would also provide for a much less fractious relationship between the EU and Turkey within its accession process, creating on broader level, a more cooperative climate for progress (e.g. in relation to NATO, energy etc), and a more positive interpretation of the EU’s normative process. Not only this, it would provide the platform for more open trade and thus cooperation between Greek Cypriot and Turkish officials as well as business leaders and civil society groups. In turn, this would allow the EU, through amending its Green Line Regulation, to extend its direct impact through including Turkish exports to the goods allowed to cross the Green Line (Cyprus: Reversing the Drift to Partition 2008; p10). This could also benefit the Turkish Cypriot economy, and would allow a greater connective and constructive impact as more transnational and intercommunal links and contacts develop, and a shared understanding of EU norms and the integration experience evolves. Moreover, it will allow a new discourse to evolve based on a common ‘European’ identity and common interests within the EU normative umbrella, within a climate of increasing trust, familiarity and cooperation.

The Christofias government should also publicly make clear, as early as possible, its position on how the EU can be a ‘force for good’ in reinforcing the evolving cooperative climate: a broader acceptance and diffusion of EU norms, in parallel with progress in the ongoing UN negotiation process, could lead to the agreement and implementation of the DTR, and a less severe approach to allowing implementation
of the FAR and the aid attached to this, in the north\textsuperscript{24}. Unilateral action of this sort by the Cypriot government, alongside prioritisation of the discussion of EU matters in the technical committees established, could result in the evolution of a more positive identification with the EU by all conflict parties, and thus enhance the EU’s ability to support an open frontier in the Cypriot dispute. Mehmet Ali Talat should also ensure that the Turkish Cypriot rhetoric on the EU’s normative framework is rearticulated and reinforced in the positive climate that has been created, and more importantly, demonstrate this in action, again within the technical committee discussions and in particular through showing greater openness and flexibility in allowing EU sponsored bicommmunal projects that involve cooperation with the Greek Cypriot authorities, the private sector and civil society groups (as in the agreement to remove landmines from the UN buffer zone).

Conclusions

This article focused on the EU’s bordering impact on the Cyprus conflict and the extent to which this has been influenced by differing interpretations amongst the conflict parties in the dispute of the EU as a force for good. It has shown that whilst the election of a moderate President in southern Cyprus has led to a more positive domestic climate for cooperation, this has not manifested itself in any \textit{significant} change in EU bordering practice at the time of writing. However, there does exist much more \textit{potential} for change in the direction of EU open frontiers.

The analysis provided has several important implications. First, for the EU’s ability to transform conflicts with insider/outsider dynamics through its bordering practices; second, for the extent to which the EU (self) projection as a ‘force for good’ and how it is perceived by conflict parties, can impact on the EU’s ability to influence the movement to open frontiers in conflict situations; third, for the timing of effective EU intervention (i.e. the stage at which the EU can actually be effective); finally, for the EU’s ability to transform conflicts and create interdependent borderlands in Europe’s wider neighbourhood through its bordering practice and its construction and projection as normative power.

The case of Cyprus has shown that EU bordering impact in the Papadopolous era was severely constrained by insider capture which sort to reinforce conflict enhancing dynamics through a narrow interpretation of EU norms, whilst accepting the notion of the EU as normative power. Though the EU’s normative framework acted as a key
reference point for the empowerment of the Turkish Cypriots, and the EU’s more inclusive approach after 1999 played a key role in structuring and reinforcing a conciliatory Turkish policy in support of the Annan Plan, after accession, the EU’s normative power served to maintain a hard EU border, negating the possibility of strong/positive direct or indirect EU impact in the dispute through the EU normative construct (and its different elements, see Pace 2007).

Moreover, in the case of Cyprus, whilst the conflicting parties shared the idea of the EU as a normative power, there also existed significant difference in the way in which key EU norms were interpreted, accepted and indeed embedded, domestically. From a Greek Cypriot perspective, Europeanisation entailed implementation of the four freedoms, whilst for Turkey, any positive movement flowing from the EU normative power construct in the pre-accession period was negated by a more conservative interpretation linked to what was perceived as an inconsistency relating to the EU’s normative projection towards Turkish Cypriots, and its inability to convert policy into effective action because of the strategy of the ‘insider’ Cypriot government. The consequence in Cyprus, in terms of bordering practice, was the inability to develop more open institutional and physical borders with the Turkish Cypriots and reinforce the European identity of the Turkish Cypriots that perceived the EU as a force for good. It also hardened the identity border between the EU and Turkey, further undermining the EU’s normative power in the accession process and in the Cyprus conflict, whilst also perpetuating rather than alleviating Turkish insecurity about its European orientation.

The case of Cyprus also illuminates the issue of when the EU can effectively intervene in conflict resolution. The impact of the EU as a force for good has been ambiguous at best in Cyprus, and once Cyprus became a member, the EU was ‘powerless’ to induce change towards more open frontiers, directly or indirectly. This suggests, certainly in the case of Cyprus, and Greek/Turkish relations, that whilst the EU has the potential to structure and reinforce more reconciliatory climates, it is less able to actually engineer the conditions for more cooperative environments to emerge where insider/outsider dynamics exist, in particular if there is a difference in interpretation or lack of acceptance between conflict parties, on the EU’s normative power. If the EU as a normative power construct is to have a more positive bordering impact in conflict situations, then the ‘conditions’ and potential ‘critical moments’ under which this can happen need further investigation.
Finally, the analysis points to the broader policy implications of the EU’s bordering practice and the extent to which actors beyond EU borders accept its self-construction as a force for good. Indeed, the question of differentiated interpretations and representations of the EU as force for good and how they subsequently impact on the nature of the border the EU can construct is a salient one for future research, in particular for relatively new and ambitious projections such as the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) in the broadest sense, and more specifically, for the many potential and real conflict situations within the neighbourhood.

Bibliography


*Cyprus Weekly*, 11-17 April 2008


*Cyprus ruling coalition wins poll*, 21 May 2006


NOTES

1 In the referendum held in April 2004 on the Annan Plan, 75% of Greek Cypriots voted against and 65% of Turkish Cypriots voted for. See Anastasakis et al (2004) for critical evaluation of the plan. For analyses of the main reasons behind the Greek Cypriot rejection see Attalides (2004), Coufoudakis (2004), Lordos (2005, 2006)

2 Referred to as the Annan Plan. The Annan Plan allowed for the creation of a ‘common’ state government and two equal ‘component states’, one Greek Cypriot and one Turkish Cypriot, thus ensuring political equality for the two communities. For the final version of the plan see: http://unannanplan.agrino.org/Annan_Plan_MARCH_30_2004.pdf.

3 Where issues require EU action and resources and become infused with political significance

4 See Ker-Lindsay (2007) for elaboration of what a ‘European solution’ entails

5 Agreed in principle between Mehmet Ali Talat and Tassos Papadopoulos. This process involves technical committees to deal with day-to-day issues, working groups to discuss substantive issues, and confidence building measures (CBMs) to create a more reconciliatory environment for reaching agreement.

6 To a bizonal, bicomunal federation based on the equal representation of both communities. Note this article is not about how EU normative power is constructed – this is covered adequately elsewhere – see Diez (2005), Manners (2002, 2006), Pace (2007), Diez and Pace (2007), Diez and Manners (2007).

7 Potential membership also provided a normative framework through the acquis communautaire for implementation of the four freedoms.

8 A report by the United Nations in Cyprus (2007) indicates that this not been very successful in fostering a conflict reducing dynamic between the two communities. For example only 10% of Greek Cypriots cross with any regularity as opposed to 45% of Turkish Cypriots. Of those Greek Cypriots that crossed initially for a few times, they report that it did not enhance their impression of their Turkish Cypriot neighbours. Most Turkish Cypriots report that their impression of Greek Cypriots remains unchanged as a result of the crossing. The Turkish Cypriots that had crossed to work, visit friends, shop or for recreational purposes did report a more favourable impression of the Greek Cypriots. It also led in 2003 to the decision to allow Greek Cypriots visa free travel in Turkey (although rather than stamping Greek Cypriot passports separate pieces of paper were used by Turkish authorities).

9 This is now well documented: See Christou (2004, 2006); Tocci (2004, 2007)

10 The EU’s initial reaction to improving and opening the institutional border demarcating the Turkish Cypriots from the EU took several forms in the post-accession period (see Christou 2006b). More recently (Dec 2007), there was a suggestion that the EU would identify twelve areas of governance in which it would help Turkish Cypriots officials harmonise with those of the EU (see Cyprus: Reversing the Drift to Partition 2008; p.9).


12 This was on the grounds that the UN (and Turkey) refused to postpone the referendum to provide more time for discussion of the critical aspects of the Annan Plan settlement.

13 When Turkey did sign the Additional Protocol on 29 July 2005 it attached an accompanying declaration stating that signing, ratification and implementation of the protocol did not amount ‘to any form of recognition of the Republic of Cyprus’. The protocol has not, at the time of writing, been implemented by the Turkish Grand National Assembly. Nor has Turkey opened Turkish ports and airports to Greek Cypriot vessels and carriers, despite a EU counter-statement (agreed by the 25 member states) stating clearly that ‘Turkey must apply the Protocol fully’ (Interview, Council of Ministers, 2006).

14 The vulnerability of the AK Party with Turkish domestic politics has been demonstrated by the opening of a case by the Turkish Constitutional Court on the accusation of harbouring a hidden agenda to build an Islamist state.
In the many meetings between Papadopoulos and Talat, agreement was never reached, despite the July 8 2006 ‘UN agreement’.

That will work in parallel but not supplant the working groups and technical committees agreed on 21 March 2008.

See Bailie and Azgin (2006) for an interesting account and analysis of how the Greek and Turkish Cypriot media projected a conflict-centred approach towards the opening of the Ledra Street opening in 2005-6.

Although the list of products that can be traded remains unchanged. The prohibition on animal products, which excludes honey and fish at present, remains in place.

This would not apply to cigarettes and alcohol.

The Papadopolous government, for example, instigated an ECJ suit in relation to the nature of disbursement of financial aid in the north over the issue of working with and thus recognising ‘state’ organisations in the north on a project in the energy sector.