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Ending the Fallacies and the Invasion: A “Small but Smart” State Strategy for Cyprus

Ilias Kouskouvelis

Another round of UN negotiations on Cyprus has failed in 2017. These negotiations were doomed to fail and so are any future ones, unless the four fallacies of the so-called Cyprus “problem” are countered with a “small but smart” state strategy.

Keywords: Strategy, Cyprus Problem, UN negotiations

Introduction

In the early morning of July 7, 2017, the negotiations under the auspices of the United Nations on the so-called Cyprus “problem” have ended in Switzerland. Another round of UN negotiations on Cyprus has failed. I am arguing, hereinafter, that this was an outcome to expect. These negotiations, as any previous, were doomed to fail for four reasons, which constitute the fallacies of the so-called Cyprus “problem”. The same is to happen in the future, unless the Republic of Cyprus deals with and counters the four fallacies with a “small but smart” state strategy.

Next, in the first part of this paper, I analyze the reasons why the negotiations have failed, the four fallacies, which are: (a) that we are dealing with a “problem” and not with an illegal invasion and occupation; (b) that Turkey wants to withdraw its forces from the island and cease being a guarantor power; (c) that Turkish Cypriots are free from Turkey to strike a deal with the Republic; and (d) that negotiations within the present distribution of power cannot provide the solution to the “problem”, as the invader is a much more

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powerful actor. Then, in the second part, building on my previous works on Cyprus' "small but smart" state strategy, I delineate the elements or the actions the Republic of Cyprus needs to take within the context of a "strategy", if it wishes to counter those fallacies and end the invasion. The elements of such a strategy are: the building a "poisonous shrimp" type of defense, the exploiting of the opportunities presented by the international system, the better management of its reputation, the use of the lessons learned from the past, the harnessing of the Republic's new regional partnerships, as well as that of its EU membership.

I conclude that such a strategy is important for the ending of both the political and intellectual fallacies and, more important, the invasion and occupation of the island. Let me now present the four fallacies and then turn to the "small but smart" state strategy for Cyprus.

2. The four fallacies¹

i) Fallacy One

The *first fallacy* is that international actors, international organizations, diplomats, and analysts are trying to understand first and deal then with a "problem", and not with a case of pure and brutal military invasion perpetrated by Turkey in 1974 and preserved illegally ever since.² This is where all starts and all ends: in the thought dominating (our) minds that we are to deal with a "problem" and not with a flagrant violation of almost all fundamental principals of the United Nations Charter and a series of non- implemented compulsory decisions of the Security Council.

As known, Turkey still maintains some 40.000 heavily armed troops on the island, presenting since 1974 an every day threat for the very existence of what is left territorially of the Republic of Cyprus, making us wonder how the Republic of Cyprus' citizens – EU citizens since 2004 – and its economy may endure such a situation. Turkey, as it was demonstrated in the negotiations, has not the intention to withdraw its occupation forces from the island!³ In addition,

¹ This part is an expanded version of a text published in *E-International Relations* as 'The Fallacies of the Cyprus "problem"', August 12, 2017; available at: <http://www.e-ir.info/2017/08/12/the-fallacies-of-the-cyprus-problem/>.

² On the invasion and its consequences see, "Historical Review of the Cyprus Question" Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cyprus available at: http://www.mfa.gov.cy/mfa/mfa2016.nsf/mfa08_en/mfa08_en?OpenDocument [accessed 30 March 2018]

³ "Cyprus Talks: Erdogan Dismisses Full Turkish Troop Withdrawal", *BBC*, 13 January 2017 [online], available at: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-38609828> [accessed 30 March 2018]

and perhaps more important, even if those troops were to be reduced, Turkey was adamantly against abandoning the status of the guarantor power, contrary to the intention of the other two guarantors, the United Kingdom and Greece.

Why? The official narrative says in order to guarantee the rights and the security of the Turkish Cypriots.⁴ Obviously, this is neither the real nor a convincing reason, as Turkey, given its record of human rights, cannot guarantee the rule of law, especially in an EU country. The real motive is the expansionist policy of Turkey, its appetite for Mediterranean energy resources, and its tactic to exercise through Cyprus pressure on Greece, the EU, and more broadly, the West.

ii) Fallacy Two

It is clear that Turkey does not want to contribute “solving” the “problem”. And this is the *second fallacy* committed by those who consider Turkey well-intentioned to solve the Cyprus “problem” now, under the rule of the AKP Party and of Erdoğan, and in the context of a favorable general and regional distribution of power. In fact, Turkey’s position on Cyprus was clearly stated many years ago by Ahmet Davutoğlu.⁵ The following excerpts from his book are more than explicit:

“It is not possible for a country that neglects Cyprus to have a decisive saying in the global and regional politics. It cannot be active in world politics, because this small island occupies a position which can directly affect the strategic links between Asia and Africa, Europe and Africa, and Europe and Asia. And it cannot be active in regional politics, because Cyprus has its eastern edge resembling an arrow that points to the Middle East, and its western edge establishing the cornerstone of the strategic balance among the eastern Mediterranean, the Balkans and North Africa.”⁶

“(…) Even if there was not one Muslim Turk there, Turkey had to maintain a Cyprus problem. No country can stay indifferent towards such an island, located in the heart of its very own vital space.”⁷

⁴ “Why are Turkish Troops in Cyprus?”, *TRTWORLD*, 5 July 2017 [online], available at: <http://www.trtworld.com/europe/why-are-turkish-troops-in-cyprus-394000> [accessed 30 March 2018]

⁵ He served successively as adviser to Erdoğan on foreign affairs, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Prime Minister.

⁶ Davutoğlu Ahmet, *Stratejik Derinlik. Türkiye'nin Uluslararası Konumu*, [Strategic depth: the international position of Turkey], 24th Edition, (Istanbul: Küre Yayınları, 2008), 176.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 179.

“Turkey needs to see the strategic advantage which it obtained... in the 1970s, not as the component of a Cyprus defence policy, directed towards maintaining the status quo, but as one of the diplomatic main supports of an aggressive maritime strategy.”⁸

Consequent to these views, Turkey not only does not end the illegal occupation, but it also increases problems for Cyprus. Most characteristic is the aggressive stance over the issue of energy resources discovered in the Cypriot Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and the prospect of their exploitation. Since 2010, in the very beginning, Turkey stated that has rights too on the resources, warned the countries of the region that supporting the moves of the Republic of Cyprus will have consequences in the Cyprus negotiations,⁹ and attempted to stop Cyprus and the various international companies to proceed with exploration.¹⁰ Then it moved on to an illegal agreement of delimiting the continental shelf with the self-proclaimed “Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus”, so as to carry out research into the area between itself and the northern coast of Cyprus.¹¹ It has repeatedly sent research and military vessels in the Cypriot EEZ, whenever and wherever surveys were being held out, in order to, according to Erdoğan’s statement, protect the Turkish interests, thus causing tension in the region and reaction on the part of Israel, the U.S.A., and the EU.

iii) Fallacy Three

From time to time Turkey remembers the Turkish Cypriots and declares that it maintains troops on the island and remains a guarantor in order to protect, among others, their rights on the Mediterranean energy resources. Despite the doubts about whose rights Turkey is protecting, Turkish or Turkish Cypriot, this raises a question relative to the political importance of the Turkish Cypriots and their ability to negotiate independently from Turkey the solution of the “problem”. It is the answer to this question that constitutes the third reason explaining the failure of negotiations and, at the same time, reveals the *third fallacy*.

⁸ Ibid., 180.

⁹ “Greek Cyprus to license offshore oil gas” *Hurriyet Daily News*, 5 January 2011, available at: <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/greek-cyprus-to-license-offshore-oil-gas-search.aspx?pageID=438&n=cyprus-to-license-offshore-oil-and-gas-search-2011-01-05> [accessed 5 January 2011]

¹⁰ “Turkey to deter gas exploration plans” *Hurriyet Daily News*, 5 August 2011, available at: <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkey-to-deter-gas-exploration-plans.aspx?pageID=438&n=turkey-to-deter-gas-exploration-plans-2011-08-05> [accessed 5 August 2011]

¹¹ “Turkey and N. Cyprus clear gas drill hurdle” *Hurriyet Daily News*, 21 September 2011, available at: <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkey-and-n-cyprus-clear-gas-drill-hurdle.aspx?pageID=438&n=turkey-and-n-cyprus-clear-gas-drill-hurdle-2011-09-21> [accessed 21 September 2011]

A big part of the negotiations was conducted between the leaders of the two communities, despite the fact that the one is the President of an internationally recognized state and the other the leader of a Community. But protocol, which no doubt matters in international relations, is not the obstacle here. The obstacle is that the Turkish Cypriots are so dependent on and from Turkey that they really do not have the ability to strike any deal if Turkey disagrees. It is therefore a *fallacy* to think that because the two communities on the island (perhaps genuinely) want to end the division, this is going to happen. And it is lost energy, human resources, political capital, time, money and unfulfilled hopes to have the impotent Turkish Cypriot leader discussing with a democratically elected, internationally recognized and with full power to strike a deal President of the Republic of Cyprus.

It is very nice having the two leaders meeting, taking the customary picture, and trying to solve the details of how a re-unified island and its government may work. But, it is also *fallacious*! Because, the solution of the Cyprus “problem” is totally dependent on the end of the occupation, which does not depend on the Turkish Cypriots! It depends on the Turkish government and particularly, at this moment, Erdoğan.

iv) Fallacy Four

Foreign actors, as well as domestic political and economic elites, often put pressure for negotiations to restart and a solution to be found. Truly, the word “negotiations” sounds nice and has by itself a positive impact to many citizens and politicians. Yet, this constitutes the *fourth fallacy*, as negotiations are not the panacea to all “problems”, particularly to an invasion perpetrated by a much more powerful actor.

The truth is that any negotiation is doomed to fail producing an acceptable result if it does not respect two of the basic preconditions set by the theory on negotiations. The first is that none of the sides perceives the issue under negotiations as a zero-sum game. Unfortunately, Ankara not only wants to legalize the status quo of the invasion, but also to maximize and expand further its benefits, especially, now, in the energy sector. The second condition is that the two sides are of a relative equal strength; negotiations between two unequal sides may lead the weaker conceding to the stronger. Again unfortunately, Cyprus is a “small” state, much weaker than Turkey; and as Thucydides has put it two-and-a-half thousand years ago “in the human reason (affairs) what is just (right) is determined by equal necessity (power), and those who are stronger do as they can and the weak acquiesce to.”¹²

¹² Thucydides, 5.89.

It is more than obvious that Cyprus can never become of an equal power to Turkey. Yet, the critical word in Thucydides' phrase is "necessity". And the necessity for Cyprus is to deal with its vulnerability and, thus, to increase its chances for survival or to further preserve its independence so as to pursue its main goal: to end the illegal occupation.

It seems that the only way it can succeed to reduce its necessity is by developing a tailored to its size and specificities "small but smart" state strategy. The International Relations literature on small states can be of great help to elaborate one.

3. A "small but smart" state strategy for Cyprus¹³

Cyprus' foreign policy can be characterized as one of survival.¹⁴ The peculiar circumstances of its independence and the illegal invasion and occupation that followed constrain Cyprus and make its foreign policy an endeavor next to the impossible.¹⁵

Cyprus, however, should exploit its smallness and follow a smart strategy in order to increase its influence.¹⁶ Smallness should not be mistaken for impotence.¹⁷ Several small states have managed to achieve their goals against more powerful actors.¹⁸ Yet, success does not come automatically with smallness; "small but smart" states may follow steps that other small states have successfully made.¹⁹

¹³ This part is based upon two works setting the framework for a "small but smart" state strategy; see Kouskouvelis Ilias, "Smart" Leadership in a Small State: The Case of Cyprus', in *The Eastern Mediterranean in Transition: Multipolarity, Politics and Power* eds. Tziampiris Aristotle and Litsas Spyridon, (Abingdon, 2015) 93-117; Kouskouvelis Ilias and Pedi Revecca, 'Cyprus' Reunification: from the "Momentum" trap to a "Small but Smart" State Strategy', *Eurodialogue: Journal of International Relations, European Economic & Social Studies*, 5 (2017), 19-34.

¹⁴ Melakopides Costas, "Cyprus, Small-Powerhood and the EU's Principles and Values" in *Small States in Europe: Challenges and Opportunities*, eds. Steinmetz R. and Wivel A., (Routledge, 2010) 161-179.

¹⁵ Kouskouvelis Ilias, "Small States Strategy in the International System: the Case of Cyprus" [in Greek], in *The Cyprus and the International System, 1945-1974: Seeking position in the world* ed. P. Papapolyviou et al. (Athens, 2013), 395-416; Ker-Lindsay, James. "Shifting alignments: The external orientations of Cyprus since independence." *The Cyprus Review* 22.2 (2010): 67-74.

¹⁶ Kouskouvelis, 2015.

¹⁷ Browning Christopher S., "Small, smart and salient? Rethinking identity in the small states literature." *Cambridge review of international affairs* 19.4 (2006): 669-684.

¹⁸ Baldacchino Godfrey, "Thucydides or Kissinger? A critical review of smaller state diplomacy." *The diplomacies of small states*. Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2009. 21-40.

¹⁹ Grøn, Caroline Howard, and Wivel Anders. "Maximizing influence in the European Union after the Lisbon Treaty: From small state policy to smart state strategy." *Journal of European Integration* 33.5 (2011): 523-539. Diana Panke, "Dwarfs in international negotiations: how small states make their voices heard." *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 25.3 (2012): 313-328.

i. The “poisonous shrimp” defense

The Republic of Cyprus will be facing always the disproportional strength of Turkey and its grandiose ambitions. Therefore it needs to preserve the independence of the free territories, in order to continue as a small state to pursue the ending both of the invasion and of its consequences. The Republic cannot become a larger state, but it may become again a normal state without foreign troops on its soil and without guarantees. The preservation of its independence, to a certain extent, depends on the Cypriot forces and their ability to defend the Republic. In the question, thus, whether a small state is able to defend itself, the answer is again positive, and the best example both in reality and in the literature is Singapore. This island-state has built a “total defence” concept, to which it owes the surname of “the poisonous shrimp”²⁰ or the “porcupine” (defence).²¹ As Ron Matthews and Nellie Zhang Yan point out, Singapore’s “total defence” concept is based on three elements, “a consensual society, a powerful economy, and a strong military”, of which Cyprus possesses the two.²² The result of this policy is that “Singapore’s national security strategy has led to this small country becoming the most militarily strong nation in South-East Asia”, and that Singapore turned out to be “an exception to the rule”, making size to appear “unimportant”.

Obviously Cyprus may follow a similar path and strengthen its defense forces. The aim cannot be anything else but to defend by deterring, meaning to be able to impose the appropriate cost to any aggressor; deterring is precisely the basic idea of the ‘poisonous shrimp’ or the ‘porcupine’ defense.

ii. Exploiting the international system

Cyprus has not always read the international system correctly.²³ Yet, and although small states feel the implications of anarchy more heavily than Big Powers, the international system provides them not only with constraints, but also with opportunities.²⁴

²⁰ See Richardson Michael, “Singapore’s poison-shrimp defence”, *The South China Morning Post*, 6 February 2004, available at: <http://www.scmp.com/article/443461/singapores-poison-shrimp-defence> [accessed 6 February 2004].

²¹ Pak Shun Ng., *From Poisonous Shrimp to Porcupine: An Analysis of Singapore’s Defence Posture Change in the Early 1980s*. No. 397. Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, 2005.

²² Ron Matthews and Zhang Yan Nellie. “Small country ‘total defence’: a case study of Singapore.” *Defence Studies* 7.3 (2007): 376-395 (393).

²³ Kouskouvelis, 2013; Kouskouvelis, 2015.

²⁴ Maass, Matthias. “Small states: Survival and proliferation.” *International Politics* 51.6 (2014): 709-728.

Right now there is an opportunity that Cyprus should not waste, namely the Western policy position on Crimea and the Eastern Ukraine. If the West is to accept for Cyprus any solution other than the one reversing the consequences of the illegal invasion and occupation, then it will give a free hand to Putin or to any other leader with revisionist ambitions.

The EU in its recently drafted Global Strategy states that it “will not recognise Russia’s illegal annexation of Crimea nor accept the destabilisation of eastern Ukraine.”²⁵ Thus the question is: will the EU accept any settlement that would legitimize the illegal invasion and occupation and destabilize Cyprus, one of its smallest member-states? What will be the message to the other small EU member-states, such as the Baltic States?

Thus, a solution terminating both the invasion and Turkey’s guarantor status is not just an issue of justice, but, most importantly, an issue of order in the international system. The Republic of Cyprus should warn the West of the policy implications of any double-standard solution, legalizing the 1974 Turkish invasion.

iii. Managing its reputation

In a “small but smart” strategy, reputation counts.²⁶ Small states make use of their smallness and appear as unthreatening and flexible, whereas a reputation for determination and high levels of success at the domestic level matter too. The Turkish side, as well as several opinion makers,²⁷ policy makers, and scholars, have portrayed the Greek side as rigid. Yet, the Greek Cypriots yearn for the reunification of their island. This is why they have made many concessions, without the expected reciprocity.²⁸ What is more, Greek Cypriots have more to lose than the Turkish Cypriots, a part of whom supports the island’s reunification in order to escape from Turkey’s authoritarian control.²⁹

²⁵ “European Global Strategy: Shared Vision, Common Action, A Stronger Europe: A Global Strategy for the European Union’s Foreign and Security Policy”, Brussels, 2016; *European External Action Service*, available at: http://eeas.europa.eu/top_stories/pdf/eugs_review_web.pdf. [accessed 30 March 2018]

²⁶ Pedi Revecca, *Theory of international relations: small states in the international system*, unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Department of International and European Studies, University of Macedonia, (Thessaloniki, 2016).

²⁷ I.e., Hannay David, “Cyprus: Lessons from the debacle of 2004 and the way ahead.” *The Round Table* 95.383 (2006): 95-100.

²⁸ Coufoudakis Van, “The Republic of Cyprus at Fifty: Challenges and Prospects.” *Mediterranean Quarterly* 22.2 (2011): 20-30.

²⁹ Levent Sener, “Who will guarantee us (Cypriots) against our guarantor (Turkey)?”, *mignatiou.com*, 29 October, 2016, available at: <http://mignatiou.com/2016/10/who-will-guarantee-us-cypriots-against-our-guarantor-turkey/> [accessed 30 March 2018]

Moreover, the Republic of Cyprus has an impressive record of recent achievements that have rendered it a respectable small state. First, despite pessimism³⁰ and due to their sacrifices and a consensus at the political level, Cypriots managed to overcome the economic crisis successfully. Furthermore, in spite of doubts regarding Cyprus' ability to cope with the administrative requirements of its EU membership,³¹ the Republic has managed to be an active member-state in issues that are of its interest and, what is more, to hold a successful EU Presidency.³²

Last but not least, Cyprus makes every effort to create political and economic value in the region; in cooperation with other states in the region, namely Israel, Egypt and Greece, and through their growing cooperation in many different sectors, they try to bring about peaceful change and increase opportunities for stability, prosperity and growth in the Eastern Mediterranean.³³ Such cooperation can be a 'game changer' in the area.

However, it is not only the reputation of a small state that matters, but also the reputation of its more powerful opponent, in this case, its aggressor.³⁴ Cyprus should spare no effort to express its concern over the authoritarian turn of Turkey, the massive violations of human rights, and Erdoğan's provocative actions and statements. In 2003, Congressman Payne wrote: "Turkey seems always poised to seize every opportunity to cash in on emerging crises and to bully its neighbors."³⁵ Thirteen years later nothing has changed. The "policy of zero problems with the neighbors" was just an effort to cover Turkey's neo-ottoman plans, as it had been pointed out quite early.³⁶

Cyprus should not stop pointing out everywhere and at all times that is a victim of an illegal invasion and of an occupation, which is becoming more and more authoritarian, more and more leaning towards religious fundamentalism. Cyprus should try consistently and strenuously to combat and eradicate the "problem" fallacy: that we are not dealing with a "problem", but with an invasion.

³⁰ Clarke Michael, "Cyprus: The Mouse That May Yet Roar." *Mediterranean Quarterly* 25.1 (2014): 95-104.

³¹ Nugent Neill, "Cyprus and the European Union: The significance of its smallness, both as an applicant and a member." *European Integration* 28.1 (2006): 51-71.

³² Christou George, "The Cyprus presidency of the EU: 'Real achievements' in a 'filoxenos topos'." *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 51. S1 (2013): 80-88.

³³ Tziampiris Aristotle, *The Emergence of Israeli-Greek Cooperation*, (Cham, 2015).

³⁴ Bjøl Erling, "The power of the weak." *Cooperation and Conflict* 3.2 (1968): 157-168.

³⁵ Payne Donald M., "Security in the Eastern Mediterranean: Bargaining with Law Breakers." *Mediterranean Quarterly* 14.1 (2003): 25-31.

³⁶ Kouskouvelis Ilias, "The Problem with Turkey's" Zero Problems." *Middle East Quarterly* (2013): 47-56.

iv. Lessons from the past

Cyprus should reflect on the lessons of its past. According to Reiter,³⁷ small states make their choices based on their past experiences; success is followed by continuity, while failure provokes innovation. The Republic knows well that if political arrangements are again dysfunctional, any solution will not last long and will put in danger its hard-won achievements.

Cypriot politicians should also recognize that unity pays back³⁸ and should try to form and maintain a long term common front. The rejection of the Annan Plan by the 76% of the Greek Cypriots shows that their society is united in their demand for a fair, functional, and viable solution. Politicians have to follow.

In its effort Cyprus should equally draw on legal, technical and moral argumentation, aiming at both the leaders and the international public opinion. Cyprus has underused its legal and moral advantages,³⁹ it has not clarified the consequences of a dysfunctional settlement and, what is more, it has not stressed to a satisfactory degree, the moral dimension of being the victim of an aggression.

The Republic of Cyprus has also failed to create a powerful narrative and achieve international recognition of the “Cyprus invasion” and of the Republic’s rights. At the same time, Turkey has continuously violated any UNSC resolution calling for a withdrawal of its army from the island.⁴⁰ Yet, it asks from Greek Cypriots to make more concessions, and although it is a force of occupation, it presents the Turkish Cypriots as victims.⁴¹ Cyprus has to use an effective political communication strategy and make use of both the traditional and the new media in order to project its positions.

Moreover, Cypriot politicians should at last learn from negative past experiences and deal with the fourth fallacy. Just negotiating with the Turkish Cypriots is not the answer and they should no longer do this. In fact, it is obvious that the Republic’s authorities are negotiating with two counterparts, the one after the other; it is first the Turkish Cypriots and then, in a second line (of defense or offense) it is Turkey. The negotiation benefits for Turkey are

³⁷ Reiter Dan., “Learning, realism, and alliances: The weight of the shadow of the past.” *World Politics* 46.4 (1994): 490-526.

³⁸ Kouskouvelis I., 2015.

³⁹ Coufoudakis V., 2011

⁴⁰ Zunes Stephen, “United Nations Security Council Resolutions Currently Being Violated by Countries Other than Iraq.” *Foreign Policy in Focus* 2 (2002), 1 October 2002, available at: http://fpif.org/united_nations_security_council_resolutions_currently_being_violated_by_countries_other_than_iraq/ [accessed 30 March 2018]

⁴¹ Coufoudakis V., 2011

obvious and the Republic's government needs to put an end to that. After all, it is not the Turkish Cypriots who invaded the island, but Turkey. Cyprus is a state and Turkey another, and if the latter truly wants peace, then either Turkey should sit at the negotiations table or, simply, withdraw its invasion and occupation forces.

v. Harnessing its new partnerships

Obviously, Cyprus needs active supporters. Lesser powers in the area, which also are threatened or their interests jeopardized by Turkey; big powers, such as France, Italy, and the US, with which Cyprus shares a common interest in its gas resources exploitation; Turkish Cypriots, who want to escape from Turkey's control; and the EU institutions and states, may all come as effective partners.

Cyprus has to continue building its cooperation networks in the region, as these networks have proven to be beneficial for its economy, prestige, and security; the existing relations should be deepened and solidified and new should be formed with moderate powers of the region, such as Jordan.

The Republic should also continue to cultivate closer ties with big powers, not only in the energy sector, but also in that of politics and security. Perhaps, it should clarify more its preferences towards the West, with which its political system, its economy, its society, and its energy future are interrelated.

vi. Harnessing its EU membership

As for the Union, the question whether the EU will work as a shelter for Cyprus remains crucial. According to Bailes, Thayer, and Thorhallsson,⁴² small states join alliances and international or regional organizations for economic, political, security and societal reasons. In this sense the alliance or the international/regional organization becomes a shelter for the small state which can benefit disproportionately, although usually at a cost in its autonomy. Indeed, Cyprus has been keen to become an EU member state mostly for security and societal reasons.⁴³

It is true that the EU membership has enhanced Cyprus' position vis-a-vis Turkey and has also increased its status, whereas provided to its citizens a much-wanted identity. The EU's support to any future negotiations, as well as to Turkish provocative behaviour can be critical. Cyprus has to lobby hard for its positions within the EU and remind to its partners firstly, that in a case of a

⁴² Bailes Alyson JK, Thayer Bradley A. and Thorhallsson Baldur. "Alliance theory and alliance 'Shelter': the complexities of small state alliance behaviour." *Third World Thematics: A TWQ Journal* 1.1 (2016): 9-26.

⁴³ Nuggent N., 2006

settlement it should be unacceptable for Turkey to any kind of influence or presence to an EU member state. Secondly, that, in a case of a non-agreement, Turkish aggressiveness and a *de facto* solution will become EU issues, and Cyprus cannot be left alone. And, thirdly, it should stress to other small states in the Central and Eastern Europe what it means for a small state to be threatened by a more powerful neighbour. Equally, Cyprus should systematically underline that its location and its stability are important to transatlantic institutions, as well as its cooperation with other powers in the region.

Conclusion

If anyone in the future wants genuinely to deal with the “problem”, she or he should start where all negotiations should have had started since 1974. The place is called Ankara, the country is Turkey, the leader now is Erdoğan, and what needs to be done is to end, first, the occupation and, second, the anachronism or the absurdity of a non-EU country guaranteeing the rule of law and the security of an EU member state!

If the Republic of Cyprus wants to increase its chances to end the illegal occupation of its territory, then it has to fight against these fallacies. To do so, Cyprus has to adopt and follow a “small but smart” state strategy. This strategy has to combine the elements that have been previously tested by other small states and are extensively analyzed in the International Relations literature.⁴⁴

Moreover, independently of the efforts that the Republic of Cyprus may or may not undertake, dealing with the fallacies of the Cyprus “problem” is important not just for policy purposes but also for intellectual and analytical reasons. Otherwise, we will continue living with the fallacies of what has been named a “problem”, masking the crucial fact that Turkey is the invader and small Cyprus the victim! Worst, the Greek and the Turkish Cypriots will continue living under the threat or the rule of a regime that considerably and consistently moves away from the secular orientation and becomes more and more authoritarian.

⁴⁴ Pedi Revecca, *Theory of International Relations: Small States in the International System*, Doctoral dissertation, University of Macedonia, 2016. available at: <http://thesis.ekt.gr/thesisBookReader/id/38599#page/1/mode/2up> [accessed 30 March 2018]

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