

The Cypriot Exclaves: Ormidhia, Xylotymbou and Dhekelia Power Station

Abstract

Together with the collapse of communism and acceleration of the European integration process, Europe became the scene of political changes. In the western part of the continent, state borders started to be considered less and less relevant. Free flows of people, goods, services and capital, as well as growing interdependence, illustrated the ongoing de-bordering process. The above-described tendencies were very visible in the case of state exclaves, serving often as forerunners and testers of border tensions. An exclave is a space legally or politically connected to the main state territory, but physically separated from it. Thomas Lunden claims that “an exclave is a territory that is a part of an independent state but separated from the main area by the territory of another state or by other states”¹. Yet not such areas are exclaves. In Honore Marc Catudal’s opinion areas with water connection to the mainland are not exclaves². As a result, one could define Russian Kaliningrad neither as an exclave nor as a semi-exclave, but there are some scholars who claim that it is a typical semi-exclave.

Despite theoretical differences, most of scholars agree that there are many such areas worldwide. According to Evgeny Vinokurov, “with almost three hundred enclaves and exclaves recognized at the international level, they can hardly be called an anomaly”³. Moreover, many of them are located in Europe⁴. The best examples are Baarle-Nassau and Baarle-Hertog (Belgium/the Netherlands), Campione d’Italia

¹ T. Lunden, *Exclaves – Geographical and Historical Perspectives*, in: *European Exclaves in the Process of De-bordering and Re-bordering*, J. Janczak, P. Osiewicz (eds), Logos Verlag, Berlin 2012, p. 11.

² H.M. Catudal, *The Exclave Problem of Western Europe*, University of Alabama Press, 1979, p. 5.

³ E. Vinokurov, *A Theory of Enclaves*, Lanham 2007, p. 297.

⁴ A detailed analysis of theory and chosen cases of exclaves in Europe see: *European Exclaves in the Process of De-bordering and Re-bordering*, J. Janczak, P. Osiewicz (eds), op. cit.

(Switzerland/Italy), Llivia (Spain/France) and Dubrovnik (Croatia). This paper is dedicated to processes of de-bordering and re-bordering in the case of Cypriot exclaves, namely Ormidhia, Xylotymbou and Dhekelia Power Station. As a result of the London-Zurich agreements as well as the July 1960 Agreement on SBAs, the Republic of Cyprus has three exclaves. All of them represent unique examples of exclaves surrounded by a military base, namely the Dhekelia Sovereign Base Area which belongs to the United Kingdom. These exclaves differ from other European exclaves, because their foundation was artificial and had no historical or social grounds. After 52 years they still exist, although the surrounding Dhekelia Sovereign Base Area appears as a relic of past colonialism. The exclaves occasionally cause tensions between the Republic of Cyprus and the United Kingdom.

1. Historical background

Cyprus remains one of the biggest islands in the Mediterranean Sea to this day. Its geostrategic position makes it very important and as such, throughout many centuries all regional powers desired the right to control the island in order to gain supremacy within the Eastern Mediterranean. Among those who wanted the island as such were empires such as the Roman, Byzantium, The Ottomans, Venetian and The United Kingdom.

No exclaves had existed in Cyprus prior to 1960. Britain had controlled the island as part of the British-Ottoman agreement of 1878 up until 1914 where subsequently Cyprus became a Crown Colony from 1925 onwards until the island itself would gain independence in 1960. According to the British-Ottoman agreement of 1878, Cyprus was to be administered by the British in order to protect the Ottoman Empire from a potential threat from Russia. At the very beginning, Greek Cypriots welcomed the British as liberators. They hoped that the British would cede the island to Greece sooner rather than later. Yet Cyprus was not handed over to Greece by the United Kingdom. The reason was that the Cypriot case differed from the case of the Ionian Islands which had been transferred to Greece in 1864. Cyprus' perfect geostrategic location was crucial from the British point of view. Along with Gibraltar, Malta and the Suez Canal, Cyprus formed a part of the chain of territories which enabled the British to control an essential seaway from Great Britain up to Colonial India. In 1914 the United Kingdom annexed Cyprus after the Ottoman Empire had given its support in aid of Germany during World

War I, yet this did not change the situation of Cypriots. On the contrary, Cyprus was to be proclaimed a British colony in 1925 and Greek Cypriots continued their struggle for the unification of Cyprus with Greece (*enosis*).

The British did not intend to let Greek Cypriots unite with their Greek compatriots and as a result of this Greek Cypriots initiated a guerrilla war against British rule in 1955. The most influential Greek Cypriot organization was National Organisation of Cypriot Fighters (EOKA)⁵. They fought in the name of *enosis*. At the same time Turkish Cypriots, who constituted a fifth of the Cypriot population, were afraid of the potential Greek rule and that is why they were in favour of either the continuation of British rule or a partition of Cyprus into Turkish and Greek portions (*taksim*).

The rivalry continued to 1959 when all interested parties decided to take part in international conferences dedicated to the final settlement of Cyprus' status. The first one had taken place in Zurich while the second was organized in London. The Cypriot exclaves were created as a result of a difficult political compromise. The United Kingdom agreed to withdraw from the island and allowed creation of a new independent state, namely the Republic of Cyprus. *By the year 1959, Greece, Turkey and Britain had agreed to a settlement of the Cyprus problem. Cyprus was to be neither united with Greece nor ethnically partitioned. It was to be established as an independent, bicomunal republic, whose sovereignty and territorial integrity was to be guaranteed by Britain, Greece and Turkey*⁶. In return, the British government demanded two sovereign base areas as well as access to a few military installations. This way London wanted to retain control of the Eastern Mediterranean in general and Cyprus in particular. As a result of diplomatic efforts, Britain acquired two military bases – Dhekelia and Akrotiri. It was confirmed by provisions of the Treaty of Establishment. Both sovereign base areas were located in the southern part of the island. This way sovereignty of the Republic of Cyprus has been limited since the very beginning of its existence.

The situation did not change when the Republic of Cyprus joined the European Union on 1 May 2004. *Protocol 3 to the Accession Treaty relates to the Sovereign Base Areas of the United Kingdom in Cyprus. According to the Treaty of*

⁵ More see: A. Varnavas, *A History of the Liberation Struggle of EOKA (1955-1959)*, Nicosia 2004.

⁶ H. Anastasiou, *The Broken Olive Branch: Nationalism, Ethnic Conflict, and the Quest For Peace in Cyprus*, Vol. 1, New York 2008, p. 94.

Establishment the two bases (Dhekelia and Akrotiri). (...) Under that protocol, the SBA's are included within the Community customs territory, but the UK may maintain certain reliefs and exemptions from duties and taxes on supplies to its forces and associated personnel, which are granted by the Treaty of Establishment. Community payments under the common agricultural policy could be paid to Cypriot farmers living on the SBA's⁷.

As a result of the London-Zurich agreements as well as the July 1960 Agreement on SBAs, the Republic of Cyprus has three exclaves. All of them are located within the Dhekelia Sovereign Base Area in the southeastern part of the island. Two exclaves, namely Ormidhia and Xylotymbou are Cypriot villages. The third exclave is the Dhekelia Power Station. Although it is divided into two parts by the road belonging to the SBA, only its northern part forms an exclave, because the southern has direct access to the Mediterranean Sea. The exclaves played a significant role during the 1974 war, because many Greek Cypriot refugees found shelter there. Most of them were fleeing from Turkish troops when the Turks captured Famagusta.

2. Geographical location of the exclave, its current: state belonging, demographic situation and ethnic situation

All exclaves, namely Ormidhia, Xylotymbou and the Dhekelia Power Station area belong to the Republic of Cyprus. They are surrounded by areas controlled by the British military. The Dhekelia Military Base is one of the two British Sovereign Base Areas (SBA's) in Cyprus⁸. *The total of SBA residents is approximately 15,700: 7,700 Cypriots, 3,900 Service and UKBC personnel, of whom 3,600 live in the SBAs, and nearly 5,000 dependants, of whom over 4,400 live in the SBAs. There are also nearly 2,700 locally employed civilians⁹. Both bases comprise around 3 percent of the total area of Cyprus. British and Cypriot citizens own some 60 percent of the land and the remainder belongs to the British Ministry of Defense or the Crown¹⁰.*

According to the 1960 Agreement, the British were to pay rent to the Republic of Cyprus. Both bases are located in very attractive places at the seaside and have

⁷ F. Hoffmeister, *Legal Aspects of the Cyprus Problem: Annan Plan and EU Accession*, Leiden and Boston 2006, p. 204.

⁸ The other is Akrotiri which is located nearby the city of Limassol (Lemesos).

⁹ *Sovereign Base Areas Cyprus*, <http://www.sbaadministration.org/home/sbap.htm> (14.10.2012).

¹⁰ *British Sovereign Base Areas (SBAs)*, [in:] F. Mirbagheri, *Historical Dictionary of Cyprus*, Plymouth 2010, p. 26.

direct access to the Mediterranean Sea. As a consequence Cypriots cannot invest there, examples being the building of hotels or any other infrastructure. *Between 1960 and 1964, following Cypriot independence, the British government paid rent to the Republic of Cyprus for use of the SBAs. The intercommunal conflict between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots led to the cessation of rent payments from Great Britain to the Republic of Cyprus. Britain asserted that it could not be sure that the money would benefit both communities equally. The Republic of Cyprus is still claiming rent from the British government for the use of the SBAs for the period from 1964 to date*¹¹.

The aforementioned Cypriot exclaves are within the Dhekelia Sovereign Base Area which is located in southeastern part of the island. It is bordered by areas controlled by the Republic of Cyprus to the west and to the east, the UN buffer zone controlled by the United Nations Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) to the north west as well as Turkish Cypriot administered areas, namely the unrecognized Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), to the north. Its total area is 81 km².

Both Ormidhia and Xylotymbou are inhabited by Greek Cypriots. Due to the Cyprus problem, Turkish Cypriots do not live within the exclaves. Ormidhia was used by Greek Cypriot refugees after the 1974 war. Then the valley was full of tents. As a result, refugees constitute 30 percent of the village population¹².

The Ormidhia exclave (Greek: Ορμίδεια) is located in a small valley, just 1.2 km from the Larnaca Bay and around 15 km from the city of Larnaca. Its total area is 21.378 km². Ormidhia belongs to Larnaca district and although Ormidhia's total population is around 4600 people, it is a village. There are two primary schools which function in accordance with the relevant Cypriot regulations. Also there are banks, a hospital, a post office as well as a number of shops. Ormidhia is located nearby via a motorway connecting Paralimni with Larnaca. It provides its residents with a comfortable access to both cities.

Chart 1. Population of Ormidhia between 1946-2011

YEAR	POPULATION
1946	968

¹¹ Ibidem.

¹² <http://www.ormideia.info/html/home.html> (12.10.2012).

1960	1 470
1982	3 248
1992	3 682
2001	3 960
2011	4 189

Source: *Ormidhia*, <http://www.mlahanas.de/Cyprus/Geo/Ormidhia.html> (20.10.2012).

Xylotymbou (Greek: Ξυλοτύμβου), the second exclave, also belongs to Larnaca district. It has a population of around 3500. It should be emphasized that in 1840 it only consisted of seven houses. Xylotymbou is famous due to the churches including Saint Raphael Monastery, Agia Marina, Chapel of St. Efrem and Agios Nikolaos¹³. Here, there is a community council office, a library and post office. Its residents work either in the Dhekelia SBA or in Larnaca and Ayia Napa tourism industry. Xylotymbou is home to Football Club Xylotymbou 2006. In the 2012/2013 season it played in the fourth Cypriot league and hired three foreign players – two from Poland and one of Bulgarian origin. The Community Stadium Xylotymbou's capacity is 1000. As it was mentioned before, both Ormidhia and Xylotymbou's residents can move freely within the Dhekelia Sovereign British Area.

The third exclave, namely the Dhekelia power station, is a typical industrial area with no residents. It is crucial due to its economic importance. The first power station was built in the mid-1950's, but now the *Dhekelia Power Station consists of 6 x 60 MW conventional steam units burning heavy fuel oil. The first unit was commissioned in 1982 and the last one in 1993. Dhekelia Power Station generated in 2006, 1.860.781 MWh which corresponds to 40,29% of the total electricity generated from the Authority's Power Stations. During the same period, Dhekelia Power Station exported, 1.768.290 MWh which corresponds to 40,53% of the total electricity exported from the Authority's Power Stations*¹⁴. The importance of the Dhekelia Power Station was proved in 2011 when the Vassiliko Power Station, the Republic of Cyprus' main power station, was severely damaged after Evangelos Florakis Naval Base explosion. *Twelve people died, including the commanders both*

¹³ <http://www.xylotymbou-cyprus.com/ksx.htm> (20.10.2012).

¹⁴ *Electricity Authority of Cyprus*, http://www.eac.com.cy/EN/Operations/Pages/G_PowerStations.aspx (14.10.2012).

*of the Cypriot navy, Andreas Ioannides, and of the Evangelos Florakis naval base, Lambros Lambrou, when 98 barrels containing confiscated Iranian explosives and other munitions caught fire*¹⁵.

According to Yiannis Tirkides and Andreas Theophanous *discussing the benefits to Cyprus from the presence of the Sovereign Base Areas, the Greek Cypriot interviewees answered overwhelmingly that such benefits are very few. The Turkish Cypriots in their overwhelming majority also answered in the same way as their Greek Cypriot counterparts. The foreign nationals by contrast argued that there are considerable benefits*¹⁶.

The interviewees were then asked to describe Greek Cypriot public opinion concerning the British Bases. The answers ranged on a scale of five from ‘very negative’, ‘negative’, ‘indifferent’, ‘positive’ and ‘very positive’. More than two thirds of the interviewees answered ‘negative’ or ‘very negative’. Another 25% were ‘indifferent’ and only 7% answered ‘positive’¹⁷.

3. Historical developments that created the given exclave

The Cypriot exclaves were not formed during long historical processes like, for example, Belgian exclaves in Baarle, Netherlands. All three exclaves were created in 1960 when the Constitution of the Republic of Cyprus came into force. It was an outcome of a long diplomatic process which did not satisfy the Cypriot side.

In December 1958, the Joint Planning Staff of the United Kingdom Chiefs of Staff published a report in which it described the importance of Cyprus. The whole report was based on four assumptions, namely:

- *Cyprus remains the only available base from which to support the Baghdad Pact;*
- *Cyprus remains an important base for the support of NATO in the Eastern Mediterranean;*

¹⁵ R. Spencer, *Anger grows in Cyprus over 'criminal errors' behind explosion*, “The Telegraph” of 12 July 2011.

¹⁶ Y. Tirkides, A. Theophanous, *Perceptions of Greek Cypriots, Turkish Cypriots and Foreign Nationals on the Relations Between the Republic of Cyprus and Britain and on the Sovereign Base Areas*, [in:] *Reflections on the Relations Between Britain and the Republic of Cyprus and the Case of the British Sovereign Base Areas*, A. Theophanous, Y. Tirkides (eds.), Nicosia 2007, p. 85.

¹⁷ APPENDIX: *Results of A Survey Conducted Through Personal Interviews on the Relations Between Britain and the Republic of Cyprus and on the Sovereign Base Areas*, [in:] *Reflections on the Relations Between Britain and the Republic of Cyprus...*, op. cit., p. 113.

- *Cyprus continues to provide a means of maintaining British position and influence, not only in the Eastern Mediterranean, but also in the Middle East as a whole;*
- *Cyprus continues to be an indispensable and irreplaceable centre for providing intelligence, communications, radar and broadcasting facilities for Britain, the United States and NATO¹⁸.*

The British renounced their sovereignty in return for the Base Areas of Dhekelia and Akrotiri. The whole agreement was subject to a Treaty of Guarantee signed by Britain, Greece and Turkey to recognize and guarantee the independence, territorial integrity and security of the Republic of Cyprus and also the provisions of the basic articles of its Constitution¹⁹.

To date, the United Kingdom has shown no intention of surrendering the bases, but it has offered to surrender 117 km² of farmland as part of the rejected Annan Plan.

4. De-bordering and its influence on the situation of the given exclave and/or re-bordering and its influence on the situation of the given exclave:

a) International context of de-bordering/re-bordering

The Republic of Cyprus, as an EU member state, is interested in removing all official as well as de facto borders on the island. The borders of SBAs are artificial, because they were created on a basis of an international agreement made in 1960. No historical processes preceded their emergence. Moreover, there are four different political entities in the surroundings, namely the Dhekelia SBA, the Republic of Cyprus, the United Nations buffer zone and the internationally unrecognized Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

¹⁸ K.A. Kyriakides, *The Sovereign Base Areas and British Defence Policy Since 1960*, [in:] *Britain in Cyprus: Colonialism and Post-Colonialism 1878-2006*, H. Faustmann, N. Peristianis (eds.), Mannheim und Möhnesee 2006, p. 520-521.

¹⁹ E. Johnson, *British Strategic Interests and Enosis in Colonial Cyprus*, [in:] *Cyprus in the Modern World*, M.S. Michael, A.M. Tamis, Thessaloniki 2005, p. 22.

Yet the borders significance is less and less important. It is even hard to notice a border between the SBA and the exclaves. Nevertheless, a chance for a complete de-bordering is very limited. Any withdrawal of the British troops from the island does not come under consideration and also seems that their presence is even welcomed as long as there are no political settlements on the island.

b) Consequences for the given exclave

Borders are not clearly demarcated on access roads. Although there are some markers, they are usually hard to find. Most of them are hidden in bushes or on roadsides. *Most importantly, no checks on persons crossing from the SBA's to the territory of the Republic need to be introduced because the UK guarantees to exercise such controls on the external borders of the SBA's*²⁰. Due to this guarantee, any people who work or live in the exclaves can move freely within the military base, with one exception – they have no access to restricted areas such as military installations, etc. In practice, the borders between the exclaves and the SBA do not affect the exclaves' residents. They can, for example, drive their cars from Ormidhia to Xylotymbou without any obstacles or formalities. The same rule applies to all passing tourists or SBA's staff.

5. Current political situation

a) Symbolic importance

The Cypriot exclaves in the Dhekelia Sovereign Base are very important to Greek Cypriots who tend to perceive the SBA's as the remnants of the British Colonial rule. Yet residents of Ormidhia complain that they have no access to the Mediterranean Sea and as a consequence, tourism cannot develop in this area. It seriously limits Ormidhia's competitiveness in comparison with other places in the Larnaca region. *The election of left-wing Dimitris Christofias as Cypriot president in February 2008 prompted concern in the United Kingdom. Christofias has pledged to remove all foreign military forces from the island as part of a future settlement of the Cyprus dispute, calling the British presence on the island a "colonial bloodstain"*²¹.

²⁰ F. Hoffmeister, *Legal Aspects of the Cyprus Problem...*, op. cit., p. 204.

²¹ H. Smith, *Cyprus elects its first communist president*, "The Guardian" of 25 February 2008.

b) Political control

The authorities of the Republic of Cyprus are in full control of all three exclaves. The British authorities do not try to interfere in their internal situation with both sides seemingly accepting the status quo. Nevertheless, the Cypriot side would be satisfied if the British decided to leave the island and give the base areas to the Republic of Cyprus.

According to Klearchos A. Kyriakides, *it was ironic that during the mid-1990s the gravest threat to the future of the Sovereign Base Areas emerged from within the United Kingdom. On this occasion, the threat arose after an apparent upsurge in violence perpetrated in Cyprus by off-duty British service personnel after they had had too much to drink. The upsurge reached its denouement in 1994 when Louise Jensen, a Danish tour guide, was subjected to an horrific death near Ayia Napa*²².

c) Real role in internal and international politics

The Cypriot exclaves play significant roles neither in internal nor in international politics. They occasionally cause tensions in British – Cypriot relations, however, not directly. There is a problem of SBAs and their future. Undoubtedly, the Cypriot authorities would like to eliminate them. If that's the case then the exclaves will cease to exist. Such scenario was very likely in 2004. If both Cypriot communities had accepted the so-called Annan Plan in simultaneous referenda held in April 2004, the exclaves would have ceased to exist. The British authorities intended to cede about half of the area to a united Republic of Cyprus. Such offer was renewed in 2009 should a settlement be achieved²³.

6. Conclusion

The Cypriot exclaves represent a unique example of exclaves surrounded by a military base. They differ from other European exclaves, because their foundation was artificial and had no historical or social grounds and all three can be described as a result of a political compromise of 1960. After 52 years they still exist and the surrounding Dhekelia Sovereign Base Area appears as a relic of past colonialism.

²² K.A. Kyriakides, *The Sovereign Base Areas and British Defence Policy Since 1960*, op. cit., p. 531.

²³ L.D. Anderson, E.W. Anderson, *An Atlas of Middle Eastern Affairs*, New York 2014, p. 103.

In comparison with other exclaves in Europe, there is almost no obstacle as far as movement to and from the Cypriot exclaves. Daily life inside the Cypriot exclaves is not as bothersome as in other European exclaves. Its residents can move freely within the Dhekelia military base, with many working for the British military. Moreover, they can easily cross external borders of the SBA with the Republic of Cyprus. Thanks to this freedom, they are able to work in touristic areas of Larnaca and Paralimni. They are unable to invest in any touristic infrastructure at the seaside within the Dhekelia SBA though. Undoubtedly, such a situation limits their business initiatives related to tourism.

The exclaves occasionally cause tensions between the Republic of Cyprus and the United Kingdom. The United Kingdom has not paid rents for the use of the SBAs since 1964. The Greek Cypriot authorities perceive the Sovereign Base Areas as a relic of the past colonial system; nevertheless, they have almost no influence on the current situation. In this case everything depends on the United Kingdom, because the SBAs were founded on the basis of an international agreement, namely the Treaty of Guarantee, meaning that both sides will have to agree on any changes. There is no other legal way. Nowadays nothing indicates that the UK may reconsider its military presence on the island anytime in the near future and therefore the exclaves will still function. Yet its offers of 2004 and 2009 proved that nothing is impossible and everything depends on good will of both Cypriot communities.