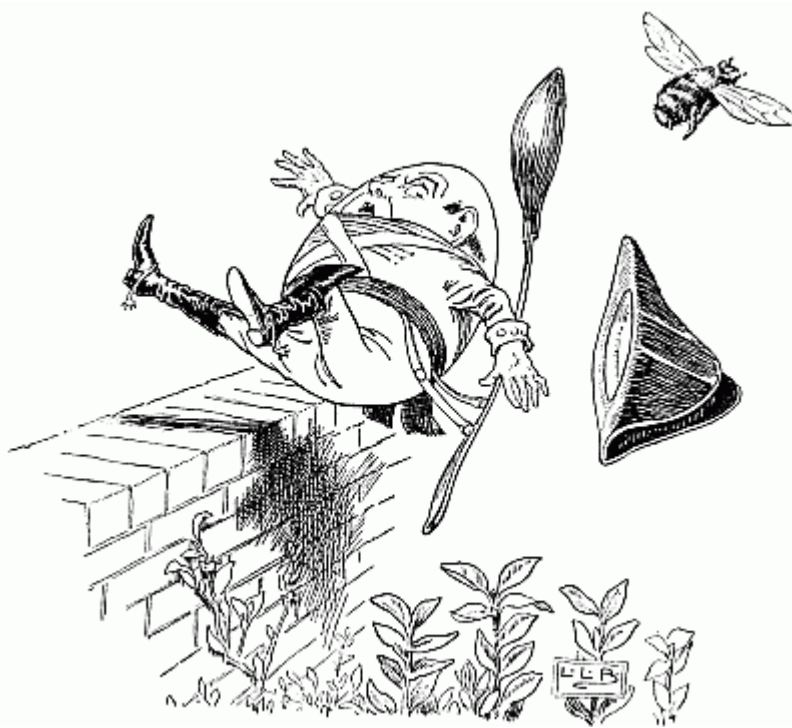


Cyprus and the tyranny of words

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By Robert Ellis

One of the characters Alice meets in Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking Glass* is the argumentative egg, Humpty Dumpty. According to Humpty, "When I use a word, it means just what I choose it to mean", which is the problem the two parties to the Cyprus dispute are now facing.

In essence, the conflict concerns two separate agendas, which for the last fifty-five years have collided and continue to do so. When three hundred years of Ottoman rule was succeeded by British administration in 1878, the thoughts of the Greek Cypriots turned to enosis (union) with their motherland, Greece. These thoughts were reinforced by the fact that Greece had shaken off Turkish rule fifty years earlier, and other islands such as Crete and the Dodecanese later became part of Greece.

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