

The First Constitution of the Republic of Cyprus and its Effect on the Greco-Turkish Ethnic Conflict

Abstract

The main purpose of this paper is to assess the impact of the first Cypriot constitution of 1960 on the following inter-ethnic violence, which broke out in 1963. Explanation of all the relevant political crises of the early Cypriot Republic right until the meltdown of the constitutional system, provides for a wider context in which a line can be drawn between the provisions stated by the constitution and the resulting local Greco-Turkish ethnic conflict.

The first half of this thesis comprises a rather theoretical view of the constitution, whose certain articles are cited whenever needed. It also includes some information about the historical and political background, summing up the causes behind the proclamation of independence itself, as well as the final shape of many controversial provisions offered by the constitution.

The second half sheds some light on the complex political crises caused in part by the reluctance of both national communities to co-operate when governing the state, in part by the very system outlined by the constitution. A few of the last sub-chapters deal with the aforementioned ethnic conflict of 1963 onwards, provoked by a then president Makarios' attempt to amend the constitution.