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Crossing the checkpoints (Online Article)



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Historical Note

This digital article was published in February of 2010, on the blog Reunification 2011.

Content

Crossing the checkpoints

Many times we focus our eyes towards the accomplishment of the agreement and ignore that reunification cannot be concentrated on a piece of paper, co-operation contract or constitution. Reunification is a social process in the minds of the Cypriots and upon the territory of Cyprus. It is the process of the perception and creation of a holistic Cyprus that pre-considers the defeat, not merely of the nationalisms, but also of the ethno-centrisms, north and south. It is the process of the equitable acceptance of the Other, of mutual respect and of coexistence. And above all, it is the process of challenging the division that has been imposed the previous half century.

2003 constitutes a pivotal point in Cypriot history. The opening of the checkpoints signified the beginning of a new period where reunification as an aim, gained a social basis and materiality. According to research, the majority of Cypriots crossed to the opposite side, at least once, while there exists a significant minority that crosses the checkpoints relatively often. This group that crosses the checkpoints, even for simply consumption reasons (I have described the more directly political aspect here http://nekatomata.blogspot.com/2009/09/blog-post_23.html), constitutes basically the magic of reunification. Because it comes into contact with the other community, challenges in practice the “borders” and more importantly undermines the dominant logic of partition that understands Cyprus as two separate pieces. The opening of Ledra street in 2008 consolidated this tendency. A visit at

Ledra street is enough for someone to come to the realization that coexistence is a fact – whether you are in the south or the north, the people are mixed. You realize that Cyprus is bilingual and bi-communal.

Of course what I am describing is a Nicosian perspective. It's as if Nicosia is a different country, I was told by two Paphians the other day, when we were walking around old city, north and south. Limassolians and Larnacians, who do not see Pentadaktylos, who do not experience the dead zone, must have a different perspective regarding the status quo as well. Nicosia was the place where the idea of partition began. It is here that we must overthrow it.

Needs Turkish Translation, Reunification 2011 (Website), Decade 2010-2019, 2010, Online Articles, Undefined Location, Checkpoints

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