



Anglo-Turkish Society hybrid lecture, 4 April 2023, 6.00 pm (UK time)

Speaker: Dr Michael A. Riccioli (Retired Senior Lecturer, University of Paris-Dauphine)

Venue: Royal Anthropological Institute, 50 Fitzroy St, Fitzrovia, London W1T 5BT

Title: 'Anglo-Turkish Relations 1939-1980 and the Cyprus Strife'

Anglo-Turkish relations have been through political conflicts, diplomatic manoeuvrings and economic difficulties over the centuries. But the spirit of cordial relations has persisted between the two countries. Turkey's strict or active neutrality during the Second World War was strongly criticised by both the Allies and the Axis powers. It cannot be overlooked that with Atatürk's enthusiasm and the help of British and Turkish ambassadors, Turkey managed to restore relations with Britain. Despite its criticism, the British government was well aware that Turkish neutrality had prevented the conflict from spreading to the Middle East. In the post-war period, however, the British, who had been replaced in the Middle East by the Americans, continued to be present in Turkey.

As far as Cyprus was concerned, the British Conservative Party and the British Labour Party were strongly divided in their attitude with regard to the resolution of the political issue, but this division lost force after the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus in 1960. The Greek Cypriots had always felt supported by the Philhellenic members of the Labour Party who promised them a right to self-determination which would have led to *ENOSIS*, i.e. the political union of Cyprus with Greece. On the other hand, the pro-Turkish members of the Conservative Party had encouraged the Turks to demand the partition of the island. The two major British political parties had thus divided the two communities and were most likely manipulating them over Greece and Turkey.

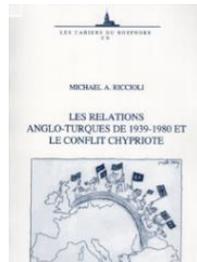
However, Britain's responsibility for Cyprus as a guarantor country became increasingly difficult to manage, especially after the proclamation of the Republic. In 1974, the Labour government assumed the role of conciliator between Greeks and Turks, rather than that of intervener as the Treaty of Guarantee allowed them to.

By giving itself the freedom to choose a conciliatory role, Britain, remembering the recent past in Cyprus and in Northern Ireland, had managed not to involve its troops again in a hopeless struggle, and so it decided to 'lay down the burden'¹ it had inherited from the Turks in 1878.

1. John Reddaway, *Burdened with Cyprus: The British Connection*

Booking essential: <https://michael-riccioli-lecture.eventbrite.co.uk>

Contact: contact@angloturkishsociety.org.uk



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Dr Michael A. Riccioli, a British citizen of Maltese descent, was born in Istanbul. He attended the English High School for Girls (primary) and the English High School for Boys (secondary) and completed his secondary and high school studies at the French Consulate General school (Istanbul). After his *French Baccalauréat*, he received a three-year grant - The Queen Elizabeth II Coronation Fund Grant - from the British Consulate General in Istanbul to cover his book expenses when he decided to study at the Faculty of English Language and Literature at the Sorbonne-Nouvelle (Paris III). His MA dissertation focused on 'Turkish Foreign Policy since 1945 and Anglo-Turkish Relations'. His 5th year postgraduate diploma (D.EA.) was on '*Les Relations Anglo-Turques 1945-1980*' and his Ph.D. thesis was on '*Les Relations Anglo-Turques 1939-1980 et le Conflit Chypriote*'. His fully updated doctoral thesis was published in April 2022. The book written in French (with footnotes in English and French), is based on documents from the French and British archives.

He taught English at the Turco-British Association (ITBA) (Istanbul), the British Institute (Paris) and the University of London Institute (Paris). He also taught English, Business English and British Civilisation at the Catholic Institute (Paris) and at the Universities of Picardie Jules Verne (Amiens) and Paris-Dauphine. He has published numerous English language textbooks and articles.

He lives in the suburbs of Paris.

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