The Northern Cypriot Dream – Turkish Immigration 1974–1980

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Abstract

After the division of Cyprus in 1974 into a Greek Cypriot south and a Turkish Cypriot north, approximately 30,000 immigrants from Turkey moved to north Cyprus. The period between 1974 and 1980 is the time during which these immigrants arrived in northern Cyprus, and may be referred to as the first wave of immigration. This article seeks primarily to answer the question: Why did they immigrate to northern Cyprus? There are a lot of misperceptions about the movement of so many people from Turkey to north Cyprus; therefore it is important that this study creates an accurate and much-needed debate. In short, the first wave of immigration should be viewed as a result of the employment of state mechanisms as well as traditional pull factors: work opportunities, and a need for labour in north Cyprus. Once in northern Cyprus, these immigrants received housing, land, and aid plus help with other necessities such as food and supplies.

Keywords: immigration, Turkey, north Cyprus, settlers, Turkish Cypriots, refugees

Introduction

When Cyprus was divided in 1974, the leaders of the Turkish Cypriot community, with the help of Turkish authorities, initiated a policy of encouraging people from Turkey to move to northern Cyprus.[2] In addition to the relatively high number of casualties and missing persons, a population vacuum was created through the vast numbers of internally displaced persons. UNHCR estimated that there were circa 240,000 internally displaced as a result of the division of the island, of which approximately 180,000 were Greek Cypriots who moved south, and 60,000 were Turkish Cypriots who went north.[3] This obviously resulted in a vast amount of abandoned moveable and

1 This article is based on my master's thesis: H. Jensehaugen (2013) 'The Northern Cypriot Dream: The First Wave of Immigration from Turkey to North Cyprus – 1974–1980'. Unpublished Master Thesis from the University of Oslo.

2 H.A. Richter (2010) *A Concise History of Modern Cyprus, 1878–2009*, Mainz and Ruhpolding: Franz Philipp Rutzen, p. 202; C. Ramm (2009) 'Turkish Cypriots, Turkish "Settlers" and (Trans)National Identities between Turkish Nationalism, Cypriotism and Europe'. Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, Ruhr University, Bochum.

3 Author's e-mail correspondence with Ishak, UNHCR Representation in Cyprus, 18 April 2011; H.A. Richter (2010), *op. cit.*, p. 14.

immovable property on both sides of the divide. It is in this context that the Turkish government and the leaders of the Turkish Cypriot community identified the need to fill this vacuum and, recognising the possibility of utilising and exploiting the forsaken Greek Cypriot property, initiated a policy of encouraging people from Turkey to move to northern Cyprus. The period 1974 to 1980,[4] which may be denoted as the first wave of immigration as the period is enchased by the division of Cyprus in 1974 and the *coup d'état* in Turkey in 1980, may be distinguished from later waves of immigration, which were of a less centrally organised nature but have also resulted in a great influx of immigrants from Turkey. Studying solely the incorporation of Turkish immigrants in north Cyprus,[5] this article seeks to answer the following questions: Why did Turkish people immigrate to northern Cyprus? Why were the immigrants from Turkey needed in north Cyprus in this period? And lastly, was the first wave of immigration successful in contributing to both an economic and political independence from the Greek Cypriot south?

The subject of Turkish immigration to northern Cyprus is a highly politicised one, and brings forth strong emotions and opinions on both sides of the divide. The fact that Turkey was so involved in the immigration process has led many to apply the term 'settler' to describe the mainland Turks who came to northern Cyprus after 1974. The anthropologist Rebecca Bryant, who has written extensively on the Turkish Cypriot people and northern Cyprus, argues that the immigrants, or *göçmenler* [6] in Turkish, who arrived during this period 'do not resemble settlers in other colonial nationalist projects such as Israel ... and quite a few knew little about Cyprus when they arrived'.[7] Not only were many unable to locate Cyprus on a map prior to arriving, but they often had no other option than to leave their homes and villages in Turkey, for various reasons mentioned later. They were, however, given houses and land upon arrival and, in most cases, citizenship to the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus (TFSC)[8] (and became citizens of the Turkish

4 After the *coup d'état* in Turkey on 12 September 1980, migration to northern Cyprus halted for a few years. Martial law was put in place following the coup and it became difficult for ordinary Turks to obtain a passport, and the permission to leave the country. Thus, 1980 marks the end of the first wave of Turkish immigration to north Cyprus.

5 Due to the spatial limits of this article, it seeks only to study the actual incorporation of immigrants from Turkey during the limited time period of 1974–1980, and will therefore not study conditions and events in Turkey at the time or look in detail at other regional examples of similar phenomena. These are certainly subjects in need of in-depth study and should be themes of other articles and further research.

6 The Turkish word *göçmen* refers both to immigrants and refugees/displaced persons. A. Gürel (2012) *Displacement in Cyprus: Consequences of Civil and Military Strife: Report 4: Turkish Cypriot Legal Framework*, PRIO Report 4/2012, p. 18.

7 R. Bryant and C. Yakinthou (2012) *Cypriot Perceptions of Turkey*, Istanbul: TESEV, p. 27.

8 Although terms for the northern part of the island are referred to in this essay as the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus (TFSC) from 1975, or the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) from 1983, it is acknowledged

Republic of Northern Cyprus after its unilateral declaration of independence in 1983), either immediately upon arrival or later. During the first wave of immigration, approximately 25,000 immigrants from Turkey were given citizenship of the TFSC.[9] This led many, especially in the south, to look on them as colonisers whose objective was to take advantage of the Turkish Cypriots and forever change the demographics of the island. From the 1990s and 2000s this view has gained influence in the north as well, and there is an increasing fear among the Turkish Cypriots that they are being 'outnumbered by immigrants from Turkey'.[10] But this view is based more on later immigration waves than on the first wave.

Although it is clear that the Turkish immigrants came as part of a deliberate policy to consolidate Turkish Cypriot control over northern Cyprus and ensure economic self-sufficiency from the Greek Cypriots, many of the Turkish immigrants came to northern Cyprus on their own initiative, something both senior researcher at PRIO Mete Hatay and this research have shown.[11] The fact that the Turkish Cypriot authorities offered deserted Greek Cypriot 'land, houses and livestock to villagers who would migrate to Cyprus' was, unquestionably, a major factor involved when they made the decision to move there.[12] Therefore, whether the immigrants came on their own initiative or not, which is subject to nuances and debates, the Turkish Cypriot administration had a clear incorporation policy designed to increase the population of the north and utilise abandoned Greek Cypriot-owned land.

Professor John McGarry, in his article '"Demographic engineering": the state-directed movement of ethnic groups as a technique of conflict regulation', has examined the ways in which states can encourage or force the movement of an ethnic group to another region: that is 'demographically engineer' an area. 'Agents' are, according to McGarry, given advantages such as housing, work and/or land.[13] They are provided for in a new location because they 'are intended to perform a function on behalf of the state.'[14] McGarry claims that '[a]gents are settled in particular

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that neither the TFSC nor the TRNC were or are recognised by the international community except Turkey.

9 R. Bryant (2010) *The Past in Pieces: Belonging in the New Cyprus*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, p. 43.

10 R. Bryant and C. Yakinthou (2012), *op. cit.*, p. 27; M. Hatay (2007) *Is the Turkish Cypriot Population Shrinking?: An Overview of the Ethno Demography of Cyprus in the Light of the Preliminary Results of the 2006 Turkish Cypriot Census*. PRIO Report 2/2007.

11 M. Hatay (2005) *Beyond Numbers: An Inquiry into the Political Integration of the Turkish 'Settlers' in Northern Cyprus*, PRIO Report 4/2005, p. 13; H. Jensehaugen (2013), *op. cit.*

12 K.K. Fosshagen (2008) *Island of Conjecture: State Modalities and Historical Trajectories in Cyprus*, Bergen: University of Bergen, p. 209.

13 J. McGarry (1998) '"Demographic Engineering": The State-directed Movement of Ethnic Groups as a Technique of Conflict Regulation', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 4, London: Routledge, p. 619.

14 *Ibid.*, pp. 614–615, 619.

regions to consolidate the state's control of the area and its resources' and in that way are used as demographic facts on the ground in order to solidify the state's control over a disputed area.[15]

People may also simply move on their own initiative through ordinary push-pull factors, such as socio-economic considerations. At the same time, McGarry argues that '[p]olitical authorities can manipulate push-pull factors' in a way that hides forced or encouraged movement behind a veil of seemingly normal economic or social factors.[16] In the case of north Cyprus, promises of a better life, through the provision of housing and land, certainly contributed to the considerable extent and number of immigrants in this period. There was a need in northern Cyprus for the Turkish Cypriots to cement their control over their new territorial acquisitions.[17] There were also significant agricultural resources, which were unexploited due to the flight of Greek Cypriots following the war that needed to be taken care of. This was a clear incentive to settle 'agents'.

Developments in Northern Cyprus 1974–1980

As with any area involved in a war, the Turkish intervention of July and August 1974 had significant negative impacts on the political, social and economic development of northern Cyprus. Although north Cyprus, which consisted of 36% of the island, possessed fertile lands and the most developed tourist areas of Cyprus, it was the hardest hit economically. This was largely attributed to a population that was too small to fully take advantage of the economic potential of the north, but also a result of trade restrictions due to the illegality of the division of the island. Consequently, after 1974, the political, social and economic structures of northern Cyprus were increasingly influenced from Turkey.[18] It was in this context of close co-operation with Turkey, that the first wave of immigration was made possible.

The relocation of populations between north and south was largely completed by the end of 1974 as people on both sides had fled because of the war. However, most of those remaining on the 'wrong' side of the Buffer Zone were transferred after August 1975. The Vienna III Agreement had been concluded on 2 August 1975 between Denktaş as representative of the Turkish Cypriot community and Glafcos Clerides as representative of the Greek Cypriots.[19] The Turkish Cypriots, in contrast to what Vienna III actually stated, interpreted the agreement as a population exchange and referred to it 'as the "1975 Vienna Population Exchange Agreement" or the "Voluntary Re-

15 *Ibid.*, p. 616.
16 *Ibid.*, pp. 617, 619.
17 *Ibid.*, pp. 629–630.
18 H.A. Richter (2010), *op. cit.*, pp. 199–200; B. Morvaridi (1993b) 'Social Structure and Social Change' in C.H. Dodd (ed.), *The Political, Social and Economic Development of Northern Cyprus*, Huntingdon: The Eothen Press, p. 266.
19 Z.M. Necatigil (1989) *The Cyprus Question and the Turkish Position in International Law*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 128.

Grouping of Population Agreement".[20] The great majority of Turkish Cypriots who found themselves in southern Cyprus following the war took up the offer as stated in the agreement, to move north. As a result, after about two months only 130 Turkish Cypriots remained in the south. On the other hand, the Greek Cypriot population in northern Cyprus dwindled at a slower pace (in 1978 there were still 1,600 Greek Cypriots living in north Cyprus).[21]

The Turkish Cypriot's erroneous reading of the agreement was due to their principle view on the solution to the Cyprus conflict, namely that 'bizonality is the *key* [their italics] parameter of a settlement'.[22] Therefore, as a consequence of the agreement, both the north and the south of the island were more or less completely ethnically cleansed by 1975. The Turkish Cypriot interpretation of the Vienna III Agreement was a major element in their desire to turn Cyprus into a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation.[23] For the Turkish Cypriots, the idea of a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation would consist of two strictly geographically and ethnically separated autonomous states, unified politically as a Federal Republic of Cyprus.[24] Polemics over what a future federation may consist of aside, one major point that was left out of the inter-communal discussions altogether was the issue of the Turkish immigrants who had moved, and continued to move, to northern Cyprus following the Turkish intervention in 1974.

The increasing presence of immigrants from mainland Turkey augmented the sense, outside of the north, that Turkey was colonialising northern Cyprus. Renaming villages, in addition to turning churches into mosques, was a part of the desire to 'Turkify' the north and create 'an "ethnic democracy" only for Turks'.[25] Furthermore, it was part of the policy of achieving cultural and political independence from the Greek Cypriots. Another means to reaching this goal was the removal and eradication of symbols and elements of Greek and Greek Cypriot culture and history, and replacing them with Turkish ones, such as statues of Kemal Atatürk.[26] These policies appear to have been steps towards creating a wholly independent 'Turkified' Turkish Cypriot state, rather than a Federal Cypriot Republic. 'The main strategy of Turkification was to convince the newcomer Turks from Turkey ... and the Turkish Cypriots ... that this is a Turkish place, both in

20 A. Gürel and K. Özersay (2006) *The Politics of Property in Cyprus: Conflicting Appeals to 'Bizonality' and 'Human Rights' by the Two Cypriot Communities*, PRIO Report 3/2006, p. 18.

21 *Ibid.*, pp. 17–18; 'TRNC' Archive Doc. No. 873.

22 A. Gürel and K. Özersay (2006), *op. cit.*, p. 15; J. Ker-Lindsay (2011) *The Cyprus Problem: What Everyone Needs to Know*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 78–79.

23 H.A. Richter (2010), *op. cit.*, pp. 203–204.

24 J. Ker-Lindsay (2011), *op. cit.*, pp. 78–79; C. Ramm (2009), *op. cit.*, p. 195.

25 C. Ramm, (2009), *op. cit.*, p. 208.

26 C.P. Ioannides (1991) *In Turkey's Image: The Transformation of Occupied Cyprus into a Turkish Province*, New Rochelle: Catatzas, p. 184; M. Jansen (2005) *War and Cultural Heritage: Cyprus after the 1974 Turkish Invasion*, Minnesota Mediterranean and East European Monographs, No. 14, Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press.

the present and for a future that is detached from the past.'[27] Cyprus was being transformed into two geographically and culturally separated parts.[28]

The immigration policy, and its cultural implications, did not receive exclusively positive reactions from the Turkish Cypriots. In effect, the former Vice President of the Republic of Cyprus, the Turkish Cypriot Fazıl Kutçuk claimed that the immigrants 'had sectarian conflicts among them ... lived away from each other because of blood feuds and who belonged to two different faiths', and was for that reason highly sceptical of their arrival.[29] There was, and remains to be, a sense among Turkish Cypriots that they themselves are 'Turks, but they have developed a culture with its own norms, values and belief systems', which has increasingly become threatened by the influx of immigrants from the more traditional and religious areas of Turkey.[30] Due to these cultural differences, after the initial Turkish Cypriot enthusiasm for the Turkish immigrants slowly faded, there developed an identity distinction between Turkish Cypriots and immigrants from Turkey specific to the class and social standing of the mainland Turks.[31] What is more, on account of the mostly humble background of the immigrants, they were often looked down upon by the Turkish Cypriots. Those who emigrated from Turkey were generally disadvantaged, both economically and socially.[32] The immigrants, for the most part, were poor labourers or farmers predominantly from areas of Turkey where few work opportunities existed or where entire villages and towns were being uprooted because of large development projects, such as the construction of major dams or highways.[33] The social anthropologist Dr Yael Navaro-Yashin, writing about the Turkish immigrants in Cyprus, claims that increasingly with time '[c]onflict with "Greek Cypriots" did not preoccupy or worry them [the Turkish Cypriots] as much as their everyday experiences of living with settlers from Turkey', but as previously mentioned, this became a more prevalent and pressing issue from the 1990s onwards.[34]

The area in which the developments in northern Cyprus were mostly controlled and influenced by Turkey was the economy. During the civil war period of 1963–1974, the Turkish

27 A. Göker (2012) 'Senses of Belonging and "Belongings" and Making "Home" Away from Home', in R. Bryant and Y. Papadakis (eds.), *Cyprus and the Politics of Memory: History, Community and Conflict*, London / New York: IB Tauris, p. 132.

28 K. Kyle (1997) *Cyprus: In Search of Peace*, London: Minority Rights Group International, p. 19.

29 C. Hitchens (1984) *Cyprus*, London: Quartet books, p. 111.

30 B. Morvaridi (1993b) 'Social Structure and Social Change', *op. cit.*, p. 266.

31 *Ibid*; C. Ramm (2009) *op. cit.*, pp. 305–306. The discussion about how the Turkish immigrants are perceived by the Turkish Cypriots is beyond the scope of this article but it is an interesting phenomenon, which became a particularly important and heated issue from the 1990s onwards.

32 Author's private audio-recorded interview with H. Atun conducted on 22 February 2013.

33 R. Bryant and C. Yakinthou (2012), *op. cit.*, p. 27; M. Hatay (2005), *op. cit.*, p. 12; Interview with H. Atun.

34 Y. Navaro-Yashin (2006) 'De-ethnicizing the Ethnography of Cyprus: Political and Social Conflict between Turkish Cypriots and Settlers from Turkey', in Y. Papadakis, N. Peristianis and G. Welz (eds), *Divided Cyprus: Modernity, History and an Island in Conflict*, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, p. 87.

Cypriots mainly lived in enclaves beyond the reach of the Cyprus government, and were therefore hardly involved in the politics and economy of the state. The length of the period in which they were absent from government meant that they were to a large extent inexperienced in the fields of public and economic management.[35] As a result, although in control of fertile and agriculturally opportune areas after the Turkish intervention in 1974, 'the Turkish Cypriots had to start from very little when Northern Cyprus claimed its own boundaries ... and installed its own government'.[36] Many of the sectors of the northern Cypriot economy were underemployed due to the population vacuum created by the forced exodus of circa 180,000 Greek Cypriots. Further, the economic situation was characterised by high inflation rates, rising cost of living and labour unrest.[37] According to Hakkı Atun, north Cyprus' first Minister of Housing and Rehabilitation, there were three main economic objectives for the Turkish Cypriot authorities in this period, namely 'to direct the economy, to make best use of the idle factors of production, [and] to prepare the way to planned economy'.[38] Paradoxically, with the agricultural potential of north Cyprus, the Turkish Cypriots were to a large degree dependent on imported food from Turkey. Despite having resource potential, northern Cyprus' economic development was slow. The reason for this discrepancy is probably ascribed to inefficient policies. It may, however, also be explained by the lack of international recognition and the consequent embargo on north Cyprus. Turkey attempted to save the damaged northern Cypriot economy by contributing to funding the budget, giving aid and sending experts and not least immigrants, who could fill the thin workforce.[39]

Turkish Immigration

Because of the large exodus of Greek Cypriots and a much smaller influx of Turkish Cypriots, north Cyprus experienced a net loss of circa 120,000 inhabitants.[40] As a consequence the authorities in northern Cyprus concluded a 'co-operation and development project' with Turkey.[41]

35 'TRNC' Archive Doc. No. 81; Author's private audio-recorded interview with K. Atakol conducted on 12 March 2013.

36 M.E. Olgun (1993) 'Economic Overview', in C.H. Dodd (ed.), *The Political Social and Economic Development of Northern Cyprus*, Huntington: The Eothen Press, pp. 271–272.

37 C. Ramm (2009), *op. cit.*, p. 201; C.H. Dodd (1993) 'From Federated State to Republic', in C.H. Dodd (ed.), *The Political Social and Economic Development of Northern Cyprus*, pp. 111-112; 'TRNC' Archive Doc. No. 1564; 'TRNC' Archive Doc. No. 905.

38 'TRNC' Archive Doc. No. 89.

39 C. Ramm (2009), *op. cit.*, p. 207; Interview with K. Atakol; Author's private audio-recorded interview with V. Çelik conducted on 11 March 2013; Interview with H. Atun; Author's private interview with Onurhan conducted on 18 April 2013.

40 E-mail correspondence with N. Ishak.

41 H. Atun (2007) 'Kıbrıs'ta Göçmenlerin İskanı' [Settlement of Immigrants in Cyprus], Rapor 6, Uluslararası Kıbrıs Araştırmaları Kongresi için, 24–26 Ekim 2007 [Report for the 6th International Congress on Cyprus Studies, 24–26 October 2007], pp. 383–397: Document in the possession of Hakkı Arun.

This agreement aimed at facilitating the incorporation of the 90,000 or more refugees and immigrants that entered north Cyprus in the period from 1974 to 1980. Between 30,000 and 45,000 of these were immigrants from Turkey,[42] and were of various ethnic, linguistic and geographic backgrounds.[43]

The large majority of the migrants who went to north Cyprus in the first wave of immigration were from the following regions: the Trabzon province in the East Black Sea sub-region; the Samsun province of the West Black Sea sub-region; the Konya province of the Central Anatolia region; the Adana, Antalya and Mersin provinces of the Mediterranean region; the Diyarbakır province of the South eastern Anatolian region; and the Muş province of the Eastern Anatolian region.[44] This corresponds with where the bulk of those who emigrated within Turkey and those who moved abroad came from. Moreover, the ethnic make-up of the Turkish emigrants was heterogeneous. They hailed from many different backgrounds. Among the most common ethnic and linguistic groups in the first wave of immigration were Turkish, Yörük, Laz – a people from the East Black Sea sub-region; and Kurdish.[45]

For the new Turkish Cypriot political entity in northern Cyprus, one of the main economic objectives was 'to make best use of the idle factors of production'.[46] One of the most important aspects of taking advantage of idle resources was encouraging immigration from Turkey. Nonetheless, the first task was the resettlement of Turkish Cypriots who moved to northern Cyprus from the south side following the 1974 war. From 20 July 1974 until the end of 1975, more than half of all Turkish Cypriots were displaced as a result of the war. Many of them moved north, with the aid of UNFICYP, after the signing of the Vienna III Agreement on 2 August 1975, as stipulated in the agreement's first article.[47] The Turkish Cypriot refugees from the south were understandably the group to consider foremost as regards the use of resources that were suddenly in Turkish Cypriot hands after the division of the island. More importantly, this group was crucial

42 There remains a great degree of uncertainty about the exact number of immigrants that came to north Cyprus in this period, and there are no confirmed figures. The numbers often vary according to which sources one reads.

43 H. Atun (2007), 'Kıbrıs'ta Göçmenlerin İskanı' [Settlement of Immigrants in Cyprus], *op. cit.*

44 M. Hatay (2005), *op. cit.*, p. 12; B. Morvaridi (1993a) 'Demographic Change, Resettlement and Resource Use', in C.H. Dodd (ed.), *The Political Social and Economic Development of Northern Cyprus*, p. 228.

45 B. Ekenoglu (2012) 'Ethnic Identity Formation of the Kurdish Immigrants in North Cyprus: Analyzing Ethnic Identity as Social Identity and the Effects of Social Otherization in North', Unpublished Master Thesis from University of Amsterdam, p. 7; C.P. Ioannides (1991), *op. cit.*, pp. 36–39.

46 'TRNC' Archive Doc. No. 89.

47 A. Gürel, M. Hatay and C. Yakinthou (2012) *Displacement in Cyprus: Consequences of Civil and Military Strife. Report 5: An Overview of Events and Perceptions*, PRIO Report 5/2012, p. 11; A. Gürel and K. Özersay (2006) *op. cit.*, pp. 11–20; United Nations Security Council, 'Interim Report of the Secretary-General Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 370 (1975)'. UN Document S/11789, 5 August 1975. Source found on United Nations' 'Documents' website, 15 February 2006, available at [http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N75/151/45/PDF/N7515145.pdf?OpenElement], accessed on 3 November 2013.

for the creation of a Turkish Cypriot political entity. In effect, article 32, number 2 of the 'constitution' of the 'Turkish Federated State of Cyprus' specifies that '[r]efugees shall have priority in the distribution of land'.[48]

In consequence, a ministry with the main objective of housing the internally displaced Turkish Cypriots, and relocating immigrants from Turkey, was set up following the division of the island. On the authority of Hakkı Atun and Tamer Gazioglu, Chief of Resources, Inventory and Statistics Section in Atun's department, there was a concise methodology used in the process of resettling Turkish Cypriots from southern Cyprus and settling immigrants from Turkey.[49] Comparing the process with the exchange of population between Greece and Turkey in the 1920s, Atun argued, in a personal interview, that the case of northern Cyprus 'was much more orderly and scientific'.[50] It involved preparing a list of all the properties and land that Turkish Cypriots had left in the south. Furthermore,

> '[t]he same survey was carried out for each empty settlement in the north, and the number and type of the existing houses, shops and workshops and the amount and type of agricultural resources, existing infrastructure and means of communications and degree of accessibility was found out.'[51]

The large exodus of people from the north compared to a much smaller influx meant that 'the land and settlements, houses and villages, even parts of towns were empty. So we had to house these empty settlements, and we had to irrigate and look after the land', stated Atun.[52]

Initially, it was widely believed that resettlement and movement to the north was only a temporary measure that would be reversed once the situation on the island calmed down again, and a solution to the conflict was found. This had partially been the case during previous periods of civil strife.[53] So, many saw the movement to the north purely as an interim situation. Gazioglu admitted that even at the administrative level, many believed it was only temporary.[54] As a result, 'no title deeds were given and people never spent even one penny to paint, [or] to repair the homes that they were living in, because they thought "this does not belong to me, why should I invest money in it? I might be thrown away one day"'.[55] As time went on, and a solution was still not reached, ownership rights were eventually given to those Turkish Cypriots who had abandoned

48 'TRNC' Archive Doc. No. 36.
49 Interview with H. Atun; Author's private audio-recorded interview with T. Gazioğlu conducted on 21 February 2013.
50 Interview with H. Atun.
51 'TRNC' Archive Doc. No. 89.
52 Interview with H. Atun.
53 R. Bryant (2012) *op. cit.*, p. 9.
54 Interview with T. Gazioğlu.
55 *Ibid.*

properties in the south and moved north. Political pressure and dissatisfaction from the refugee population resulted in the Resettlement, Land Distribution, and Equivalent Property Law (*İTEM* Law) for the handing over of such ownership rights.[56] The law was passed on 3 August 1977. Its aim was to make legal the policies carried out in between 20 July 1974 and 3 August 1977 in relation to the 'provision of land, equipment, livestock and loans to those in the agricultural sectors' and 'provision, in accordance with family size, of adequate social housing and essential household goods' to both refugees and immigrants.[57] Thus, the law was both retroactive and proactive.

The Turkish Cypriots refugees who had been allocated properties in the north were then given ownership rights and therein the right to sell and pass on their new properties in accordance with the *İTEM* Law. With the definitive possessory certificates, showing that the properties awarded to the displaced persons legally belonged to them, the Turkish Cypriot refugees 'started to repair their houses ... to upgrade them, to paint them ... to add a new room next to it'.[58] In parallel to and following the resettlement of Turkish Cypriot refugees, immigrants from Turkey were settled in northern Cyprus using a similar methodology.

By 9 September 1974, less than a month after the completion of Turkey's second intervention in Cyprus, 'Turkish mainland authorities announced that 5,000 farm workers were to be sent to Cyprus as 'seasonal workers' to look after the abandoned farms and orchards.'[59] The Minister of Defence and Foreign Affairs of the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus at the time, Vedat Çelik, insisted that contrary to widespread belief, it was the Turkish Cypriot authorities that demanded the importation of a labour force from Turkey. As stated by him, the Turkish authorities did not promote the immigration of mainlanders.[60] Nevertheless, they were vital in order to carry out the migration process. With vast amounts of land compared to population size, the Turkish Cypriot authorities needed to make up for the loss through the importation of labour from mainland Turkey. In the calls for labour that were communicated to villages in Turkey, it was specified that people were needed to improve the economy of the region, especially within the agricultural sector.[61] Çelik argued that 'we had to bring in [a] labour force from Turkey because ... although we now consider ourselves to be populated, then we were very, very under-populated and we couldn't

56 Commonly referred to as the *İTEM* Law: *İskan, Topraklandırma ve Eşdeğer Mal Yasası* in Turkish.

57 Interview with T. Gazioğlu; Interview with H. Atun; A. Gürel (2012), *op. cit.*, pp. 23–24.

58 Interview with T. Gazioğlu; Author's private audio-recorded interview with A. Gürel conducted on 21 February 2013.

59 C. Hitchens (1984), *op. cit*, p. 105.

60 Interview with V. Çelik.

61 Türkiye Cumhuriyeti İl Toprak ve İskan Müdürlüğü [The Turkish Republic Provincial Land and Housing Directorate], 'Duyuru Antalya Valiliğinden' [Announcement from the Antalya Governorship], 3 April 1975: Document in the possession of Mustafa Yeşil.

cope with the agricultural requirements at the time.'[62]

Immigrants who came in the first wave of arrivals lived in a total of 87 locations. At the time there were three cities and towns and 200 villages in northern Cyprus, meaning that nearly half of all villages, towns and cities were used for the settlement of immigrants from Turkey. All four districts: Kyrenia, Famagusta, Nicosia, and Larnaca, that fell within the de-facto 'borders' of northern Cyprus, were used for the settlement of immigrants from Turkey. On the whole, the immigrants were provided with houses and land in villages and towns that were on the periphery, and well away from the major cities and towns. The villages of Liveras/Sadrazamköy, in the Kyrenia district, and Rizokarpasso/Dipkarpaz, in the Famagusta district, are the best examples of this practice. Notably, villages in close proximity to the main cities were not used to house the immigrants. The villages and towns of Gerolakkos/Alayköy, Mia Milia/Haspolat, Neo Chorio/Minareliköy, Palaikythro/Balıkesir, and Kythrea/Değirmenlik, on the outskirts of Nicosia, and Ekgomi/Tuzla, Stylloi/Mutluyaka, Agios Sergios/Yeni Boğaziçi, and Liminia/Mormenekşe, surrounding Famagusta, are exceptions in this regard. None of the major cities, with the notable exception of Famagusta, housed immigrants. The majority of the 87 locations were mixed. That is, their inhabitants consisted of the original Turkish Cypriot population plus Turkish Cypriot refugees and immigrants from Turkey (and, in a very small number of cases in the Karpasia Peninsula, the original Greek Cypriot inhabitants). However, there were only a few villages that were entirely occupied by immigrants from the mainland. The most peripheral area of north Cyprus, the Karpasia Peninsula, was widely used for housing immigrants from Turkey, and became inhabited mostly by these newcomers. The cities and towns that were vital for citrus production, such as Morphou/Güzelyurt and Varosha/Maraş, a suburb of Famagusta, were essentially used for the settlement of immigrants. Another important trend was that villages along the northern coast of Cyprus, particularly west of Kyrenia, housed immigrants from the Black Sea region of Turkey.[63]

Those who came as part of '[t]he systematic settlement policy pursued by Turkey and the Turkish Cypriot government' were a part of both a political and economic deliberation.[64] The political aspect involved increasing the population of north Cyprus, and the consolidation of an independent Turkish Cypriot entity in the north. The economic aspects of the policy took in those aspirations of reaching the same goal: independence from the Greek Cypriots in the south through economic self-sufficiency. Conspicuously, most of the immigrants in the first wave were farmers

62 Interview with V. Çelik.

63 'TRNC' Archive Doc. No. 873; 'TRNC' Archive Doc. No. 89; A. Gürel, M. Hatay, N. Trimikliniotis, O. Demetriou, R. Bryant and C. Yakinthou (2013), *Internal Displacement in Cyprus: Mapping the Consequences of Civil and Military Strife. Internal Displacement in Cyprus*, PRIO Cyprus Centre, 30 September 2011, available at [http://www.prio-cyprus-displacement.net/default.asp?id=245], accessed on 21 May 2013.

64 C. Ramm (2009), *op. cit.*, p. 215.

sent to northern Cyprus in order to cultivate the fertile agricultural lands that were deserted through the exodus of Greek Cypriots. In northern Cyprus the Turkish immigrants were issued with dwelling, land and agricultural equipment according to their family size.[65] The large number of immigrants, totalling between 30,000 and 45,000 that arrived in northern Cyprus within a seven-year period, from 1974 until 1980, gives perspective to the haste with which the resettlement was carried out.[66] Atun specifies that the authorities had to be quick and timely in the immigration process because 'there were gardens in need of irrigation, land waiting to be cultivated and fruit trees that needed to be picked'.[67] For these reasons there was an urgent need for sufficient labour from Turkey to undertake the necessary work.

In addition to the labour immigration, there was a group of Turkish soldiers who had settled in north Cyprus following the 1974 war. They had either participated in the Turkish intervention of 1974 or had been part of the Turkish military contingent stationed in Cyprus in compliance with the Treaty of Alliance of 1960. Moreover, the families of soldiers who had lost their lives in the intervention were also invited to move to north Cyprus. They were assigned land, housing, immovable property, and citizenship by the Turkish Cypriot authorities and were often cited as proof that Turkey was 'Turkifying' northern Cyprus through militarisation. In truth, relatively few soldiers and veterans moved to north Cyprus following the war.[68] The primary goal of the immigration, at least in the beginning, was arguably to rebuild the economy and enable unused land to be cultivated.

While it may be true that later immigration led to widespread discrimination and xenophobia against Turkish immigrants, initially it appears that the Turkish Cypriots generally greeted them with open arms. The first immigrants of the 1970s were mostly seen as saviours – viewed as both an extension and the representatives of Turkey. In the opinion of most immigrants, politicians and officials interviewed,[69] they had saved the Turkish Cypriots from perceived inevitable destruction and annihilation. Yusuf Suiçmez, who came to northern Cyprus towards the end of 1975, remembers the reception and sentiments they encountered from the Turkish Cypriots when they met. He recalls that 'they [the Turkish Cypriots] were very respectful to the Turks [immigrants]'.[70] There may also have been a feeling of appreciation and admiration for the Turkish immigrants, and a realisation that 'they came here, they shared their lives with you and

65 *Ibid*., pp. 216–218; M. Hatay (2005), *op. cit*., p. 12.

66 The number of immigrants in this seven-year period lies between 30,000 and 45,000 depending on the source. It is difficult to know the exact number, as it has not been affirmed and recorded.

67 H. Atun (2007) 'Kıbrıs'ta Göçmenlerin İskanı' [Settlement of Immigrants in Cyprus], *op. cit*., p. 387.

68 R. Bryant and C. Yakinthou (2012), *op. cit*., p. 27; M. Hatay (2005), *op. cit*., p. 11; C.P. Ioannides (1991) *op. cit*., pp. 163–165; R. Bryant (2010), *op. cit*., p. 20.

69 Interview with H. Atun; Author's private audio-recorded interview with Y. Suiçmez conducted 15 February 2013; Interview with V. Çelik; Interview with K. Atakol.

70 Interview with Y. Suiçmez.

they contributed to the economy, they contributed to the security, they contributed to ... social life'.[71] Atun concurred, and commended the Turkish Cypriot population because, in his words, 'nobody complained that we brought the people from Turkey'.[72]

Mustafa Yeşil, who immigrated to north Cyprus in this period, recounted a festival that had been arranged for the inward bound immigrants at the port city of Famagusta, the customary port of entry for the immigrants, in celebration of their arrival to northern Cyprus.[73] They were met with music and a barbeque party, at which '[t]hey sacrificed the lamb, and they played the drums and horns'.[74] This hints of an enthusiasm and appreciation for their new countrymen who were essential players in their quick economic recovery strategy and were viewed as a crucial helping hand for the Turkish Cypriots and their new political entity.

Conversely, the immigrants were not necessarily skilled or suited for the jobs that were short of labour, such as citrus husbandry.[75] One of the problems was that the Cypriot climate was notably different from that of the places in Turkey where the majority of immigrants came from. Most of the immigrants interviewed described the weather and heat in Cyprus as fiery and cited the lack of water as a huge problem for farming on the island. The fruits and vegetables cultivated in Cyprus were often unlike those grown in Turkey and particularly those around the Black Sea region.[76] Consequently, the authorities sent officials from 'the agricultural ministry ... to teach them [the immigrants] ... how to cultivate' the crops that they were unfamiliar with and explain their points of origin.[77]

Foremost, there was a need for a labour force, particularly within the field of citrus growing, which was the main produce of the northern part of Cyprus. In 1977 agricultural goods constituted 77.5% of all exports, while citrus fruits alone amounted to 65.7% of agricultural exports.[78] In some cases, even if immigrants were settled in villages distanced well away from the nearest citrus fields, they were transported long distances daily to harvest the crop in areas such as Morphou/Güzelyurt or on the outskirts of Famagusta, as this clearly was the most important product.[79] Kadir Yel, who immigrated to northern Cyprus in 1976 at the age of eight, recounted

71 Interview with V. Çelik.
72 Interview with H. Atun.
73 Author's private audio-recorded interview with M. Yeşil conducted on 8 April 2013.
74 Interview with M. Yeşil.
75 C. Hitchens (1984), *op. cit.*, p. 109.
76 Interview with H. Atun; Author's private audio-recorded interview with **Ç**ağlayan family conducted on 17 February 2013; Interview with M. Yeşil; Interview with Y. Suiçmez; Author's private audio-recorded interview with **Ç**akır family conducted on 17 February 2013.
77 'TRNC' Archive Doc. No. 89; Interview with **Ç**ağlayan family; Interview with M. Yeşil; Interview with Y. Suiçmez; Interview with **Ç**akır family.
78 'TRNC' Archive Doc. No. 905.
79 Interview with **Ç**akır family.

that every weekend they travelled over 100 kilometres from his village, Komikebir/Büyük Konuk in the Karpasia Peninsula, to the citrus fields of Morphou/Güzelyurt to pick fruits. This was not an uncommon practice, and Yel's story does not appear to be exceptional. In north Cyprus agricultural production, in general, and citrus production, in particular, used out-dated methods and relied heavily on labour.[80]

Incorporation of the Immigrants and Refugees

In order for the settlement process to proceed as smoothly as possible, the authorities initiated a programme of settlement assistance. Each village, or groups of villages in some cases, were assigned one or two *iskan rehberi* (or housing guide(s)) who took care of those who were resettled from the south along with those who were settled from Turkey. The *iskan rehberi* arrived in villages that were intended for settlement and prepared the houses and land for the arrival of refugees and immigrants. Once the villages were inhabited and people had settled in, the guides lived in the villages amongst those who had moved there, and provided assistance with anything that was required. Sometimes these guides stayed for up to two years in the village to make sure that the transition was smooth for those who had relocated there. It also demonstrated that the people were not stranded or forgotten by the authorities, as explained by Tamer Gazioğlu, who, in 1974, was an *iskan rehberi* in Agios Epiktitos/Çatalköy, in the Kyrenia district of north Cyprus (a village mainly inhabited by Turkish Cypriot refugees, and not used for the settlement of immigrants from Turkey).[81]

Other than the *iskan rehberi* who lived in the villages with the settled immigrants and refugees, Gazioğlu stated that 'we were sparing houses for teachers and sending teachers from [the] centre to there to live and they were living [in] those houses ... In larger villages we were allocating houses to the police families'.[82] This reveals the permanence of the settlement project and the goal of creating a durable and stable community for both the Turkish Cypriot refugees and the immigrants from Turkey.

In 1975, before the Vienna III Agreement between north and south Cyprus had been concluded, 'statistics of the empty houses in villages, or empty villages ... and empty neighbourhoods of villages' were gathered and prepared for the settlement of both Turkish Cypriot refugees and Turkish immigrants.[83] Lists were drawn up to classify the size of the properties, the number of rooms, the furniture, and other goods left in the houses so that the allocation of housing was done in a fair and just manner in accordance with family size. In contrast to the case of the

80 Author's private audio-recorded interview with K. Yel conducted on 8 April 2013; Interview with Çakır family.
81 Interview with T. Gazioğlu.
82 *Ibid*; A. Gürel, M. Hatay, N. Trimikliniotis, O. Demetriou, R. Bryant and C. Yakinthou (2013), *op. cit.*
83 Interview with T. Gazioğlu.

immigrants from Turkey who were due to arrive, the authorities, more or less knew beforehand which villages were to be provided for the displaced Turkish Cypriots who were either waiting in the south to transfer or in the British Sovereign Bases, Akrotiri and Dhekelia.[84] 'The villages they [the Turkish Cypriot refugees] were going to be located was known and ... how many houses is going to be need[ed] was also known', thus it was easier to prepare these villages and houses for the Turkish Cypriot refugees.[85] Indeed, according to Bryant,

> 'the Turkish Cypriot administration resettled Turkish Cypriot refugees from the south as villages, hence as communities, and indeed appears to have taken some effort to guarantee that the villages in which they resettled in some way resembled their own.'[86]

In this way, villages and/or neighbourhoods of villages that were not assigned to arriving refugees could be mapped out and lists prepared for immigrants from Turkey coming to the island. By and large, villages that were easily accessible and closer to town centres were intended for the refugees from the south. Villages far from the centre, for instance the Karpasia Peninsula, which were harder to access, were largely set aside for the immigrants from Turkey as the Turkish Cypriots did not want to reside in isolated locations. Thus, it may be claimed that the authorities were more sensitive to complaints from Turkish Cypriots, and gave them priority in the settlement process.[87] Nevertheless, it did occur that some immigrants were dissatisfied with the location they had been allocated and the house or land that had been assigned to them, and as a result they were moved elsewhere and given a different home. Gazioğlu recalls one such situation:

> 'we entered in Turunçlu [Strongylos] ... it was a mixed village before. And we ... went there and repaired the houses, upgraded them for regular living. And we took a small group of villagers from Turkey ... to move there ... And one or two, maybe they were like leaders ... they said: "We don't want to [be] located in these houses, they are old", because the good houses were located by the ... Turkish-Cypriots living there ... And we had not enough good houses there, and the houses that we wanted to locate them in, they didn't want ... And what happened? We were moving ... "This village ... Kurudere [Mousoulita] ... we didn't have allocated anybody there yet, let's try this village." ... And we allocated them in this village [instead].'[88]

Suiçmez tells of a similar experience, as an immigrant:

> 'At first they settled us on [the] mountain ... Mersinlik [Flamoudi] ... they [had] told us that we would be settled in Değirmenlik [Kythrea] ... but they sent us to another place. My father, also

84 *Ibid.*
85 *Ibid.*
86 R. Bryant (2010), *op. cit.*, p. 13.
87 Interview with T. Gazioğlu; R. Bryant and C. Yakinthou (2012), *op. cit.*, p. 27.
88 Interview with T. Gazioğlu.

other people, they objected and they wanted to see the place that [was] promised and they came to Değirmenlik [Kythrea].'[89]

It seems that, although the authorities were more inclined to give the Turkish Cypriot refugees precedence in the settlement process, complaints from immigrants, in particular from village heads or similar leader figures, could affect the settlement of such groups. Some even threatened to return to Turkey unless they were given better houses.[90]

Like the Turkish Cypriot refugees, the immigrants from Turkey were also allocated land and housing in keeping with the size of their family. Hence, the list of property was compared with the list of families arriving from Turkey and the properties in question were categorised according to size and capacity. Each available village for settlement was divided into groups of houses standardised by size. The groups were then assigned a letter to denote its category, for example 'A' for the larger houses, plus a number within that group. The family list was subsequently grouped according to size, and each family was given the corresponding letter indicating its category.[91] Upon arrival at the village, each family picked a number within its group category and was allocated a house, 'like a lottery'.[92]

Contrary to the Turkish Cypriots, whose houses were generally ready to move into immediately, the immigrants from Turkey normally had to spend some time in temporary accommodation in Famagusta, the port of arrival, before being transferred to the villages from which they could choose a house. The length of time spent in Famagusta varied from case to case. Sometimes villages were ready for immigrants to transfer to within one or two nights after their arrival in northern Cyprus. In other cases, families spent up to a month living in a school dormitory or similar temporary housing in the port city. There were also some families who did not have to spend any time in Famagusta as they were moved directly to their assigned village. In those instances, other family members or people from the same village in Turkey had settled earlier in a location where other houses were available to move into. All the same, such instances appear to be the exception, and the rule seems to be that at least some nights were spent in temporary housing. While in Famagusta the immigrants were provided with all their meals, and they were taken care of until the villages for settlement were ready.[93]

Apart from houses being awarded to the immigrants there was also a specific policy involved in meting out farmland to the arriving families. Like housing, land was distributed according to the size of the family. On average 153 *dönüms* of dry farmland was dispersed to families of five. But,

89 Interview with Y. Suiçmez.
90 Interview with T. Gazioğlu.
91 *Ibid.*
92 *Ibid.*
93 Interview with Y. Suiçmez; Interview with M. Yeşil; Interview with Çağlayan family; Interview with Çakır family; Interview with K. Yel.

farmland that produced higher yields, such as citrus orchards, potato fields and vegetable fields, was divided into smaller plots. The Ministry of Resettlement, as it was renamed in 1976, equated 153 *dönüms* of dry farmland with 15 *dönüms* of citrus orchards and/or 12 *dönüms* of potato and vegetable fields. In many cases land of this size was not available for distribution, so where there were differences between 153 *dönüms* and the amount of land actually offered to a family, compensation was made through other goods or property, such as extra livestock or a shop or credit to be used in the co-operatives.[94] In the words of Atun, those who did not receive the amount of land that was the norm, 'were subsidized, they were reinforced by animals, [banana, olive or carob] trees.'[95]

Regardless, as reported by Professor Behrooz Morvaridi, the norm of 153 *dönüms*, or the equivalent of other farmland, did not always apply, and he claims that 'each village had a norm determined by the Ministry [of Resettlement]'.[96] After the *İTEM* Law was passed in 1977, land ownership was standardised to a large degree. Turkish Cypriots who had lived in northern Cyprus prior to the division, and who had less than 80 *dönüms* of land were given additional land in order to balance the land distribution across both the new and the old inhabitants of north Cyprus.[97]

In addition to these policies of land distribution, each village had co-operatives that had stored the '[l]ivestock, wheat, barley, tractors and other equipment left behind by the fleeing Greek Cypriots', which they allotted to those in need of such goods.[98] That said, there was not enough equipment and livestock left behind. In many cases the animals that had been abandoned by the Greek Cypriots had dispersed or were unaccounted for as a result of the war. In order to make up for the losses and provide sufficient livestock, sheep were imported from Anatolia by the thousands. Furthermore, cows were purchased and brought in from the Netherlands.[99] Another key area of need was money to buy crops so that the agricultural labourers could carry out their work. The co-operative system provided the farmers with credit, which 'financed them to grow ... their crops, to sell them, and then pay back'.[100]

'[T]here was an urgent need to maintain and protect certain types of agricultural resources like orchards, greenhouses and especially vast citrus orchards ... before they could be allocated to the people.'[101] The norm was to allocate land and housing immediately. However, in cases where land was vital for the economic sustainability of north Cyprus, such as the examples listed above, co-

94 B. Morvaridi (1993a), *op. cit.*, pp. 223–225; Interview with T. Gazioğlu.
95 Interview with H. Atun.
96 B. Morvaridi (1993a), *op. cit.*, p. 225.
97 *Ibid.*
98 *Ibid.*
99 Interview with H. Atun.
100 *Ibid.*
101 'TRNC' Archive Doc. No. 89.

operatives and public enterprises were established 'for the maintenance and management of these resources'.[102] Once the production of essential goods and products was back on course, the authorities 'transferred all the production units ... to private companies, or to private people.'[103] Atun and Gazioğlu proudly asserted that the setting up of a Turkish Cypriot political entity was a kind of social experiment.[104]

Because it took some time to settle in to new homes and villages, the authorities provided meals and food until the immigrants could provide for themselves.[105] In this respect, the villages were equipped with a 'moveable kitchen from Red Crescent', which cooked and prepared meals for the inhabitants.[106] Furthermore, while preparing the villages and houses for newcomers, equipment and furniture were utilised from the unoccupied Greek Cypriot homes. These goods and properties were stored in what were colloquially referred to as 'loot depots', or *ganimet ambarları* in Turkish, and the *iskan rehberi* were responsible for redistributing these goods according to the needs and sizes of families.[107] As Bryant argues, this policy of looting abandoned Greek Cypriot homes following the war 'was normalized, even naturalized, by assimilating property to a new "national" territory'.[108] Stealing Greek Cypriot property, both moveable and immovable, was, the Turkish Cypriots claimed, an eye-for-an-eye argumentation, legitimised by pointing to similar policies by the Greek Cypriots following the creation of Turkish Cypriot enclaves in the mid-1960s.[109]

Food depots were set up in and around groups of villages as well, from where the inhabitants could collect rice, pasta and other food and household goods in exchange for the ration cards they had been given. Usually, people were granted ration cards for one year, which they could use to obtain staple foods every day in order to cope while they were trying to work the land and kick-start agricultural production. Some, however, reported that food was still received using ration cards almost two years later. Generally in these cases the hitches proved to be part of the initial wave of immigrants. As it was a pioneering project, it took time for the system to operate smoothly and it typically took longer for the first immigrants to be settled than it did for those who came later.[110]

Added to the settlement offices in the various villages and groups of villages there was a central *levazım*, or supply office located in the 'capital', Nicosia, which provided 'refrigerators ... necessary equipment to use [in] their houses. Cooking units, ... washing machines if they existed. All kinds

102 *Ibid.*
103 Interview with E. Onurhan.
104 Interview with T. Gazioğlu; Interview with H. Atun.
105 Interview with T. Gazioğlu.
106 Interview with H. Atun.
107 R. Bryant (2010), *op. cit.*, p. 144.
108 *Ibid.*
109 *Ibid.*, pp. 143–144.
110 Interview with M. Yeşil.

of apparatus necessary in the houses'.[111] A few years later, when the settlement process was running more or less smoothly, the *iskan rehberi* pulled out of the villages and the number of settlement offices was reduced to only the largest cities and towns: Famagusta, Nicosia, Kyrenia, Morphou/Güzelyurt and Trikomo/İskele.[112]

Most of the villages were mixed in the sense that they comprised of the original Turkish Cypriot inhabitants, Turkish Cypriot refugees from the south and Turkish immigrants from different regions in Turkey. As well as attempting to keep villages more or less intact when relocating them in northern Cyprus, the authorities aimed at moving people to villages that they believed resembled the places that the immigrants had come from in Turkey. Atun confirmed that this was largely how it was organised. For instance, 'the people from ... Black Sea area, were settled along the coast. Not all of them, but most of them'.[113]

Although there is little evidence of widespread conflicts between the Turkish Cypriot population and the Turkish immigrants in Cyprus, there were some cultural differences and difficulties in terms of adaptation for the immigrants in their new setting. Cyprus was more developed and modern than the places where most of the immigrants originated. Many were unaccustomed to Western toilets (known as *à la franka* toilets in Turkish), and luxuries such as bathtubs and contemporary kitchens equipped with modern electric or gas stoves.[114] Gazioğlu, who remembers receiving a number of complaints from Turkish immigrants regarding their houses, recounted an instance: '[t]he houses ... was not according to their ... social and economic situations and their daily living standards.'[115] In certain cases it was a challenge to convince the immigrants that they had been given adequate housing, but some still grumbled about being handed incomplete or inadequate homes. Gazioğlu went on to recount other situations in which families from mainland Turkey complained to the authorities about being given a house without a kitchen because the house lacked a wood-burning iron stove, which was what they used to cook their food in at home in Turkey. He also recalls seeing bathtubs used as troughs for animal feed because the people that had been given homes furnished with bathtubs had never seen the like before and did not know of its conventional use. He also remembers having visited numerous families who converted their *à la franka* toilets into squat toilets (known as *à la turka* toilets in Turkish).[116]

Such observations and memories led Gazioğlu to conclude that 'they [the Turkish immigrants] were ... very far back compared with our [Turkish Cypriots'] social lives. They were more ... conservatives.'[117] It was not easy for the immigrants from Turkey 'where styles of work and living are

111 Interview with T. Gazioğlu.
112 *Ibid.*
113 Interview with H. Atun.
114 Interview with T. Gazioğlu.
115 *Ibid.*
116 *Ibid.*
117 *Ibid.*

quite different in some important respects from those of the Turkish Cypriots'.[118] Following their initial enthusiasm for the resettlement programme with the Turkish Cypriots, the immigrants, besides being treated contrarily by the government – as the example below illustrates in their different treatment regarding title deeds – later faced discrimination from the population at large.[119]

While Turkish Cypriot refugees were given title deeds following ownership rights granted under the *İTEM* Law, which came into effect in 1977, immigrants from Turkey were not allowed the same rights. This was, arguably, because the Turkish Cypriot administration wanted to prevent the Turkish immigrants from selling properties and moving back to Turkey.[120] The disparity in treatment between the two groups understandably led to resentment among the immigrants. The restrictions on land ownership meant, both in theory and in practice, that those from Turkey had secondary status in comparison to the Turkish Cypriot refugees and the Turkish Cypriot residents in northern Cyprus. The combination of having to adjust to new surroundings and a new way of life, and not receiving the same privileges as the Turkish Cypriot refugees, often placed the Turkish immigrants in a more testing situation than the population at large.[121] Northern Cyprus, it was argued, 'needed people to exploit the resources ... and to establish a proper administration'.[122] '[W]e were afraid lest they sold it [the property] and run back to Turkey. Because we needed them for the production, they came here. We needed the labour force.'[123]

Atun reveals the importance of Turkish assistance in this process of resettling both Turkish Cypriot refugees and the immigrants from Turkey:

> '[M]y Ministry, Housing and Rehabilitation, got almost one third of the [total state] budget and it was all sent from Turkey. We repaired the houses; we financed the people to buy tractors, to buy crops. So the Turkish Agricultural Bank, or Türkiye Ziraat Bankası, financed this. And ... in a way, we borrowed this money from Turkey ... but eventually we didn't pay it back. So it was, in a way, a donation from Turkey.'[124]

He continued to underline Turkey's crucial role for the Turkish Cypriots in stating that 'the role of Turkey in this [process], financially, technically, was very effective and was very necessary'.[125] Without Turkey, the resettlement of Turkish Cypriot refugees and the settlement of Turkish

118 B. Morvaridi (1993a), *op. cit.*, p. 234.
119 B. Morvaridi (1993b), *op. cit.*, p. 266; Y. Navaro-Yashin (2006), *op. cit.*, p. 87.
120 C. Ramm (2009), *op. cit.*, p. 218.
121 Interview with H. Atun; Interview with T. Gazioğlu.
122 A.J.R. Groom (1993) 'The Process of Negotiation: 1974–1993', in C.H. Dodd (ed.), *The Political, Social and Economic Development of Northern Cyprus*, Huntingdon: The Eothen Press, p. 20.
123 Interview with V. Çelik.
124 Interview with H. Atun.
125 *Ibid.*

immigrants would likely not be possible. Furthermore, the setting up of a Turkish Cypriot 'state' in northern Cyprus would undoubtedly border the impossible without Turkish assistance.

Was It a Success?

Both at the time, and retrospectively, many have questioned whether the immigration process was a success or not. When Gazioğlu was asked what he thought was the biggest mistake made by the government in the resettlement process, he responded: 'allocating land to the people from Turkey in Famagusta, Maraş [Varosha]'.[126] This response is commensurate with the criticism mentioned earlier that the immigrants were not necessarily qualified for the tasks they came to the island to perform. There were difficulties for them in adapting to life in the island compared to the life they were used to in Turkey. The example of Varosha/Maraş – a suburb of Famagusta, the second largest city in northern Cyprus – demonstrates this specifically. Only the very first wave of immigrants was settled in this area because it later proved to be problematic for both a future settlement to the Cyprus conflict and because of overproduction and a subsequent deterioration of the agricultural land.[127]

Approximately 3,000 Turkish immigrants were settled in Varosha/Maraş. They were mainly employed to work in the citrus orchards and later with greenhouse farming, after the water became salinized due to over-use. The interesting thing is that many of those who settled in this urban centre – on the fringe of citrus orchards – were Yörüks. They are a semi-nomadic people from the Mersin and Antalya provinces of Turkey, many of whom were used to living in tents and travelling around with their herded animals.[128] Upon arrival in Famagusta, some of them described it as being 'like New York'.[129] Some were overwhelmed by the profound transformation that greeted them and they returned to Turkey, while others refused to live in the apartments given to them, and moved into tents in the citrus orchards.[130]

It was not unusual for immigrants to return to Turkey because their experiences in northern Cyprus did not reflect their expectations, or what they claimed they were promised by the authorities.[131] Yusuf Suiçmez maintained that a person from his village in Turkey, who moved to

126 Interview with T. Gazioğlu.

127 'TRNC' Archive Doc. No. 332.

128 Interview with M. Yeşil; Author's private audio-recorded interview with M. Hatay conducted on 15 February; 8 April 2013; R. Kasaba (2009) *A Moveable Empire: Ottoman Nomads, Migrants and Refugees*, Seattle/London: University of Washington Press, p. 21.

129 Interview with M. Yeşil.

130 *Ibid.*

131 Interview with Y. Suiçmez; Interview with Çağlayan family; Interview with Çakır family; Interview with T. Gazioğlu; Interview with M. Yeşil; Author's private audio-recorded interview with H. Suiçmez conducted on 16 February 2013.

north Cyprus at the same time as the Suiçmez family, went back to Turkey and 'killed the *kaymakam* [the governor of the provincial district]' because 'they lied to them' about what would await them in northern Cyprus.[132] Many myths surrounded the expectations of north Cyprus and the opportunities such a move would present. Many were in turn disappointed.

In response to the question as to whether mistakes were made in the immigration process, Onurhan responded that 'it could be organized better ... [We] had to fill in a gap very rapidly.'[133] The haste with which people were needed seemed to be the biggest challenge in the process, and he held that '[i]t was probably not very regulated at that time'.[134] Although this may be true, the large group of immigrants who moved to northern Cyprus in this seven-year period were resettled in their villages and houses and land were distributed relatively quickly and effectively. Atun insisted that 'the amount of 30,000 [Turkish immigrants in the first wave of immigration] was more or less calculated', however, he also alleged that the immigration process was 'done in a very hasty manner'.[135]

Priority was given to the goal of the 'creation of employment as quickly as possible and the direction of people to production', thereby kick-starting the immigrants' personal economy together with the economy of the new state.[136] From 1975 to 1980 there was an average growth of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of 18.75%, with highs of 62.2% in 1975 and 31.3% in 1976. Likewise, every sector of the economy experienced notable growth in this period,[137] and such growth 'may be attributed to efficient utilization of human and natural resources'.[138] Over and above the economic improvements, north Cyprus experienced great social developments too.[139] Thus, coupled with the Turkish Cypriot refugees who were resettled in the north, the immigrants from Turkey directly contributed to the economic growth and social developments of the new Turkish Cypriot political entity created following the 1974 war. Yet politically, northern Cyprus became more isolated and condemned internationally as a result of the immigration from Turkey. The Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 and its 1977 amendment deem settlement policies in occupied territories illegal. In Professor McGarry's terms the state manipulated push-pull factors were, therefore, unlawful by international law. This deepened the quagmire of isolation for the new Turkish Cypriot state, and the question of the Turkish immigration remains one of the most heated and deadlocked subjects in the Cyprus talks.[140]

132 Interview with Y. Suiçmez.
133 Interview with E. Onurhan.
134 *Ibid.*
135 Interview with H. Atun. As previously stated, the number 30,000 is far from confirmed, and numbers vary between 30,000 and 45,000.
136 'TRNC' Archive Doc. No. 89.
137 *Ibid.*, No. 343.
138 *Ibid.*
139 *Ibid.*, No. 1564.
140 J. Ker-Lindsay (2011) *op. cit.*, p. 88; J. McGarry (1998), *op. cit.*, p. 619.

Conclusion

Following the war in 1974, and in the context of a population vacuum, Turkish immigrants came to north Cyprus through a combination of normal and engineered pull-factors. In the seven-year period from the division of the island in 1974, until the end of the first wave of immigration from Turkey in 1980, the physical division between north and south Cyprus developed into a social, economic and political dissolution between the two communities. The immigrants from Turkey were, it was argued by the authorities, needed in order to work towards a Turkish Cypriot goal of economic self-sufficiency and political independence.

The population vacuum in north Cyprus following the division of the island and the exodus of the Greek Cypriots brought with it a lack of labour within most sectors of the northern Cypriot economy. It was therefore possible for the immigrants from Turkey to obtain work immediately on arrival to the island. Furthermore, immigrants from Turkey were promised housing, land and other immovable property in north Cyprus. In that way pull-factors were manipulated, in accordance with McGarry's theories, in order to appeal to immigrants from Turkey. For that reason it was a relatively easy choice for most of those who emigrated from Turkey. People who had moved to northern Cyprus in this period also encouraged family members back in Turkey to emigrate. In this manner the immigration process, through traditional and manipulated pull-factors, was kept alive by the authorities and those who had already moved.

While the Turkish Cypriot refugees were usually resettled in villages and towns near the cities and in other central locations, the immigrants from Turkey were ordinarily settled in more peripheral areas, such as the Karpasia Peninsula. Having said that, there were more central areas, for instance in and around Morphou/Güzelyurt and Famagusta, which were used to settle people from Turkey. This was largely because of the citrus fields that existed there. Even in those cases where people were settled in areas far away from the citrus fields, immigrants travelled long distances daily in order to pick fruits. These examples illustrate that immigration from Turkey was first and foremost intended to fill the labour shortage within certain economic fields, particularly within citrus and other agricultural production, making them 'agents', in that sense, in the words of McGarry.

Contrarily, the fact that many of the immigrants who came to north Cyprus from Turkey were not necessarily skilled in agricultural production, where they were put to work, was counter-productive. As a result, the authorities identified the need to send officials from the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Energy to teach the newcomers how to grow and pick the fruits and vegetables. In so doing the immigrants could focus on working the land and kick-starting agricultural production, which was arguably the primary goal of encouraging them to move to north Cyprus in the first place.

It may be questioned whether the first wave of immigration was a success. The degree of success, however, depends on whose and what perspective is taken. The labour shortage that characterised northern Cyprus following the division of the island was, for instance, largely solved

by the first wave of immigration. In consequence, the new state could take advantage of the natural resources available, particularly the citrus fields. However, in some cases, as with Varosha/Maraş, irresponsible overproduction deteriorated the agricultural land. This consequence also falls in line with the notion that the first wave of immigration took place too quickly, with too many immigrants in too short a time span. Although Atun claimed that the number of immigrants was more or less calculated, it was clear that the challenges that this immigration process would lead to were not necessarily foreseen or thought out. For example, the fact that not all refugees from south Cyprus were resettled in northern Cyprus prior to settling immigrants from Turkey posed a challenge. Turkish Cypriot refugees were given priority and were normally given the better housing and land in more central locations than the immigrants from Turkey. This sometimes led to resentment among the immigrants.

Although some of the Turkish immigrants left, the majority of them stayed in north Cyprus and presumably improved their lives and personal economy. Moreover, they were arguably decisive in improving the economy of northern Cyprus, which experienced an average growth in gross domestic product of nearly 20% as well as growth in practically all sectors of the economy. The realisation that there was a need for labour from Turkey created an initial enthusiasm for their arrival, as vividly illustrated by the welcoming ceremonies recounted by some of the interviewed immigrants.

The first wave of immigration from Turkey to north Cyprus from 1974 to 1980 in some ways fits Professor John McGarry's theory of 'demographic engineering'. His basic argument is that 'agents' move, or are moved, in such a process. Such movements often occur following a war or in the context of crisis. 'Agents' are meant to play a consolidating role, solidifying the state's control over a specific area or region. On this account, 'agents' are normally enticed to move by promises of housing and land. This was certainly the case with the immigrants from Turkey, who were not only promised a house, land and work in north Cyprus, but were also lured by notions and presentations of northern Cyprus as a form of dreamland with great opportunities and possibilities. The immigrants from Turkey were necessary in north Cyprus in order to ensure Turkish Cypriot economic and political independence and self-sufficiency from the Greek Cypriots.

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