

2.6 Geopolitics and the Cyprus Question

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Title

‘Enabling and Hybridising: How International Aid Impacts Cypriot Peacebuilding Civil Society Organisations’

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Abstract

Indigenous peacebuilding civil society organisations (CSOs) are receiving a larger proportion of international aid than ever before. The international community increasingly supplies them with financial support owing to the belief that they are most effective at mediating between disputant communities. The impact of this situation is a matter of continued debate. Whereas some scholars assert that recipients transform into service-delivery organisations tied to the expectations of their donors, others allege that CSOs retain the agency to negotiate how funds are spent in accordance with their own priorities.

By focusing on Cypriot peacebuilding CSOs, I add further complexity to this debate. I find that international aid has both an enabling and hybridising effect: it provides CSOs with the resources to design and develop peacebuilding initiatives according to their own objectives, whilst indirectly encouraging them to assume both a national policy and grassroots community focus.

Keywords

Peacebuilding; Civil Society Organisations; Cyprus; International Aid

Enabling and Hybridising: How International Aid Impacts Cypriot Peacebuilding Civil Society Organisations

Introduction

In recent decades, researchers and policymakers have increasingly argued that indigenous civil society organisations (CSOs) – here defined as organisations comprising of shared interests, purposes and values, distinct from the state, market and family, such as religious associations, women’s organisations and human rights groups – play a critical role in post-conflict peacebuilding. As they are ingrained into disputant communities, they understand their ‘cultural context and nuanced dynamics’ (Jewett 2019: 119) and can thereby develop effective, working relationships with conflicting parties, who commonly perceive them as legitimate and well-meaning actors. This is typically in contrast with external actors who lack deep awareness of a conflict’s complex internal politics, which can be a barrier to successfully engaging with disputants.

However, peacebuilding CSOs are also increasingly reliant upon international donors – namely international organisations (IOs) and foreign governments who provide them with financial support. Indeed, it is now widely conceived in academic and policy circles that they are receiving ‘a larger share of international aid than ever before’ (Krawczyk 2018: 296). The impact this situation has upon individual CSOs is a matter of continued debate. Some scholars allege that this reliance upon international aid means recipient CSOs effectively transition into professionalised, service-delivery organisations which complete specified tasks on behalf donors – who they ultimately become accountable to – and lose sight of their original, contextual intentions (Bebbington 1997; Suleiman 2013; Chahim & Prakash 2014). This view is challenged by those who claim the situation is more complex and nuanced than this. They believe CSOs have the agency to negotiate how the funds they receive are spent, so can therefore use them to support their own priorities and those advocated by grassroots communities they represent (Ebrahim 2003; Andrews 2014; Puljek-Shank 2018).

I wish to test and add to this debate by exploring the impact of international aid upon peacebuilding CSOs operating in Cyprus against the backdrop of the island’s ongoing conflict. There are good reasons for choosing Cyprus as a case study for this investigation. Recent decades have seen the development of peacebuilding CSOs across the island. Many of these CSOs facilitate Track II (T2) peacebuilding initiatives, including bicomunal projects, ‘peace education’ programs and dialogue forums. Some are also hugely benefitting from external funding from international donors, most notably the European Union (EU) (Jarraud *et al* 2013; Flynn 2016). However, the consequences of this financial reliance upon their identity and peacebuilding efforts requires further attention. It is not clear whether funded CSOs become shaped by the interests and demands of their donors, and thereby approach peacebuilding from a less contextual and locally driven perspective, or if they have the capacity to receive financial support whilst also pursuing their own peacebuilding goals and strategies.

Literature Review

Local Turn

The belief that indigenous CSOs are effective peacebuilders became particularly salient during the aftermath of the failed peacebuilding missions of the 1990s. These missions closely followed the ‘liberal internationalist’ paradigm, by adhering to the idea that peace can only be ordained if democratic elections, marketisation programs and constitutional reforms codifying civil rights are established in areas of conflict – as codified in the United Nation’s (UN) 1992 Agenda for Peace report (Boutros-Ghali 1992: para.82). However, this approach was quickly deemed ineffective and unsuccessful in establishing peace, not least because war-torn societies do not tend to possess the required infrastructure, socio-economic stability or political will to embark on elections (Paris 1997: 57; Kumar 1998: 7). Indeed, this one size fits all approach to peacebuilding, consisting of imposing Western ideals of market democracy onto radically different countries decimated by conflict, was soon regarded as naïve and unrealistic.

Consequently, there was a general sense that alternative approaches to peacebuilding were required. One such alternative, termed the social constructivist approach, advances that peace does not have a universally accepted definition, given it means ‘different things to different actors in different contexts’ (Wallis 2021: 77). Rather than peace being imposed onto a particular setting, social constructivists believe it should be based on the ideas and practices of human agents within intersubjective social contexts, thereby including the input of indigenous and contextual knowledge. Such an approach is reflected in the ‘local turn’ literature, which emphasises the active involvement of people on the ground in peacebuilding efforts (Leonardsson & Rudd, 2015: 825; Odendaal 2021: 627). Most of these studies begin by citing John Paul Lederach. In his 1997 ‘integrated framework for peacebuilding’, Lederach taught that sustainable peace is rooted in local people, who must become drivers of peacebuilding efforts if peace is to be ordained (Lederach 1997: 100).

Given this increased focus on building peace from the local community and grassroots level, theorists and practitioners commonly perceive indigenous CSOs as indispensable to successful and long-lasting peace. The inclusion of civil society is discussed as a silver bullet to overcoming problems associated with external actors imposing their own version of peace onto communities and societies they are unfamiliar with. This is because CSOs – with women’s organisations, religious associations and groups dedicated to human rights amongst those often mentioned – can help peacebuilding efforts to ‘gain broader public legitimacy and in turn become more durable’ (McKeon 2004), given that they are in touch with citizens on the ground and have a deep awareness of a conflict’s internal dynamics and developments. A related assumption is that civil society is embedded with values of civility, tolerance, cooperation, non-violence and transparency – all deemed essential to resolving persistent disputes and tensions.

These beliefs are reflected in the international community’s assessments for why CSOs need to become actively involved in peacebuilding. The UN claims that ‘real progress’ depends upon accessing their knowledge and resources, besides ‘actively including them in their work’ (United Nations Security Council 2015: 14). The EU has spoken of how an

'empowered civil society is a crucial component of any democratic system' and is an 'important player in fostering peace' (European Commission 2012: 3). These claims are supported by a wealth of academic research which has sought to empirically test the extent to which the inclusion of CSOs does mean peace is more likely to prevail in the long term. Desiree Nilsson's quantitative study assessed 83 peace agreements signed between 1989 and 2004, determining that CSO involvement is beneficial to the durability of peace (Nilsson 2012: 246). Similarly, Roberto Belloni argues that including civil society in the Bosnian peace process is vital for its 'long-term sustainability' (Belloni 2001: 164), whilst David Roberts claims that 'indigenous organisations' are vital to creating a 'meaningful, stable and viable' peace in Cambodia (Roberts 2008: 67).

T2 Peacebuilding

In terms of how indigenous CSOs can practically influence peacebuilding operations, focus is generally placed on their role as facilitators of T2 initiatives: unofficial and informal activities, such as inter-ethnic dialogue sessions and workshops, designed to enhance interaction and understanding between disputant parties. They are intended to complement Track I diplomacy, or official negotiations and peace talks carried out by government and IO officials or diplomats (Mapendere 2000: 67). T2 efforts help to stimulate a 'peace constituency' by emphasising the value of peaceful relations and building trust between disputants (Burgess & Burgess 2010: 16), thereby creating conditions where official peace negotiations and strategies are more likely to succeed. Indigenous CSOs are considered particularly effective in facilitating them. They are generally trusted by conflicting parties, who regard their aims as more legitimate and genuine than those of official actors. Consequently, CSOs can access a greater number of communities than officials whose lack of knowledge of a conflict's complex internal politics can be a barrier to engaging with disputants. It should be noted, however, that indigenous CSOs are diverse in their objectives and actions, so some are better suited to peacebuilding than others. Faith-based organisations are believed to be particularly effective, owing to their experience as educators and intermediaries (Bercovitch & Kadayifci-Orellana 2009: 176). There are also weaknesses and limitations to indigenous CSOs facilitating T2 activities. Unlike official state or IO representatives, they cannot offer financial or diplomatic incentives to conflicting parties to help them reach a mutual understanding.

In addition to facilitating T2 initiatives, CSOs also contribute to peacebuilding through playing an advocacy and public communication role, which can be defined as the practice of 'articulating interests' and creating 'channels of communication to bring them to the public agenda' (Paffenholz & Spurr 2006). Examples of advocacy work are diverse, but can include bringing specific conflict-related themes, such as legal issues around the recognition of individual rights, to the national agenda through public campaigns and lobbying activities; campaigning for civil society to be involved in peace negotiations; and targeted campaigns around specific issues, such as the release of prisoners or the return of refugees (Paffenholz 2010: 386). Such advocacy work has benefitted from technological advancements, which have enabled CSOs to carry out sustained campaigns across territorial borders.

International Aid and 'Donorisation' of CSOs

IOs and foreign governments are increasingly channelling funding directly to indigenous CSOs. Their growing mistrust in the integrity of official aid channels, combined with

assumptions that CSOs are reliable groups with well-meaning intentions, convinces donors that this approach limits the danger of funds being misused or wasted. A further incentive for funding CSOs directly is that donors tend to have greater control over their commitment, and the flexibility to shift priorities if their wish to (Edwards & Hulme 1995; Ebrahim 2003; Chahim & Prakash 2014; Novak 2017).

Scholars typically contend that CSOs receiving such funding effectively become ‘service-delivery’ organisations which are primarily accountable to donors and derive legitimacy from completing tasks and matching an agenda externally set by them (DiMaggio & Powell 1983; Brinkerhoff 2005; Chahim & Prakash 2014). Examples of ‘service delivery’ could include distributing medical supplies, improving access between communities and staffing community centres – any ‘service’ which donors regard as fundamental to their operations (Banks *et al* 2015: 710). This process is said to be underlined by the ‘professionalisation’ or ‘NGOisation’ of CSOs, whereby funds are used to employ trained, full-time staff members to deliver specified projects, maintain permanent premises, and develop formal policies and reporting procedures – all which donors deem necessary if recipient organisations are to fulfil their responsibilities effectively. Focus becomes placed on delivering services or initiatives with ‘short-term outcomes’ and clearly monitored ‘deliverables’ (Andrews 2014: 101).

However, this ‘professionalisation’ process is simultaneously believed to weaken the CSOs’ ties with local, grassroots communities and decreases ‘broad-based community participation’ in their activities (Chahim & Prakash 2014: 491). As CSOs become responsive to the needs and demands of external donors, their attention becomes diverted from internal constituents and community-based issues. This causes local communities to perceive professionalised CSOs as elitist organisations removed from their concerns, and which are artificially interested in projects or initiatives which apparent beneficiaries may not want or need (Rodionov *et al* 2021; Elbers *et al* 2022). Indeed, some commentators conclude that funded CSOs effectively become ‘subcontracted development consultants’ (Bebbington 1997: 1759) or ‘private consultancy firms’ with professional networks and specialities in policy monitoring and service delivery (Alvarez 2009: 180). This is believed to be in contrast with unfunded, membership based CSOs, which are responsive to the needs and priorities of their own members and communities they are accountable to.

In recent years, some studies have pushed back against this narrative, by arguing that CSOs can continue to pursue their own interests in addition to representing and involving local communities in their activities whilst also receiving financial support from donors (Andrews 2014; Banks *et al* 2015). In practice, this is said to occur through CSOs effectively becoming ‘intermediaries between donor and local interests’ (Puljek-Shank 2018: 881). They receive donor funds but apply them to the needs of communities, who influence how resources are allocated. To some degree, this approach appeases both donors and grassroots communities – donors can be sure their financial aid is directed towards the most pressing issues, whilst communities can state their priorities (Banks *et al* 2015; Puljek-Shank 2018). A related argument is that CSOs retain the agency and influence to ‘negotiate’ with donors as to how funds are spent, by persuading them to match their funding to the needs and priorities of local communities (Andrews 2014: 107). Such an approach is believed to safeguard CSOs’ representative function and legitimacy amongst the grassroots, which donors may regard as an important consideration when apportioning financial resources (Ebrahim 2003; Andrews

2014). The impact of international aid upon individual CSOs therefore remains a matter of scholarly debate.

Case Selection and Methods

Why Cyprus

Several reasons explain the investigation's case selection. Cyprus presents a conflict in a protracted state, where core issues are yet to be resolved, but also where armed fighting has largely ceased. These conditions are ripe for peacebuilding operations, given there is a clear incentive to settle underlying structures of conflict, whilst the lack of continuous armed violence means there is greater likelihood that peacebuilding initiatives can practically take place. Such conflicts are often labelled as 'frozen', although there are issues with this definition. It has been criticised for implying that conflicts are in a de facto stable, yet unresolved, condition. Such assessments therefore do not account for the changing political dynamics and intentions of involved parties, which can cause proposed solutions and methods for securing peace to significantly change over time (Lynch 2005: 192; Smetana & Ludvik 2019: 3). A substantial number of the world's protracted conflicts involve former Soviet satellite states in Eastern Europe, but current geopolitical tensions render them somewhat inaccessible in practical terms, meaning research choices were relatively limited from the start.

Furthermore, though formal, high-level negotiations have not taken place since 2017, there is ample evidence of the continued growth and development of Cypriot CSOs carrying out T2 peacebuilding initiatives. Two notable factors help to explain this trend. Firstly, owing to the distinct lack of progress through official peace talks, there have been growing calls for a 'Cypriot-led, Cypriot-owned' peace process, involving wider Cypriot society rather than just the political elite. This phrase stems from a speech made by former UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, during the aftermath of the failed 2004 Annan Plan.¹ He claimed that future peacebuilding efforts must lay 'first and foremost with the Cypriots themselves' if they are to have any realistic chance of success (Michael 2013: 531). Subsequently, international actors have become committed to developing and working with the island's civil society. The UN's peacekeeping force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) has developed a Civil Affairs section, which purposely works with indigenous groups on a range of initiatives and activities designed to build bicomunal confidence and trust. The EU has similarly pledged to logistically and financially support civil society to help 'facilitate the reunification of Cyprus' (Council of the EU 2006). Secondly, the opening of the 'Green Line' border in 2003 spurred civil society development, by enabling Greek and Turkish Cypriots to meet and communicate with each

¹ The Annan Plan was arguably the most notable and politically consequential attempt to resolve the conflict since the island's partition in 1974. In line with previous arrangements, the plan was to create a new 'United Republic of Cyprus', consisting of the Greek and Turkish Cypriot states and joined by a federal government apparatus (Axt 2009: 74). The proposals were put to a referendum, where they were accepted by 65% of Turkish Cypriots, but rejected by 72% of Greek Cypriots, ensuring they were defeated. This did not stop Cyprus from subsequently being controversially admitted into the EU as a divided country.

other for the first time in decades.² Despite deep-seated grievances between both communities, this encouraged at least a degree of bicomunal engagement among sectors of the population who are more committed to resolving the conflict than prolonging ethnic tensions (Lönnqvist 2008: 1). Unsurprisingly, many of the island's most active CSOs formed at this time, such as 'Hands Across the Divide' – the island's first bicomunal women's organisation.

This emphasis upon the Cypriot peace process requiring civil society involvement further explains the case selection, as it means there are a range of international actors (or donors) financially supporting peacebuilding CSOs. Currently, the most active and generous international donor is the EU – which is perhaps unsurprising given the country's EU membership. Its financial aid is channelled through several distinct funding streams and programs. They include the United National Development Program (UNDP), which supports initiatives designed to 'encourage dialogue and cooperation between all of the communities of Cyprus' (UNDP website 2022). Support also comes from the 'youth strand' of its Erasmus+ program, designed to support youth-based initiatives operating outside the formal education sector (Erasmus+ website 2022). Other international donors include UNFICYP, though its financial support is generally limited to small grants covering necessary expenses like transportation costs. Several embassies and foreign governments are also active. The German foreign office funds initiatives relating to crisis prevention, stabilisation and post-conflict peacebuilding (German foreign office website 2022). Likewise, the Swedish government continues to support Cypriot peacebuilding efforts. Clearly, there is ample evidence of international donors financially supporting Cypriot CSOs. However, the consequences of this aid upon their identity and peacebuilding activities remains undeveloped and is therefore the centre of this paper's investigation.

CSO selection

Given practical constraints, this study specifically focuses on three peacebuilding CSOs operating in Cyprus – though the author has analysed many others for research purposes beyond the scope of this paper. They were selected based on their ongoing activeness in peacebuilding efforts (the extent to which they continue to respond to ongoing tensions); their bicomunalism (the involvement of Greek and Turkish Cypriots in their activities); and their dependency on international aid (how reliant they are on external funding). This latter point revealed an interesting dimension often missing in the literature. Though it is usually interpreted that CSOs either receive financial support or remain totally self-sufficient, I found it more reflective to think of a 'spectrum' of international aid rather than this binary divide. Whereas some CSOs are fundamentally tied to external funding, given they employ a full team of staff, maintain premises and carry out a variety of programs (characteristics associated with their professionalisation or institutionalisation), others are voluntary based – so are not professionalised in this sense – yet still receive some project-specific funds to design and develop a limited number of activities. It is therefore relevant to question the extent to which CSOs are dependent on international aid, rather than simply uncovering whether they receive any support or not.

² The 'Green Line' refers to the UN-controlled buffer zone dividing both sides of the country. Movement across the buffer zone was heavily restricted until 2003, when regulations were relaxed.

The chosen CSOs are listed here:

1. Association for Historical Dialogue and Research (ADHR): This group established in 2003 with the intention of enhancing understanding, respect and cooperation among all communities in Cyprus, by promoting a culture of peace through educational practices.
2. Famagusta Avenue Garage (FAG): This bicommunal organisation established in 2018 to encourage individuals from both communities, across the divided Famagusta region, to work together to promote a culture of coexistence and the sharing of experiences.
3. Cyprus Youth Council (CYC): CYC formed in 1996 with the aim of promoting dialogue and cooperation between youth in Cyprus whilst connecting them to the wider world. Its areas of interest in relation to young people include human rights, employment and education issues.

There are fundamental similarities between these groups. Most notably, they are focused on bringing together people from across the divide and regard a ‘united Cyprus’ as the acceptable means of resolving the conflict. They have sourced at least some level of financial support and continue to be active in facilitating T2 peacebuilding initiatives. However, it is important to also emphasise how there are differences between these CSOs. ADHR and CYC are most ‘professionalised’, in the sense that they employ staff members, have formal decision-making procedures and a physical base. In contrast, FAG relies on volunteers and thus operates on a more transient basis than ADHR and CYC, with fewer consistent events or initiatives. The CSO is therefore less institutionalised or professionalised than the other two groups.

Research Methods

Some ‘desk-based’ research was initially carried out. I analysed the websites and social media content of each CSO, in addition to a range of reports and documents circulated by them. I also reviewed newspaper articles written about their work. However, the investigation primarily centres on an ethnographic approach. I spent considerable time in Cyprus, across two different periods, interviewing members and employees of each CSO and attending their activities – including workshops and dialogue forums. In addition, I spoke to a variety of prominent domestic politicians, UN and EU officials, journalists, lawyers, educators and activists. As ever, the interview process assumed a ‘snowball’ effect, whereby additional interviews were arranged after speaking with an initial list of contacts. This ethnographic approach enabled me to get a firm grasp of the contextual considerations impacting the CSOs’ ability to operate effectively and account for local experiences of peace interventions. Such an approach cannot simply be defined as ‘qualitative’. Though I conducted semi-structured interviews, understanding life in a context marked by conflict, and studying individuals ‘in their own time and space’, requires deeper immersion into communities that goes beyond interview settings and relatively formal face-to-face encounters (Koonings *et al* 2019: 4). Establishing long-term engagement with contacts, which naturally translates to ‘participant observation’, means researchers develop an emotional connection with socio-

political reality and a contextualised interpretation of how communities view the world around them in relation to conflict and peace (Krause 2021: 329).

Discussion

Enabling and Facilitating

My findings contrast with much of the narrative propelled in the ‘donorisation’ literature. Rather than transforming CSOs into ‘consultants’ working on behalf of donors and adhering to their needs and interests (Alvarez 2009: 180), international aid serves an ‘enabling’ or ‘facilitating’ purpose – it provides beneficiaries with the means and resources to develop initiatives according to their own agenda and priorities (Interview with ADHR 2023). The CSOs purposely search for financial support, typically in the form of ‘project funds’, so they can design and develop peacebuilding programs matching their objectives, which are structured by the most pressing needs and interests of those demographics they represent. Funding is specifically required to cover staffing costs – the CSO may need to recruit designated project officers or alternatively reallocate full-time employees to develop the project. Funding is also sought for other project requirements, including necessary printed and online resources, such as websites and marketing materials; transportation costs (travelling to specific venues); and booking external experts or guest speakers. Given the CSOs’ projects are centred on building trust between Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities, in addition to overcoming divisive stereotypes and attitudes, international aid enables them to make a grassroots and community-focused peacebuilding contribution.

We can see evidence of this when surveying projects coordinated by the three CSOs. For example, ADHR facilitates an ‘Imagine’ program, financially supported by the German foreign office. The program is designed to increase contact between both communities and promote peace, understanding and anti-racism across Cyprus, so has an education focus in line with the organisation’s overall objectives. The funding means ADHR can continue to employ ‘education officers’, who visit schools and closely collaborate with teachers in the design of workshops and classes where existing conflict-inducing stereotypes, discrimination and attitudes - described as elements of the ‘prevailing culture of violence’ - are critically interrogated and replaced with alternative viewpoints and perceptions (Interview with ADHR 2023). An additional element of this program sees participating Greek and Turkish Cypriot children visit ADHR’s physical base – located in the buffer zone and maintained through EU-facilitated grants – to take part in further peace education activities designed to develop skills for teamwork, tolerance and trust.³ Therefore, this funded program enables young people from across the divide to meet each other (such programs often provide the first opportunity for Turkish and Greek Cypriot children to interact), whilst training them to understand that different perceptions and attitudes exist in relation to the causes of the conflict and its various impacts. This training is intended to overcome the ‘nationalism’ and ‘blame game’ narratives integrated into the formal education curriculum on both sides of the island, which

³ ADHR are based at the ‘Home for Cooperation’ – a community centre in the buffer zone that ADHR shares with other peacebuilding CSOs. The EU, through their ‘EEA and Norway Grants’, provided an initial 600,000 EUR to support its establishment in 2011.

characterise ‘the other’ as the perpetrators and reason why the conflict persists (Interview with UNFICYP 2023).

International aid similarly allows CYC to design and implement its initiatives. The CSO’s projects are mainly supported by the EU’s Erasmus+ programme, which is unsurprising given the CSO’s focus on ‘working with and representing young people from across the island’ (Interview with CYC 2023). They include a ‘Co-creating Media Literate Youth’ project, designed to raise awareness among school-aged Turkish and Greek Cypriots of the amount of fake news and misinformation plaguing both communities – which is rooted in aspects of the conflict. Financial aid ensures CYC continues to employ a team of educators to train project participants in ‘media literacy’. This involves teaching them to recognise the propagation of false narratives, particularly in an online context. Participants are also exposed to practical methods in how to overcome and even respond to such misinformation (Interview with CYC 2023). This project personifies the overall intentions of the CSO – to facilitate contact between young people from both communities, whilst enabling them to understand and confront the various interrelated issues impacting society. These intentions are apparent when analysing CYC’s other programs, such as their ‘summer school’. Taking place each year in a different part of the island, the summer school sees Greek and Turkish Cypriot youngsters participate in various non-formal education workshops and activities – with the EU’s financial support put towards necessary expenses. The workshops help young people to become ‘peace advocates’, with specific sessions on ‘democratic participation’ and how to positively influence society (Interview with CYC 2023).

A similar narrative emerges when looking at the work carried out by FAG. As mentioned, the level of professionalisation separates this CSO from ADHR and CYC. Unlike those two groups, FAG is reliant on volunteers and does not employ staff members on a consistent basis. However, the group has still accessed financial assistance for the purpose of developing projects adhering with its overall objective of increasing collaboration between Greek and Turkish Cypriots (particularly young people) across the Famagusta region. Most notably, the EU funds their ‘Empowering the Youth of Famagusta’ project – designed in collaboration with two other CSOs based in Famagusta. The financial aid largely goes towards recruiting and sustaining a ‘project officer’ (the lead member of FAG) for the predefined duration of the initiative. The project aims to ‘empower’ young Turkish and Greek Cypriots from the relatively rural Famagusta region by encouraging their participation in ‘human rights education’ and ‘intercommunal collaboration’ (Interview with FAG 2023). It encompasses several different activities, including ‘weekend camps’ where participants come together to ‘attend a series of workshops’, designed to help them appreciate different points of view, in addition to ‘entertaining activities’ including film screenings (FAG project report 2023). It is therefore another example of financial support enabling CSOs to put their own peacebuilding plans into practice.

Several contextual reasons explain how this situation has occurred. One principal explanation is that CSOs purposely access funding from donors who broadly agree with and are sympathetic to their own peacebuilding intentions. Ensuring their priorities align helps to prevent recipients from following an agenda which deviates from their ‘own goals’ (Interview with CYC 2023). For instance, ADHR has received funding from the German foreign office given it regards education-based activities as ‘integral’ to peacebuilding (Interview with ADHR 2023). Meanwhile, CYC’s financial dependence on the EU’s Erasmus+ program

relates to their mutual focus on youth-based initiatives. FAG's 'Empowering the Youth of Famagusta' project matches multiple EU priorities, including instigating collaboration among young people and connecting Turkish and Greek Cypriots from regions other than Nicosia – the usual centre of bicomunal peace efforts.⁴ Therefore, this practice of locating favourable funding streams, broadly matching their agendas, helps ensure CSOs can pursue their interests, and those of the constituents they represent, whilst receiving international aid. Their ability to source favourable funds is partly helped by the high proportion of donors and funding streams operating in Cyprus.

A further reason is that a process of negotiation often takes place between donors and recipients during the project planning stage, to ensure initiatives broadly match the aims of both parties. CSOs admit they are not afraid to 'push back' against suggestions advocated by donors during the planning stage if they are felt to contradict or interfere with their own ambitions (Interview with FAG 2023). This chimes with the arguments put forward by those scholars, such as Bebbington and Puljek-Shank, who question the 'donorisation' narrative by claiming that CSOs retain the agency to negotiate with donors to ensure financial resources are allocated according to their agenda and the interests of the people they represent – who the CSOs work alongside when planning initiatives. As also echoed by revisionist scholars, including Gilham and Edwards, this process simultaneously helps to safeguard the organisations' legitimacy by illustrating that their primary motivation is to 'work on behalf of' certain constituencies and communities (Interview with CYC 2023).

Measuring Impact

Another explanation is that donors are principally driven by ensuring their funded projects make a significant and wide-ranging peacebuilding impact. This is very much their focus of attention: they are largely happy to delegate responsibility of the design and nature of projects to the CSOs, providing they can clearly demonstrate a project's positive influence and outcomes. In practice, CSOs are expected to compile project reports, either at the conclusion of the project or on a more interim basis, documenting 'what the projects have achieved' (Interview with CYC 2023). This emphasis on measuring impact partly derives from the need for donors to internally 'justify' that their funds are 'put to good use' (Interview with EC in Cyprus 2023). It is also because international actors are otherwise restricted from influencing the peace process – given the emphasis on it being 'Cypriot-led - so regard their financial support of CSOs' projects as one of the very few ways they can demonstrate active and positive involvement.⁵ It means that although CSOs retain the agency and autonomy to structure projects according to their ambitions, they need to consider their impact from the initial design stage all the way through to their implementation.

However, the CSOs highlight that quantifying impact is much more 'difficult' and 'challenging' than might initially be assumed (Interview with FAG 2023), given their projects are primarily geared towards building trust between communities and influencing attitudes or

⁴ CSOs find that the majority of their members and participants are from the Nicosia region, where there is greater proximity to the buffer zone and a more established culture of passing between both sides of the island compared with other areas of the country. They are consciously trying to encourage people from outside this region to take part in their activities and events.

⁵ The international community typically sees its role as 'managing' and 'monitoring' the situation in Cyprus in accordance with UN resolutions, so does not take a particularly interventionist approach (Interview with UNFICYP 2023).

perceptions – objectives which can only be effectively measured over the longer-term and cannot easily be reduced to clearly defined metrics or results. For some events, the CSOs can record the ‘numbers of people attending’ to demonstrate their success (Interview with ADHR 2023), yet there are issues associated with relying on this as an effective measure of impact. Cypriot CSOs generally find that the ‘same people’, typically those who already support peace efforts (Interview with ADHR 2023), usually attend their activities. This creates a perception that they are ‘preaching to the converted’ and not reaching out to those sectors of society which object to any form of peace negotiation (Interview with CYC 2023). Furthermore, measuring attendance is not possible for certain types of activities, whilst simply attending an event does not automatically lead to participants changing their opinion and attitude towards ‘the other’ community.

As a result of these challenges, CSOs seek alternative ways of measuring impact. One of the main alternatives – one which international donors particularly approve of and where there is precedent – is for CSOs to convert their experiences facilitating a project into national policy-based suggestions and recommendations, intended to positively influence political decision-making and public policy on a wider, national level. Indeed, it is common for CSOs to include policy recommendations within their project reports. The extent to which their proposals are implemented by the Cypriot government, Northern Cypriot administration and more regional municipalities is another matter – one outside the scope of this paper.⁶ Administrations on both sides generally maintain strict control over different aspects of policy, so anecdotal evidence certainly suggests that CSOs have had limited success in their proposals directly influencing policy decisions. Nonetheless, compiling policy-based recommendations is still an effective means for CSOs to demonstrate their attempts to ‘broaden the impact’ of their projects (Interview with FAG 2023).

We can see evidence of this when looking at all three CSOs. ADHR compiled a ‘Reform of History Education’ report based on their experience working with young people, teachers and researchers as part of their ‘Imagine’ project, and in response to the German foreign office’s requirements for ADHR to consider its ‘wider impact’ (Interview with ADHR 2023). The report’s policy-based proposals include the ‘urgent’ need for a ‘new curricula and textbooks’, incorporating primary and secondary sources that ‘vary in perspectives’ and carefully construct ‘tasks and activities’ that aim to develop factual knowledge and historical concepts (ADHR Reform of History Education report 2020). Such recommendations adhere with the widely held view that history education across Cyprus is inadequate, leaving young people ‘ignorant of huge parts of factual knowledge’, including with regards to the conflict (ADHR Reform of History Education report 2020). The compilation of such reports is not necessarily solely the result of donors’ emphasis on impact and outcomes. Some organisations, particularly those which have been operating over a sustained period, may feel compelled to ‘assume greater responsibility’ by trying to influence public policy and political decision-making regardless of donor expectations – especially given that official peace negotiations have stalled since 2017 (Interview with ADHR 2023). Therefore, though donor requirements are certainly a leading factor explaining this focus on influencing ‘political decisions’ and

⁶ Since the 1974 division, the internationally recognised Republic of Cyprus government has controlled the southern two-thirds of the island, whilst the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (only recognised by Turkey) has controlled the northern one-third.

‘policymaking’ (Interview with ADHR 2023), they are not necessarily the only factor at play.⁷

CYC has similarly produced policy reports and proposals on the back of their various projects, largely in response to EU ‘expectations’ in considering their outcomes (Interview with CYC 2023). For example, CYC published a policy paper directly related to the ‘Co-creating Media Literate Youth’ project. They collated opinions, ideas and recommendations of those participating in the project specifically for the ‘purpose of drafting a policy paper’ about the various challenges caused by misinformation and fake news (CYC Press Release 2021). The paper was created with the aim of better informing policymakers and educators of practical ways to verify fake news and combat misinformation, with an original ‘toolkit’ designed for this very purpose. As mentioned, recognising and tackling misinformation and propaganda is regarded as an important step in overcoming falsely construed narratives relating to the conflict. The process adopted here by CYC is typical of their various projects. They are designed to make a positive contribution at the grassroots community level, but are also seen as an opportunity to collect first-hand evidence in support of policy-based recommendations.

Furthermore, the EU asked FAG to prepare a report detailing the ‘outcomes and suggestions’ stemming from their coordination of the ‘Empowering the Youth of Famagusta’ project (Interview with FAG 2023). This resulted in the CSO compiling a list of recommendations based on the opinions of young people participating in workshops at their weekend camps. Although FAG is geographically focused on the Famagusta region, its suggestions are of a wider, more national nature. They include a proposal for checkpoints between the ‘Green Line’ dividing the island to adopt automation technologies to reduce the time taken to pass security checks. This may sound like a very practical and technocratic proposal, but the time taken to cross the checkpoints leads to ‘unnecessary challenges’ for those crossing on a frequent basis and can potentially reduce the willingness of young people to participate in bicomunal activities (FAG project report 2023). A further proposal is for a series of cultural festivals to be organised on an annual basis to help young Turkish and Greek Cypriots to discover their ‘common cultural past’ by participating in bicomunal activities, such as cooking competitions (FAG project report 2023).

Hybridisation

This emphasis donors place on considering the impact and outcomes of projects has interrelated empirical and analytical consequences. Firstly, we can infer that it encourages CSOs to assume a more ‘national’ focus, by compiling national policy recommendations. Applying ‘national’ as an analytical concept is to some degree problematic when referring to a divided country such as Cyprus, where individuals do not conform to a standardised ‘national identity’, and where political and governmental decisions typically refer to only one part of the wider country. What I mean in this context is that CSOs develop recommendations concerning the entire Cypriot population, which could be taken up by policymakers across the island – including the official Republic of Cyprus government and the administration in

⁷ That said, the CSOs express disillusionment with developing policy proposals, given they generally do not impact political decision-making. This further indicates how they compile recommendations largely in response to donor expectations.

the north. Their ‘national’ focus therefore refers to them proposing suggestions in relation to issues faced by Greek and Turkish Cypriots across the country.

This national focus makes it difficult to succinctly define and characterise these organisations. It seems inaccurate to claim they are solely ‘local’ or ‘grassroots’ organisations – terms which are often applied in the literature. They undoubtedly remain focused on making a positive impact at the grassroots or local community level, given their primary motivation remains fixed on building bridges and overcoming sources of tension between Greek and Turkish Cypriots communities - as realised through their T2 peacebuilding efforts. Indeed, the CSOs recognise that it is their financial support which enables them to carry out these activities. Yet, this is clearly not the full extent of their contribution. It therefore appears more reflective to describe them as ‘hybrid’ organisations which are focused on more than one level of society simultaneously. This also has theoretical consequences. When considering how international aid impact CSOs, scholars typically argue – as we have seen – that it has a restricting and constraining effect, given it leads to CSOs ‘simply’ acting ‘as subcontractors that deliver services’ on behalf of donors (Krawczyk 2018: 297). Yet, I come to quite the opposite conclusion here. I find that the expectations of donors in relation to measuring impact leads and encourages CSOs to assume a broader focus transcending different levels of society. Financial aid helps them to design and develop grassroots-based initiatives, whilst also indirectly leading them to focus on public policy and political decisions.

The findings therefore add more nuance and complexity to the ‘donorisation’ debate. They highlight how the CSOs are still focused on responding to the interests and objectives of international donors - even if these interests are different to how they are usually interpreted in the literature. Donors do not directly influence the nature of projects or their day-to-day operations, whilst CSOs are not redirected to focusing on donor-led activities or services. Yet, this does not mean that CSOs are unresponsive to the primary objectives and interests of their donors. They are still very much expected to complete project reports and document a project’s ‘measurable outcomes’ within ‘pre-specified time frames’ (Banks *et al* 2015: 712). We therefore should be careful to consider the full complexities of this debate and, for example, not assume that CSOs which retain the agency to negotiate how funds are spent automatically become detached from the interests and objectives of donors. Considering donors’ main priorities is clearly integral to such analysis.

Conclusion

This paper began with a clear purpose: to highlight how international aid impacts peacebuilding CSOs operating in Cyprus. This has allowed it to make a theoretical contribution, by adding to the ongoing scholarly debate regarding the ways international donors influence recipient CSOs, in addition to building our knowledge of the identity and peacebuilding contribution of Cypriot CSOs. By closely analysing the work of three CSOs, it paints a complex and nuanced picture that in some ways reinforces, but in other ways challenges, the narrative often presented in the ‘donorisation’ literature.

I began by claiming that international aid serves an ‘enabling’ and ‘facilitating’ role, by providing recipient CSOs with the necessary resources to develop peacebuilding initiatives according to their own objectives. They actively search for financial support, which they consider fundamental to implementing effective programs. This clearly contrasts with the arguments often presented in the literature, whereby funded CSOs are believed to experience a convergence towards donor interests ‘in terms of setting priorities and determining strategy’ (Parks 2008: 217). Several contextual factors explain this situation, including CSOs’ ability to locate funding streams with favourable and matching objectives (a point lacking consideration in the literature), in addition to negotiating how funds are spent.

A further reason, which takes us to the next stage of the narrative, is that donors are primarily focused on ensuring CSOs can clearly demonstrate the impact and outcomes of their funded projects (the area where beneficiaries must be responsive to donor expectations), whilst delegating responsibility of the specific nature of activities to CSOs. However, sufficiently measuring impact is a difficult process for CSOs, given their projects are primarily geared towards influencing perceptions and attitudes, which cannot be adequately measured in the short-term. Therefore, to overcome this problem and adhere to donors’ expectations, CSOs seek alternative ways of demonstrating the outcomes of their projects. This often leads to them using their experiences to compile reports proposing national policy recommendations designed to influence public policy and political decision-making. This process has multiple implications. It means CSOs attain a more ‘national’ and policy focus, in addition to their typical grassroots-level focus, and are thus operating across different levels of society simultaneously. This ‘hybridisation’ also means that international aid, rather than restricting and inhibiting recipient CSOs into closely abiding by donors’ expectations, encourages them, even if only indirectly, to assume a broader and more ambitious focus.

It is hoped these findings will instigate further research and debate. They clearly demonstrate that international aid’s impact upon peacebuilding CSOs can only be understood when taking contextual factors and dynamics into account. We cannot begin to analyse international aid or peacebuilding CSOs without accounting for the multiple complexities existing within particular settings. Therefore, I caution against the generalisation of this narrative and instead hope similar enquiries can be carried out in other regions and countries experiencing prolonged conflict.

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Interviews

Interview with Association for Historical Dialogue and Research employees.

Interview with Cyprus Youth Council employees.

Interview with the European Commission in Cyprus employees.

Interview with Famagusta Avenue Garage members.

Interview with UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus employees.

**Justification mechanisms of the status quo, perceptions
of transitional justice and forms of solving the Cyprus
problem: A bi- communal research in the Cypriot context**

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PhD Thesis Presentation

Supervisor: Professor Charis Psaltis

Presentation structure

- ▶ Aims of the project
- ▶ Theoretical background
- ▶ Methodology
- ▶ Hypothesis
- ▶ Preliminary results
- ▶ Contribution
- ▶ References

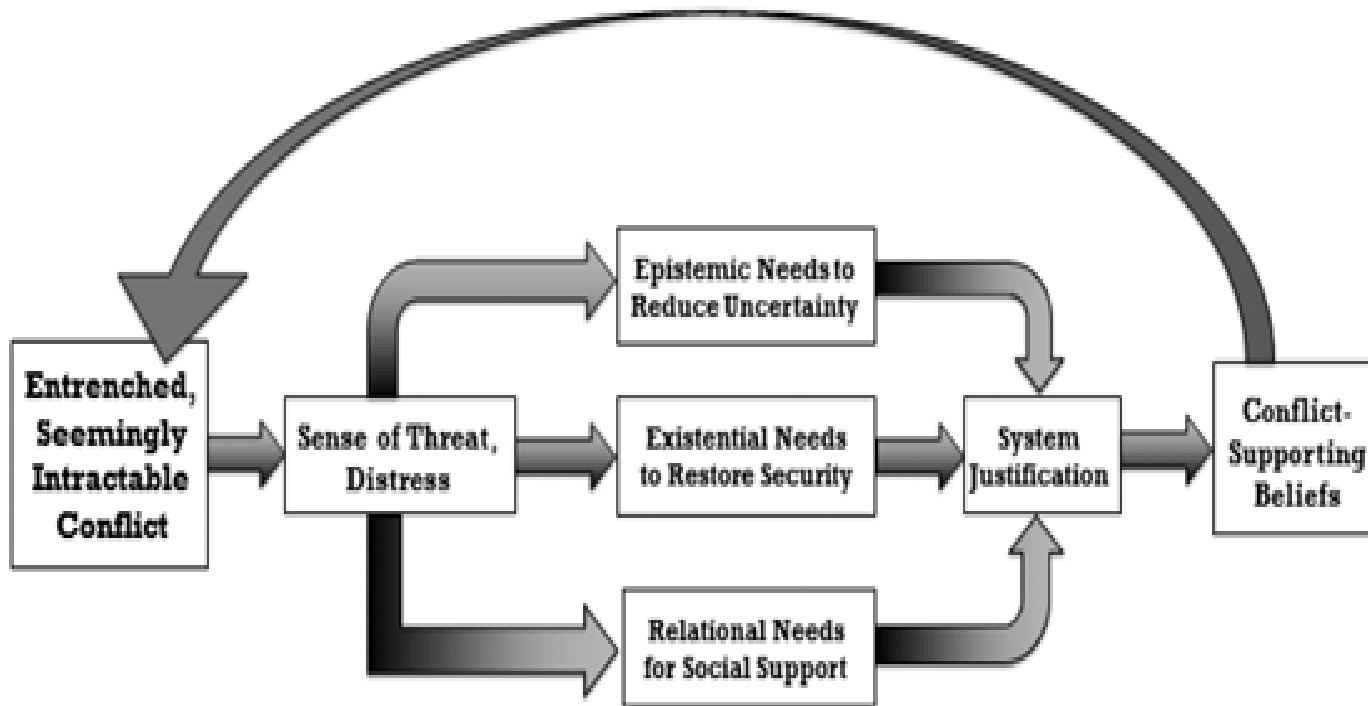
Main research goals

- ▶ The main aim of the proposed research project is to offer an in-depth interdisciplinary (psychology, politics, law, security studies) understanding of the perceptions of the current situation (status quo) in both communities of Cyprus and through a multimethodological approach between various social psychological variables to understand the mechanisms that will facilitate transition from the status quo into a jointly agreed solution to the Cyprus problem.
- ▶ Also, our research aims to explore if and how the understanding of status quo related to transitional justice attitudes among G/Cs and T/Cs
- ▶ How the inside institutional Status quo relate to the external status quo
- ▶ How victimization status influence the aforementioned relationships

Theoretical background- System justification theory

- ▶ The theory of System justification (SJT) posit that people legitimize the social system even at the expense of the self or the group (Jost & Banaji, 1994) and has not been examined in a deeply divided society context.
- ▶ When in System Justification Theory the “System” is defined then usually it refers to the political and economic system of a single state. In the case of a Deeply Divided Context like Cyprus the Status Quo needs to be defined both “internally” in each community as well as vis a vis the other community in Cyprus and the perceived national interests of regional and international actors (Turkey, Greece, UK, USA, EU, Russia, Israel)

System justification -Ethos of conflict



Transitional justice

- ▶ Transitional justice is a critically important area on political science studies but little effort has been made to examine the phenomenon from social psychological perspective (see Psaltis et al., 2019) and in a deeply divided society context.
- ▶ Amnesty
- ▶ Retribution
- ▶ Restoration
- ▶ Apology
- ▶ CMP

Methodology of project

- ▶ The project will consist of 8 focus groups in each community
- ▶ Q methodology containing statement on the definition of the problem, democracy, history and corruption
- ▶ A cross-sectional field study in both communities
- ▶ An experimental intervention
- ▶ I will give focus only on focus groups and the field study

Focus groups

- ▶ From the focus groups we attempt to identify if internal perception of socio-political system related to the external status quo by addressing the perception of corruption, democracy and justice. Specifically, we attempt to answer the following questions:
- ▶ How do both communities perceive the current status quo
- ▶ How do both communities identify internal socio-political issues, such as corruption, democracy, and justice
- ▶ Do both communities relate these internal socio-political issues to the Cyprus issue status quo, and if so, how
- ▶ How do both communities understand victimization and its various aspects

Focus groups

T/C Focus Groups	G/C Focus Groups
<u>1. Morfou</u>	<u>1. IDs from Morfou</u>
<u>2. Mesaoria</u>	<u>2. Larnaka</u>
<u>3. Nicosia (18-30)</u>	<u>3. Nicosia (18-30)</u>
<u>4. Kyrenia</u>	<u>4. Paphos</u>
<u>5. Iskele (Turkish origin)</u>	<u>5. Missing relative people</u>
<u>6. Famagusta</u>	<u>6. IDs from Famagusta</u>
<u>7. Nicosia (T/C-Turkish origin)</u>	<u>7. Limassol</u>
<u>8. Nicosia (women only)</u>	<u>8. Nicosia (women only)</u>

Field study

- ▶ The main study will comprise a field questionnaire survey with origin-based sampling with destination-focus survey from people who live in both communities in Cyprus (both Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities).
- ▶ The survey field-work (sample N = 800 in each community) will be undertaken by the University Centre for Field Studies, directed by the PI in the Greek Cypriot community and LIPA Consulting Ltd. in the Turkish Cypriot community
- ▶ For the analysis we will correlation, regression and if depends on the data we will use SEM (AMOS) to see the best model fit because this is the first attempt of observing system justification and transitional justice Cyprus issue

Hypothesis related to field study

- ▶ 1a. system justification will be positively related to the support of status quo System justification beliefs positively related to status quo support. We predict that high system justifiers will support status quo in Cyprus issue.
- ▶ 1b. We expect system justification beliefs to positively relate to status quo support via collective victimization and the narratives. Specifically, we postulate that quo via increased collective victimization and support of the ingroup narrative
- ▶ 2a. We expect that high system justifiers will support retribution measures and less reconciliation supporting measures (amnesty or restorative justice)
- ▶ 2b. We postulate that high system justifiers will accept more retribution justice measures through acceptance of status quo and the increase to realistic and symbolic threat.
- ▶ 3a. High system justifiers will score lower on supporting collective action towards corruption and Cyprus issue
- ▶ 3b. High system justifiers will score less on collective action intentions for both corruption and Cyprus issue through lower perception on corruption in Cyprus and through higher collective victimization

Preliminary results

- ▶ Perceptions of both communities on:
 - ▶ A. Cyprus issue
 - ▶ B. How Cyprus issue affect their everyday life
 - ▶ C. Perception on Corruption, democracy and justice
 - ▶ D. Perception of victimization and how victimization status influence everyday life

Micro-level interactions and Cyprus problem

The most common answers on how Cyprus influence G/Cs everyday life was the

- ▶ The problem of crossing the checkpoints between communities
- ▶ Deprivation of economic opportunities.
- ▶ The emotional trauma of the separation.
- ▶ Different opinions between elite and ordinary citizens on the perception and solution of Cyprus issue
- ▶ Some of the younger G/c participants assumed that status quo is leading to two states and some showed lack of knowledge on many aspects of Cyprus issue
- ▶ One G/C woman said that the Cyprus problem is already solved

Corruption

- ▶ For the most of the G/C participants corruption is coming from the leader and political parties and that ordinary citizens adapt to it and everybody giving “amnesty” on corruption incidents.
- ▶ Few G/Cs participants pointed out that Corruption started from the leader but is based on the general economic system that supports those kind of behaviours.
- ▶ Some assumed that Cyprus was always corrupted through history and church was part of the corruption system. The result was a constitution without checks and balances and mass media perpetuate the problem.
- ▶ For some participants only hope is EU to solve from corruption

Corruption

- ▶ It seems that corruption is considered common in both communities and is seen as one of the consequences of the Cyprus problem by some participants. Some TCs referred to corruption incidences that took place in their everyday life. TCs showed a more direct experience with corruption but G/Cs did not report any specific experiences. Greek Cypriot participants believe that there is corruption in Greek Cypriot community however, there was an ideological division among them with some assuming that everybody is corrupted, perceiving a social generalization of the whole situation while some others prefer to react to the whole corruption situation.
- ▶ While it is perceived that corrupt parties in both communities easily cooperate with each other over the Green Line for economic trades off, only few participants supported the idea of political cooperation in corruption.

Democracy and justice

- ▶ The most of the G/C participants defined that democracy is about equal rights, free transportation and freedom of speech
- ▶ Cyprus was not perceived as a full democracy but as a flawed democracy, personal interests cover democracy.
- ▶ There was also a relational perception of democracy G/C perceived Cyprus a a better democracy than TRNC because of European union and T/C were comparing their democracy with Turkey
- ▶ Some G/C participants refer that justice and democracy are the some but some others related justice with judicial system
- ▶ Justice in Cyprus issue could become by a person who will act over the political party interests, bicommunal action

Victims and perpetrators

- ▶ Many participants from both communities see ordinary people (TCs and GCs) as the victims of the conflict and 'outsiders' or the nationalists in both sides as the perpetrators.
- ▶ Some G/C participants pointed out that the economic power that some people gained after 1974 was unrelated to their victimhood status.
- ▶ The most of the participants argued that there was equal distribution of wealth and political opportunities to internally and non- internally displaced and its fair that the state gave economic support to internally displaced

Theoretical Implications

- ▶ In our view, this project will contribute to conflict resolution research in several ways.
- ▶ Theoretically, it will associate justice and social psychology by explaining why individuals choose a specific belief of transitional justice, and this will be the first step to examine in-depth this phenomenon and encourage more research on this area.
- ▶ Also, it will indicate how Greek and Turkish Cypriots feel for each other and how intergroup contact and other identity variables impacted by system justification. Likewise, will extend collective action and corruption literature by specifying if and how system justification influence corruption and several types of collective action in a frozen conflict society

Practical implications

- ▶ 4 stage policy implementation
- ▶ Corruption committee
- ▶ Message content supporting this idea

Discussion/ Feedback



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"Debordering" and "rebordering" in times of crisis: the case of the "Cyprus Question" since 2020

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Abstract: The recent coronavirus crisis upset the openness of the Cyprus Green Line, along with politics major shifts (e.g: change of government in the North since 2020 for example). The "barricading" in Cyprus occurred at a physical level but also seemingly at a social level. This paper aims to analyse those new concerns on the Cyprus Question and more specifically on "bordering" questions, at a physical and societal level. The methodology is based on both corpus and empirical analysis. Several events of various kinds taking place between 2020 and 2023 are analysed in this paper through a geopolitical prism. The first hypotheses (and fore coming results) tend to focus on very recent events occurring in Cyprus. Some latest developments seem to have a visible societal impact on populations across the Green Line. The 'Socially Acute Questions' (SAQ) around the 'Cyprus Question' are studied in the light of the effects of "bordering"- "debordering"- "rebordering".

Keywords: borders studies, Covid-19, Cyprus Question, geopolitics, Green Line, Socially Acute Question

Introduction: Definitions, Literature Review & Chronology

The decade we recently entered has brought new challenges, especially in the geopolitical field. The Covid-19 pandemic shattered established order, in terms of health concerns, but also on societal issues. Diverse "discontinuities" emerge from the Cypriot field (Lageiste & Moullé, 2015). When it comes to Cyprus, which is embedded in an "intractable" (Adamides, 2020) or "frozen" conflict (Jolicoeur & Campana, 2009) for nearly half a century, the coronavirus crisis upset the openness of the Green Line. Even if the dividing line is not a "border" legally speaking (Copeaux & Mauss-Copeaux, 2011), and is not recognize as such, the "barrier" as worked as one, "bordering" Cyprus in two entities. The process of "debordering" (Reitel, 2017) which started in the 2000s by the opening of checkpoints, has been shut down in a disconcertingly short time. This "rebordering" (ibid) mechanism, closed crossing points for weeks long. In the meantime, 2020 is also the year where a new "government" has been elected in the North of the island. This development shifted the conflict resolution frame. It was previously based on a bizonal/bicommunal federation as agreed between all parties. Now, a "two states solution" is proposed by the North to resolve the "Cyprus issue". Up to date, there has been no new official talks under the United Nations auspices since 2017. "Barricading" in Cyprus occurred at a physical level (with the temporary reclosure of the checkpoints). It maybe happened at a social level as well (with a seemingly widening gap between the populations, possibly induced by governments). This paper aims to analyse those new concerns on the Cyprus question and more specifically on "bordering" questions.

Borders studies are a broad field of research, allowing to tackle the subject under multiple perspectives. I chose to narrow the focus around several definitions, described by French (-speaking) researchers. Their characterizations will enlighten points of views I decided to express in this paper. Bruno Tertrais and Delphine Papin define "borders" as: "a geographical limit - a line or space - the drawing of which reflects the relations between two human groups: military or diplomatic power, but also traditions or good neighbourly relations. It is, in a way, history inscribed in geography, or 'time inscribed in space' (Michel Foucher)" (Tertrais & Papin, 2016, p. 13). Jean-François Staszak provides an inclusive definition. According to him borders

represent “any geographical device that operates a division that is both social and spatial” (Staszak, 2017, p. 25). Other academics confront the etymological meaning of the term “border” and compare it in different languages to underline the contrasting definitions. Bernard Reitel explains that “the word 'border' comes from the term 'frontier' which in Latin is the front line of an army” (Reitel, 2017, p. 53). This definition is also followed up by Anne-Laure Amilhat Szary who states that “in French and in Latin languages, the notion refers to military vocabulary, to the notion of violent face-to-face confrontation.” (Amilhat-Szary, 2015, p. 19). However, the author adds more dimension to this explanation and compares the English and German definitions of the word. She defines it as follows: “in English, the “boundary” appeals to the semantic field of the link (to bind, to connect). If we think of the German term “Grenze”, we open up yet another aspect of the border imaginary, the word deriving from a nearby Polish term meaning the border: i.e., a punctual material anchor to support a line which exists only as a mental construction [...]” (ibid). The geographer points out that “none of these words speak of a linear limit, a line” (ibid.). This explains the complexity of defining the “border”. According to the author, it is “a strange place, so much so that its definition poses questions.” (ibid.). Bernard Reitel also highlights “the ambivalent character of the border: sometimes fixed, sometimes fluctuating, it seems at once to dissociate, differentiate and articulate” (op. cit. p.54). Thanks to these definitions, I will rely on the principle of borders in motion. I decided to entitle this analyse “"Debordering" and "rebordering" in times of crisis: the case of the "Cyprus Question" since 2020”. The explanation of the terms is detailed by the French geographer, Bernard Reitel. This specialist in borders studies claims that: “the instituted border functions through a game of closures and openings, reflected in bordering, debordering and even rebordering.” (op. cit. p.55). The later definition helped me to tighten the focus of this article.¹

After having defined the aspects of the term “border”, it seems interesting to specify the prism of my analyse. I set my focus on a geopolitical aspect to undergo my observations. Some French-speaking scholars propose those definitions of the broad word “geopolitics”. According to Yves Lascoste, geopolitics means “rivalries of power over a territory, be it large or small, that is at stake” (Lacoste, 2008, p. 18). This general explanation can be accompanied by the one proposed by Stéphane Rosière, for whom geopolitics is “the study of territorial dynamics, that of the actors and that of the issues that motivate them” (2001, p. 37). It is a “discipline of synthesis” according to the author because it considers “space, time and the cultural, social and political dimensions” (ibid, p. 42). The definition proposed by Emmanuel Fabre completes the argument by saying that geopolitics: “is a knowledge (a science?) of conflictuality, which results from the more or less violent expression of contradictory representations of a territory. It is a practical and operative knowledge based on a scientific method taking into account the multiple scales of time and space.” (Fabre, 2004, p.6)²

Envisioning the “Cyprus Problem” under the geopolitical and borders studies spectrum may be subject to “Socially Acute Question”. This translation of the French idiom “question socialement vive” is proposed by French speaking researchers such as Nicolas Hervé, Amélie Lipp, Nadia Cancian, Nathalie Panissal et Michel Vidal (2022). “Socially Acute Question” is widely discussed in educational sciences and geography for example. “SAQ” or “acute issues”

¹ “Border” definitions are discussed in French in the paper : **Marie Pouillès Garonzi**, “Les frontières chypriotes : étude d’un phénomène polysémique et polymorphe”, *Les Cahiers d’Outre-Mer* [Online], 282 | Juillet-Décembre, Online since 01 January 2023, connection on 29 April 2023. URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/com/12363>; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/com.12363>

²“Geopolitics” definitions are used in French in the paper: **Marie Pouillès Garonzi**, “Géopolitique du patrimoine culturel immatériel sur l’île de Chypre, l’exemple linguistique”, *Norois* [Online], 256 | 2020, Online since 01 January 2024, connection on 29 April 2023. URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/norois/10398>; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/norois.10398>

(Chevallard, 1997), “which have become 'socially acute' because of the impact they have on learning (Beitone, 2004), are gradually destabilising the knowledge taught and to be taught through their controversies and uncertainties, to the point of generating a potential conflict in the transmission of knowledge and values at school.” (Chauvigné & Fabre, 2021, p.15). This definition is engaging to discuss the “Cyprob” under the light of its acute sensitivity (in schools but also in the public sphere). Even if the “Cyprus Issue” is depicted as a “frozen conflict”, several periods of “reheating” (Kassouha, 2018) are felt regularly. I now suggest a concise chronology on the History of Cyprus and the evolution of the “Cyprus Question” that can be useful for the paper’s understanding.

This brief chronology cannot be exhaustive but tries to summarise the historical broadsides of Cyprus. As a place of trade since Antiquity, Sabine Fourrier reviews the Hellenisation of the island (Fourrier, 2008) that would have occurred at the end of the Late Bronze Age. A successive wave of occupations by different actors followed. The Cypriot Middle Ages were marked by the Crusades, particularly by the conquests of Richard the Lionheart, Guy de Lusignan, and the Venetians (Vassiliou, 2005, p. 414). A turning point in the history of Cyprus came in the 16th century with the colonisation of the island by the Ottoman Empire in 1571 (ibid.). In 1878, Great Britain obtained the right to administer Cyprus, which officially became a colony in 1925. The British had to deal with a Greek-Cypriot population demanding union with Greece: the “Enosis”. The 1930s marked the beginning of revolutionary acts (great riots of 1931, the “Oktovriana”). The violent colonial conflict hastened in the 1950s. An armed struggle and a succession of attacks were carried out by the fighters of EOKA A (Greek-Cypriot pro-Enosis militia) from 1955 onwards along with the supporters of the TMT (Turkish-Cypriot nationalist militia) in favour of “Taksim” (partition in Turkish) from 1958 onwards (Papadakis, 2008). The conflict is accentuated by a growing hostility between Greek and Turkish Cypriots, but the violence is also intra-communal (Bertrand, 2019). Greece, Turkey and Great Britain met in February 1959 in Zurich to sign a tripartite treaty ensuring the right of intervention on the island as guarantor powers. On 16 August 1960, the independence of Cyprus was signed and was to put an end to the decolonisation conflicts. But the 1960s were marked by inter- and intra-community clashes which continued. Unrest broke out in 1963 and 1964, leading to the establishment of UNFICYP and the drawing of the "Green Line" which began to separate the communities. Despite the establishment of the Blue Helmets, the supporters of Enosis and members of EOKA B proclaimed a “coup d'Etat” against Archbishop Makarios to unite Cyprus to Greece on the 15th of July 1974. Turkey, one of the guarantor powers, immediately retaliated with the launch of “Operation Attila” on 20 July, then on 14 August, aiming to land on the island's northern coast. Turkey occupied nearly a third of the island, in an (initial) concern to ensure the security and to protect the rights of the Turkish-Cypriots on the island (Lapierre, 2016, pp. 337-338). The separation of Cyprus materialised around the Green Line, and its crossing was made impossible. In 1983, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) self-proclaimed, headed by Rauf Denктаş. It remains illegal in the eyes of the international community and is only officially recognised by Turkey. Since these events, the status quo persists, hopes for reconciliation have diminished and attempts for reunification have not led to a lasting agreement. In 2004, the Annan Plan was rejected by the majority of Greek Cypriots, with the aim of reunifying the two entities and establishing a new federated republic. That same year, Cyprus joined the European Union. The Green Line was opened in 2003, and nine crossing points have been established to date. The two entities of the island, the Republic of Cyprus (ROC) and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), continue to evolve separately, even after the partial opening of the Green Line. Several rounds of negotiations collapsed since

the aperture of the dividing line, the last one being the Crans-Montana conference in 2017³. This summary of the Cypriot History and “Cyprob” leads to question the problematic of this paper. I choose to finish this outline in 2017, but some very recent events seem to have a serious impact on the frozen conflict. The original dilemma of the paper is that several upheavals have occurred since 2020 in Cyprus with the Coronavirus as the source and impacted the country and society on various levels.

Figure 1: Map of Cyprus (Marie Pouillès Garonzi, 2023)



Methodology: Materials, Research Question & Plan

To tackle this problematic, I choose to analyse a research corpus incorporating scientific writings from diverse social sciences fields but also from press release. I add to this exploration a field investigation combining observations and interviews. This fieldwork took place in April and May 2022. The objective of this paper is to analyse the various upheavals that ensued since the Covid-19 crisis in Cyprus. The first hypotheses and results about the disruptions in the “Cyprus Problem” from 2020 to 2023 are put into perspective here. To engage in this discussion, I suggest asking what are the physical and social upheavals regarding the Cyprus status quo since the 2020 crisis? I chose to divide the argument in three sections. The first one is dedicated to the physical outbreaks and effects on the Cyprus issue and the island daily life. The second part is focused on the societal turmoil at the beginning of this new decade. Lastly, I will discuss the aftermaths and prospects of the events examined. The reader should bear in

³ This chronology is also mainly used in the research paper published : **Marie Pouillès Garonzi**, “Géopolitique du patrimoine culturel immatériel sur l’île de Chypre, l’exemple linguistique”, *Norois* [Online], 256 | 2020, Online since 01 January 2024, connection on 29 April 2023. URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/norois/10398>; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/norois.10398>

mind that this paper is only a collection of hypotheses and new reflexion and not a completed project. Some paragraphs are also discussed in previous papers and works (and will be indicated) but under another research prisms. They can be useful for the current reflexion. I consider very recent events and share a thinking that is supposed to be collectively discussed at the 10th LSE Symposium in May 2023. This work in progress is only the first version of a research to be continued.

Results: hypotheses, first reflexions & possible answers

I. The physical and tangible disruptions in Cyprus since 2020

1. The Covid-19 crisis: “rebordering” the Green Line

The catalyst event working as the starting point of my research is the Covid-19 global crisis. This article does not evoke the stakes of the Coronavirus on health and medical level. The information given in the paper regarding the Covid-19 epistemology are not granted. The author is not a medical scholar and is not responsible for the possible information outdated by new medical research findings. At the beginning of the year 2020, several health alerts were disseminated in the global world. The expansion of the airborne pandemic on a worldwide scale made the World Health Organisation (WHO) and governments take some unprecedented measures to limit the propagation of the epidemic. Some consisted of physical limitations to the large public. Different dimensions and levels were declared, such as strict indoor containment for the population, or preventive measures working as barrier to limit the spread of the illness (e.g: physical distancing, drastic hygiene and cleaning, face masks wearing made mandatory). Physical limitations were one of the strategies to implement the fight against Covid-19. Those substantial constraints were experienced in Cyprus at the peak of the coronavirus crisis in 2020.

Between 2003 and 2018, nine checkpoints were established across the island. Those can be crossed by any type of vehicle or reserved for pedestrians only. The opening of the Green Line has been part of a policy of “debordering” since 2003, where the “border” tend to open. The “de-frontierisation” of the Green Line can however be nuanced. It remains an obstacle for populations that cannot cross it easily. Moreover, undergoing “rebordering” manoeuvres with the Covid-19 crisis has provoked a “refrontization” of the Green Line with the (temporary) closure of checkpoints from 2020 Spring. On the 28th of February, the authorities of the Republic of Cyprus requested the closure of four crossing points between the North and the South to contain the epidemic on the island⁴. This “refrontierisation” provoked its own tensions. “Refrontierisation” can be seen as “a strategy for the spatial containment of epidemiological crisis” (Lougou, Ropivia & Bignoumba, 2021). It hinders or even prevents the (already limited) free movement of people on the island. Pro-reunification demonstrators have voiced their disapproval and advocated for the reopening of the crossing points. The evolution of the pandemic led the authorities of both entities to take increasingly restrictive measures until all checkpoints were closed for several weeks in the Spring of 2020. In June of the same year, a return of movement of certain individuals was allowed, subject to extended health control measures⁵. This was the first time since 2003 that the checkpoints have closed for such a long period. This points to the political decision-making differentials, where two authorities take

⁴ Fermeture des checkpoints à Chypre : quand le coronavirus ravive des tensions sur l’île https://www.rtbf.be/info/monde/detail_fermeture-des-checkpoints-a-chypre-quand-le-coronavirus-ravive-destensions-sur-l-ile?id=10450468

⁵ Checkpoints open but some report problems (update 3). By Katy Turner June 21, 2020, <https://cyprus-mail.com/2020/06/21/coronavirus-checkpoints-open-but-somereport-problems/>

decisions without any real consultation regarding the entry and exit of individuals on the territory and the implementation of a joint health protocol. This episode is also indicative of “debordering” processes that have taken decades to come to fruition, and which can be challenged and turned into “rebordering” policies in disconcerting speed. The opening and closing of the Green Line fluctuate and proves the fragility of “frontierisation” processes.⁶ Along with the Covid-19, other major events took place in 2020 disrupting the “Cyprob”.

Figure 2: Ledra street checkpoint (Nicosia) with a new gate (Marie Pouillès Garonzi, 2022)



⁶ The issue of the Green Line “rebordering” is also briefly tackled in the paper : **Marie Pouillès Garonzi**, “Les frontières chypriotes : étude d’un phénomène polysémique et polymorphe”, *Les Cahiers d’Outre-Mer* [Online], 282 | Juillet-Décembre, Online since 01 January 2023, connection on 29 April 2023. URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/com/12363>; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/com.12363>

2. The new paradigm in the TRNC, from federation to two-states solution proposal

On 7 October 2020, Ersin Tatar, then “prime minister” of the Northern Cyprus “government” and a candidate in the “presidential elections”, announced the unilateral opening of the ghost city of Varosha. The politician supported by Recep Tayyip Erdoğan decided, without consulting the rest of the actors involved in the settlement of the Cyprus Question, to open a civilian access to a limited part of Varosha/Maraş between noon and 5pm. The idea of developing “dark tourism” (Folio, 2016) in the ghost city was highlighted in the press⁷. This announcement caused a public outcry on the island, leading to various demonstrations where clashes were reported.⁸ This controversy led to resignations within the northern governmental bodies⁹ and altered the return of the Cyprus settlement negotiations. Condemnations of this unilateral move were widespread, from the Republic of Cyprus to the UN¹⁰ (supposedly in charge of overseeing the city reopening). This operation took place at a strategic moment: the elections of the TRNC leader, which Ersin Tatar won on 18 October 2020¹¹. Tatar is officially supported by Ankara, which now favours a two-states solution to the Cyprus Question¹². He succeeds Mustafa Akıncı, a president who favoured a bi-zonal and bi-communal federation to resolve the “Cyprob”. The opening of the ghost town is to be discussed as a key issue in the possible resumption of negotiations. This huge upheaval created disruption among the population. Greek-Cypriot demonstrations in October 2020 at the Dherynia checkpoint (near Famagusta and the ghost town) were initiated by the “Isaak and Solomou memorial committee”. On the other side of the Green Line, counterdemonstrations were held by Turkish-Cypriots and Turks who are members of the ultranationalist “Grey Wolves” movement¹³. The issue of conflicting memories is revived in a volatile geopolitical context that needs to be monitored to examine future developments and their consequences. Both actions were presented as “reheating” the conflict on a geopolitical multiscale. The opening of Varosha and the shift from federation to two-states solution proposal can be seen as “rebordering” processes. The unilateral action on the ghost town fuelled controversy among Cypriots and beyond, along with the two-states solution, which illustrate a further partition between the divided communities, contrary to confidence building measures. Other practical effects are occurring, disrupting the status quo on the Cyprus Problem.¹⁴

⁷ TRNC considers launching dark tourism in Varosha, Daily Sabah, 9 octobre 2020, <https://www.dailysabah.com/business/tourism/trnc-considers-launching-dark-tourism-in-varosha>

⁸ President calls for restraint as Dherynia demo held (update2). By Evie Andreou October 17, 2020, <https://cyprus-mail.com/2020/10/17/president-calls-for-restraint-at-dherynia-demo/>

⁹ Ozersay quits as ‘deputy PM’ over Tatar’s decision on Varosha (Updated) By Peter Michael October 7, 2020, Cyprus Mail, <https://cyprus-mail.com/2020/10/07/ozersayquits-as-deputy-pm-over-tatars-decision-on-varosha/>

¹⁰ UN, U.S. Foreign Relations Committee, PSEKA Respond to Varosha Beach Opening, the National Herald, 15 octobre 2020, https://www.thenationalherald.com/archive_associations/arthro/

¹¹ « Avec l’élection d’Ersin Tatar, la Turquie étend son emprise en Chypre du Nord », Thomas Jacobi, La Croix, 19 octobre 2020, <https://www.la-croix.com/Monde/lelection-dErsin-TatarTurquie-etend-emprise-Chypre-Nord-2020-10-19-1201120262>

¹² Ankara-backed nationalist ousts president in Turkish Cypriot poll, france24, 19 octobre 2020, <https://www.france24.com/en/video/20201019-ankara-backed-nationalist-ousts-president-inturkish-cypriot-poll>

¹³ President calls for restraint as Dherynia demo held (update2). By Evie Andreou October 17, 2020, <https://cyprus-mail.com/2020/10/17/president-calls-for-restraint-at-dherynia-demo/>

¹⁴ The reflection on Tatar’ election and the opening of Varosha is also briefly observed in the paper: **Marie Pouillès Garonzi**, « La commémoration de l’histoire conflictuelle à l’aune de la Question Chypriote : réflexion sur les acteurs et les échelles des dispositifs commémoratifs », *L’Espace Politique* [En ligne], 41 | 2020-2, mis en ligne le 08 mars 2021, consulté le 29 avril 2023. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/espacepolitique/8456> ; DOI : <https://doi.org/10.4000/espacepolitique.8456>

3. Practical effects of natural disasters and humanitarian crisis on the “Cyprob” since 2020

Practical and physical effects are described in the first section of this analysis. The first years of this new decade show difficulties of several genre: coming from political and health concerns to climate change preoccupations, but also to demographic crisis and natural disasters. I discussed the first two kinds in the previous paragraphs, and I will observe other types of considerations mentioned. Other forms of concerns need to be tackled as they weigh in the balance of the status quo. The “demographic” changes are increasing in Cyprus, in the light of a global “migrant crisis”. Some migration routes are crossing in the Levant, and Cyprus became one of the “destination” of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. Those new “arrivals” are bringing new challenges to Cyprus, and especially between the two sides of the divide. Migrants can be used as “pressure lever” between the authorities of the two entities. Differences and disparities are measured on checkpoints crossing between the two sides of the divide (Ersözler, 2019). The conditions for crossing the Green Line are facilitated for some users. European Union citizens can cross freely by showing their identity documents at the checkpoints. Other nationals must accompany their passports with a valid residence permit allowing them to cross. For others, visas are required to go through the Green Line. Some scholars call the latter the “far eastern (non-legal) border of the European Union” (Copeaux, Mauss-Copeaux, op. cit., p. 8). For some of the island's inhabitants, the Green Line is still impenetrable, while others can cross it without much difficulty. Etienne Copeaux explains that the duty of the Green Line is “to close Europe to immigration”, which is done “with difficulty, because the authorities in the north are hardly vigilant, and those in the south are very reluctant to control the southern side of the Green Line, because this would be, in their eyes, an official recognition of its existence.” (Copeaux, op. cit, p. 58). This makes it difficult to control “illegal” migration flows and thus the island's external borders, which delays its entry into the Schengen area (Clochard, 2008). The clandestine crossing of the Green Line from the North is one of the routes undertaken by migrants to access the Republic of Cyprus (among others). Marie Redon highlights the 2018 figures for asylum applications registered in the Republic of Cyprus: they increased from 2,871 in 2016 to 7,761 in 2018 “making Cyprus the country receiving the highest number of applications within the EU in relation to the number of inhabitants” (Redon, 2019, pp. 136-137). The self-proclaimed authorities in the North of Cyprus are using “illegal” migrants by threatening the Republic of Cyprus to “send” them to the South by letting them cross the Green Line illegally. Those immigrant populations can be vulnerable, parked in migrants’ camps (such as Pournara in the Nicosia district, Kofinou in the Larnaca district or Polemi in the Paphos district) and put in difficulties with huge limitations. The ongoing question of “bordering” is still applied for part of the people wishing to cross the Green Line, while it “debordered” for others. Questions of power and capabilities are tackled. While some population has a greater freedom of movement, others are still hugely limited and are mostly vulnerable populations. Great concerns other than human are faced around the “Cyprus Question”, on the verge of climate changes and catastrophes.¹⁵

I expressed “demographic” concerns in the last paragraph, but climatic deterioration is leading to multiple preoccupations in Cyprus. As a Mediterranean island, Cyprus is facing weather changes and disfunctions, such as the erosion of its shoreline coasts. Other major worryment is the occurrence of megafires. Huge devastations arose from the beginning of the new decade.

¹⁵ The differences of movement through the Green Line are also observed in the article : **Marie Pouillès Garonzi**, “Les frontières chypriotes : étude d’un phénomène polysémique et polymorphe”, *Les Cahiers d’Outre-Mer* [Online], 282 | Juillet-Décembre, Online since 01 January 2023, connection on 29 April 2023. URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/com/12363>; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/com.12363>

The Guardian described the super fires of the summer 2021 as “pure hell”¹⁶. Four people died in the flames in August 2021. Four forest workers, coming from Egypt were trapped in the brazier. The inferno lived by those individuals also had consequences on an ecological level. This episode also revealed interferences in the fire cooperation. Some help was offered from neighbourhood countries, such as Israel or Britain in 2022¹⁷. Cooperation between the North and the South of Cyprus is unusual, even in terms of climatic disaster. When a huge fire broke out in the Kantara region during the 2022’s summer, some help from the Republic of Cyprus was deployed in the Kyrenia region.¹⁸ Only few times are assets to provide cooperation between the two sides of the divide. Even during one of the greatest catastrophes of the century, geopolitics and frozen conflict are huge obstacles in unity. When the earthquake in Turkey and Syria occurred in February 2023, both sides of the divide offered its aid to help the victims. Casualties were humongous, worldwide support was needed to limit as many losses as possible. The Republic of Cyprus proposed its aid to Turkey to be deployed. The “Cyprus Issue” is also embedded in Cyprus-Turkey relations. Ankara does not recognize the legitimacy of Nicosia and the ROC and usually refuses to cooperate with the South of Cyprus. This was the case in those times of disasters. Turkey refused the help of the Republic of Cyprus to be set up on the field.¹⁹ The Cypriot emergency team was denied the entry on the Turkish territory, while they were travelling to reach the locations severely harmed by the earthquake.²⁰ This disapproval created huge sensitivity in the Cypriot community²¹. Adding to the large suffering, a group of young Turkish Cypriots are counted among the victims of the seism. Coming from the Famagusta district, those students travelled to the region of Adiyaman for a volleyball tournament. Their hotel did not meet the antiseismic measures to ensure their security and collapsed. Thirty-nine Turkish Cypriots died under the rumbles.²² This tragic loss deeply moved the Turkish Cypriot community, but also Cyprus as a whole. Multiple ceremonies and support were reported to share the pain of the families. A surge of solidarity has emerged from this period of mourning, bringing divided communities together in pain. This episode of tragedy triggered a sense of comradeship. Citizen from the ROC were bringing first aid supply and amenities to be collected by associations or the UN²³. This surge of solidarity seemed to impulse a “debordering” movement, tightening the ties between Cypriots from all “ethnicities” during this episode of crisis. The reality of the Cyprus Issue constrains this impetus, when “a group of people were blocked from crossing over the Ledra palace checkpoint {to bring aid supply} but then let through, drawing harsh criticism among Turkish Cypriot opposition, who blamed ‘foreign minister’ Tahsin Ertugruloglu for the incident”²⁴, as the Cyprus Mail explains. The “bordering” of Cyprus was still hermetic during this crisis, while it was slightly loosened up between Turkey and Armenia for example. Border gates between the two countries were opened, for the first time in thirty-five years, to allow aid to be brought to the devastated areas.²⁵ The “earthquake diplomacy” does not seem to have been widen when it comes to discuss Cyprus-

¹⁶<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jul/04/cyprus-says-deadly-forest-fire-close-to-being-under-control>

¹⁷ <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20220623-divided-cyprus-joins-forces-to-fight-fire>

¹⁸ <https://knews.kathimerini.com.cy/en/news/divided-cyprus-scrambles-as-fire-rages-in-the-north>

¹⁹ <https://knews.kathimerini.com.cy/en/news/turkey-refuses-cyprus-offer-for-assistance-and-aid>

²⁰ <https://cyprus-mail.com/2023/02/09/cypriot-rescue-team-grounded-asturkey-says-it-does-not-need-help/>

²¹ <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20230209-tragedy-cuts-short-turkey-trip-for-cypriot-students>

²² https://www.lemonde.fr/en/turkey/article/2023/02/14/turkish-cypriots-mourn-the-loss-of-children-killed-in-earthquake_6015666_219.html

²³ <https://cyprus-mail.com/2023/02/16/donations-to-earthquake-victims-continue-at-ledra-palace/>

²⁴ <https://cyprus-mail.com/2023/02/10/greek-turkish-cypriot-parties-call-for-bicomunal-rescue-mission/>

²⁵ <https://cyprus-mail.com/2023/02/11/turkey-armenia-gate-opens-for-first-time-in-decades-to-allow-aid/>

Turkey relationships in 2023. This discussion brought up elements of upheavals from tangible and practical impacts, but also societal issues, that need to be discussed in more details by now.

II. About societal upheavals in the light of the Cyprus Issue since 2020

1. A growing divide between the communities (?)

The previous lines were focusing on the substantial, in the meaning of physical, upheavals faced since 2020 around the “Cyprus Question”. Those tangible disruptions seem to have affected the Cyprus society on a deeper level. Other than physical, societal upheavals tend to be visible since 2020 on the island. I carefully choose to refer to Cyprus society, and not to focus solely on Cypriots, since other ethnicities are living on the island and are impacted by the disruptions occurring. The closing of the checkpoints during several months with the Covid-19 crisis contributed to widen the partition of the two sides of the divide much harder. With the impracticability of crossing, populations that were meeting from one side to another were impeached to do so. Cooperation measures and reunions were dormant, people were living as if Cyprus was practically divided as before 2003. Parts of the population experienced what it was to live in a drastic divided island. People born after 2003 always had the possibility of crossing by the checkpoints, lived the new reality imposed by “sanitary” measures. Some peace protesters were seriously concerned by the hardened partition²⁶. They were actively demonstrating against the closure of the checkpoints.²⁷ Some citizens were finding difficult to elaborate simple tasks of the day with those limitations. The closure was interfering with the continuity of labour, study or even healthcare²⁸ for a part of the population. This was especially measured for the residents of the northern side of Cyprus, where a part of the individuals was dependent on the checkpoints crossing to go to work, to their universities or even to benefit from special health requirements in the Republic of Cyprus. The closed checkpoints were also a fear among people working to tighten the links between the two sides of the divide, that a partition will expand in the minds of people²⁹. With a physical separation hardening, the mental partition could also occur. Since several studies were conducted to prove that interaction within groups was beneficial to build confidence measures (Yucel & Psaltis, 2020), the rarefication of physical intergroup contact could benefit to the normalization of partition. However, it is to be noted that scholars measured that “a zone of possible agreement (ZOPA) exists from a public opinion perspective” emerging from the Cypriot society regarding peace mediations (Loizides and al., 2022). The coronavirus crisis is not the only obstacle that can hinder confidence building measures and movements. Another damaging topicality is involved. The recent war in Ukraine that began in February 2022 rekindled the cracks between the divided communities in Cyprus. Two main discourses were spread in the population. In the Republic of Cyprus, some “parallels”³⁰ were drawn between the Cyprus conflict and the Ukraine war. Foreign Minister Ioannis Kasoulides said during summer 2022 that “the parallels between the problems of Cyprus and Ukraine should refocus the attention of the international community to what has happened here since 1974”. On the other hand, and on the other side of the divide, the officials were giving drastically different discourses. The leader of the TRNC revived many times the

²⁶ <https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-cyprus-checkpoints-idUKKBN20U0NP>

²⁷ <https://knews.kathimerini.com.cy/en/news/police-hold-the-line-at-ledra-checkpoint>

²⁸ <https://knews.kathimerini.com.cy/en/news/as-coronavirus-lockdown-eases-cypriots-still-in-limbo>

²⁹ As mentioned by one of my interviewees

³⁰ <https://www.ekathimerini.com/society/diaspora/1178687/ahi-highlights-parallels-between-ukraine-and-cyprus/>

“need” of a two-states solution.³¹ Ersin Tatar stated in June 2022 that he “would like to underline how important the guarantor of the Republic of Turkey is for us, especially as the Russian-Ukrainian war has shown lately.”³² The TRNC “president” is fuelling fire and fear among the northern community by reviving the memories of the intercommunal troubles of the 1960’s and 1970’s. Tatar used this “argument” to support his point on the necessity of a two-states solution, by fear of supposedly Greek-Cypriots acts that could be a threat for the Turkish-Cypriot community. The gap between North and South Cyprus seems to have deepened with the declarations and actions taken by the leaders of the island. The societal “rebordering” can be felt during this geopolitical episode of disruption. One of the events that catalyses the physical and societal upheavals of the beginning of the decade, is mainly the unilateral decision to open Varosha to the public.

2. ” *We lost Varosha*”: an episode of frozen conflict re-heating

When I met my interviewee in May 2022³³, we addressed the issue of the opening of Varosha during our conversation. My interlocutor confides in me that “we lost Varosha”. By saying so, she is englobing herself in the Greek-Cypriot community, embedded in the “we” she chooses to use. She comes from a refugee family; her mother originates from a village in the Karpass. She confesses also that she has some emotional difficulties to come back to the North of Cyprus. She visited the ancient house of her mother recently and was deeply moved by the experience and needed some time to process it. When my interviewee is talking, she has no hate for Turkish Cypriots but has some animosity concerning the officials of Turkey. She tends them to be responsible for the status quo situation and the Cyprus Problem in general. Her words against the leaders of Turkey are more crude and violent, and she seems worried about the next peace negotiations to eventually come. She also tends to be jaded by the recent situation. When she declaimed that “we lost Varosha”, the worriment is diluted with sourness in her voice. The opening of Varosha in October 2020 seems to have “reheated” the frozen conflict and the Cyprus Problem. This is evidenced by the “I don't forget” educational programme in the south of the island. It teaches students about the events related to the Cyprus Problem, including the “invasion” of the island and the “occupied territories” that should not be “forgotten” but instead “fought for reconquest” (Zembylas 2015). Although this doctrine has had declined over the years (Christou 2006), it is to be revived since October 2020. Indeed, the Ministry of Education has requested that the “I Don't Forget” programme be rekindled in an increased way after the opening of the Varosha ghost town.³⁴ The aim is to bring the Cyprus Problem back into the focus of schools and to commemorate the “loss of territory”. The re-ignition of the Cyprus Problem is also felt out of the school system, which is already a Socially Acute Question. At a supra-international level, the UN and different governments addressed their preoccupation towards the opening of Varosha and the development of the new statement involving the two states solution proposed by Tatar. The unilateral opening of the ghost town also worries the Cyprus population. Some protests were organised by groups of people on the Southern side of the divide, to Deryniea checkpoint, and inside Varosha.³⁵ In 2021, a group of militants

³¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/jan/28/cyprus-two-state-solution-ersin-tatar-head-of-turkish-occupied-north>

³² <https://cyprus-mail.com/2022/06/23/ankara-bolsters-tatars-two-state-aspirations-with-visit-by-turkish-vp/>

³³ A 30yo French-Cypriot journalist working in Nicosia

³⁴ Schools reinstating “Den Xehno” activities. By Evie Andreou October 9, 2020, <https://cyprus-mail.com/2020/10/09/schools-reinstating-den-xehno-activities/>

³⁵ This event is also expressed in the paper: Marie Pouillès Garonzi, « La commémoration de l’histoire conflictuelle à l’aune de la Question Chypriote : réflexion sur les acteurs et les échelles des dispositifs commémoratifs », *L’Espace Politique* [En ligne], 41 | 2020-2, mis en ligne le 08 mars 2021, consulté le 29 avril

composed by Greek & Turkish Cypriots and people from other ethnic background gathered inside the ghost town. In a circle, joined by hands, they protested in silence to disqualify the illegal opening of Varosha. This event happened before the symbolic visit of Erdogan in Varosha to mark the anniversary of the Turkish army intervention of summer 1974.³⁶ They were urging for a return to talks to find another solution to this “fait accompli”. As RFI stated “their voices echoing off abandoned and dilapidated buildings, some 50 Greek and Turkish Cypriots held hands last Friday to form a human chain symbolising solidarity and their desire for reconciliation” (ibid). This symbolic event can be seen as a “debordering” image, where Cypriots gather despite dividing realities. A fringe of the population is acutely worried about the recent upheavals concerning Varosha in particular, but also about the “Cyprob” development in general. Peace workers and activists are in the “line of sight” of the detractors of rapprochement. The projects made by the civil society and associations that are working in favour of reconciliation seem to be undermined.

Figure 3: Varosha in May 2022, partially reopened to the public (Marie Pouillès Garonzi, 2022)



3. Targeting irenist projects to fuel the flames of the “Cyprob”

To illustrate the question of limitations faced by associations working toward a reconciliation and reunification of the people and the island, I will use the case of the “Imagine” project. In spring 2017, the Association For Historical Dialogue and Research was able to set up the first “test” sessions of the “Imagine” educational programme conducted under the auspices of the bicomunal technical committee for education under the aegis of the United Nations. Pupils from the two entities of the island meet in the premises of the Home for Cooperation and the UN Buffer Zone next to the Ledra Palace in Nicosia, to participate in a half-day bi-communal meeting. Prior to this mutual physical meeting, the volunteer facilitators, previously trained by the AHDR workers, visit the classes participating in the “Imagine” project. They carry out several playful and pedagogical activities on the theme of peace education. On the day of the meeting, different activities are proposed to the pupils, delimited in small bi-communal groups in a random way led by the facilitators. They play several educational or sports games, in the latter case supervised by the Peace Players association. The activities are always explained in English and then translated into Greek and Turkish. The facilitators guide the children through the educational activities, which are divided into small workshops around the issue of peace education and anti-racism. To date, it is estimated that 6,117 students have participated in the “Imagine” programme from 2017 to 2022³⁷. On 16 December 2019, the President of the Republic of Cyprus, Nicos Anastasiades, and the leader of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Mustafa Akıncı, met at the conference on the “Imagine” programme where hundred school headmasters were invited³⁸. They preached the need for an educational ethos of tolerance promoting a culture of peace. Even if associations and officials are showing the urgency of a paradigm shift, the perpetuation of division becomes entrenched in the physical and social space. The good offices of this programme, however, require more than encouraging speeches to pursue their objectives. This program is hugely innovative and permitted the meeting of thousands of young people in Cyprus to discover each other. Organising pre-reunion in their own schools and classrooms prepares them to meet in real life with the unknown. When they discover each other, they first are shy and approach the other with difficulties. But when the activities are developing, they tend to share the exercise all together. English works as a lingua franca to build a bridge between them. The program tends to develop and is well-known in the circles of peacebuilding purposes.³⁹ This program can be seen as a “debordering” measure where actions facilitate direct contact between the divided populations. However, the northern authorities decided to stop the collaboration of Turkish Cypriots pupils to “Imagine”. The Cyprus Mail stated that “teachers and opposition in the north are in an uproar with the ‘presidency’, which cancelled the participation of Turkish Cypriots in bicomunal education programme”⁴⁰. The unilateral decision of the northern leaders is once again overturning steps organised to build confidence measures between the divided communities, “rebordering” each population on its own part of the divide. After this discussion, I need to draw some hypotheses about the aftermaths from those diverse upheavals described.

³⁷ <https://cyprus-mail.com/2022/11/04/turkish-cypriot-leadership-pulls-out-of-bicomunal-education-programme/>

³⁸ <https://www.financialmirror.com/2019/12/16/no-alternative-to-peace-anastasiades-tells-akinci/>

³⁹ The programme “Imagine” is also discussed in the article: **Marie Pouillès-Garonzi**, « Etudier et se rencontrer au sein d’une société divisée, perspectives de territoires d’apprentissage chypriotes », *Géocarrefour* [En ligne], 94/2 | 2020, mis en ligne le 17 avril 2020, consulté le 30 avril 2023. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/geocarrefour/14389> ; DOI : <https://doi.org/10.4000/geocarrefour.14389>

⁴⁰ <https://cyprus-mail.com/2022/11/04/turkish-cypriot-leadership-pulls-out-of-bicomunal-education-programme/>

III. Aftermaths and prospects of those episodes of disruptions

1. Thinking above the crisis

I discussed in the previous sections several physical and societal upheavals linked to the “Cyprob” that seem to have impacts on the population of Cyprus, but also on Cypriots overworld. I tackled disruptions of “crisis” events: coronavirus, Tatar election, human and nature catastrophe were among the examples I choose to illustrate my point on “debordering” and “rebordering” effects. To go further on the analyse, I could also observe the hypothetical aftermaths and prospects of those events. Thinking above the crisis can also be a direction to use. Discussing the Cyprus Problem when the frozen conflict is not reheated by uprearing moments is a possible way of reflection. News and “sensationalism” are not the only lens to discuss the ongoing conflict. Outside of the many events, the everyday life is focused on other issues and realities. Some of my interviewees in the South were telling me that the Cyprus Question was embedded in their everyday life, but transparent in the trivial days. They were not “paying attention” to it and had “other issues to face” such as financial preoccupations. Others were orienting the question around scandals that were (in surface) unrelated to the Cyprus Issue. They were arguing about corruption affairs in the Republic of Cyprus government, but also about the “Golden Passports” issue.⁴¹ According to them, this affair is deeply concerning about the trust they put in their politicians (and how they can be trusted to resolve the “Cyprob” matters for them). Their faith was altered, and they were rioting against those scandalous actions⁴². The North is also embedded in corruption and financial disruption concerning Ersin Tatar and its government. Members of the civil society are denouncing its agency and use of public funds to build palaces or mosques and not renovating schools and hospitals for instance.⁴³ On both sides of the divide, internal fractures are seen on financial crisis issues. Could it be another reason of division between the two entities?

2. A widening gap leading to partition?

Even if the everyday life is immersed in internal preoccupations inherent to the two sides (but both collided to financial issues), some agencies can lead to the hypothesis of a fuelling anger between the communities and against each other leaders. I mostly talked about recent events taking place on the island territory, but overseas Cypriots are also involved in contestations. They participate to the outstanding profusion of actions taking place where the diaspora lives. For instance, the Cypriots living in Britain are involved in lobbying actions of different kinds. The influence is both physical and spread online. Groups of citizens get into demonstrations to urge political actions towards the Cyprus Problem. I take the example of a very recent altercation in London that happened in March 2023. Ersin Tatar was visiting King’s College, when a group of Greek Cypriots stopped his car to protest against the existence of the TRNC and the inference of Turkey in Cyprus.⁴⁴ They were waving Hellenic flags and shouting slogans. On the Turkish Cypriot side, some movement such as “Young Turkish Cypriots” based in London was revealing the action and denouncing the behaviour of Greek Cypriots. By doing this, “Young Turkish Cypriot” organisation was stating the need of a two states solution to

⁴¹ <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20220912-cyprus-politicians-face-trial-in-golden-passport-scandal>

⁴² <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20210213-clashes-at-cyprus-protest-over-official-graft-virus-measures>

⁴³ <https://cyprus-mail.com/2023/03/10/outrage-in-north-over-tent-schools/>

⁴⁴ <https://cyprus-mail.com/2023/03/30/cypriot-students-protest-outside-kings-college-during-tatar-visit/>

ensure the “safety” of Turkish Cypriots on the island.⁴⁵ Every movement that can be seen as a “threat” to the community is used by this association to follow the political agenda of the Northern Cyprus government to justify the urgency of a two states solution. A same event is seen on a different lens on both sides of the divide and is subject to fuelling the flames of discord among the partitioned communities. This is relevant on the island territories and overseas where Cypriot communities are living. If I discussed those events as a potential separating issue, other behaviours are tending to build bridges between the communities on the contrary.

3. On possible bridges to build and cross

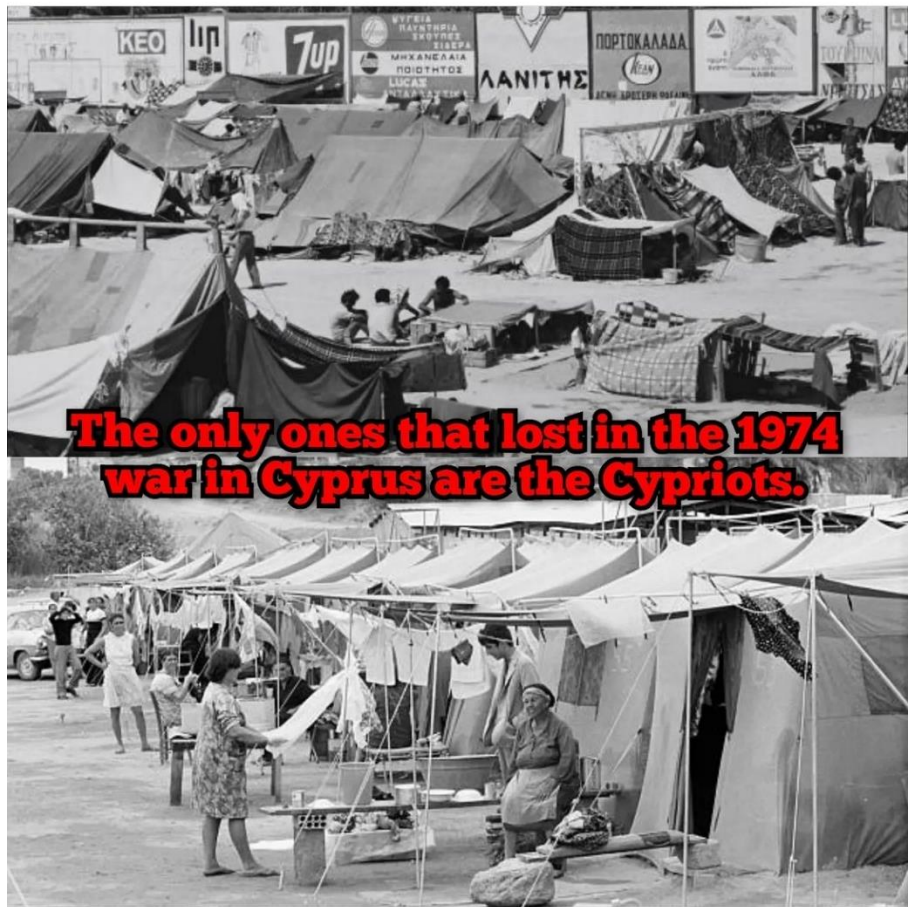
Opening and “debordering” possibilities are emerging from the divided communities. Even if the Covid-19 closure of checkpoints was separating the island, some actions were taken to build “bridges” between the divide. Creative ways permitted to have access to the other communities. If it was not by a physical mean, activists were trying to promote actions online. Many public events were organized, by videoconference mostly. Scholars, NGOs were talking about projects and research about the Cyprus Issue in general or on more precise subjects⁴⁶. Other frameworks were used to provide diverse voices about the History of Cyprus and the actuality of the Cyprus Issue. The Digital Social Medias are used to discuss and spread posts that engage the discussion on many different subjects. Twitter and Instagram are examples of medias used to propose new ways of discussing history and actuality when it comes to the “Cyprus Question”. It provokes debates, exchange of ideas and propose to think again on the strategies dismissed in society to discuss the memory of the conflict. Some of them are posted on historic days such as the “invasion/intervention” day on July 20th. The picture used to illustrate the idea comes from “thecypriotstory” Instagram account. This public page is discussing Cypriot societal questions in general and focus on the history and the “Cyprus Issue”. Many publications are made on particular events. On this one, it is stated that “the only ones that lost in the 1974 war in Cyprus are the Cypriots” to show that both sides of the divide suffered from the conflict. When each community is taught that only its own side suffered, those individuals reinvent the way to think about the memory of the conflict and share it publicly. Online publications and discussions are a way to think differently about the societal issues of Cyprus. Even physically divided people can meet thanks to digital frames. The actions taken by people from the civil society aim to rethink about history and the bias of memory involved by official ideologies spread across each sides of the divide. They also tend to build (virtual) bridges thanks to the social medias. Anyone can participate, tone up their voice and discuss Socially Acute Question online and then maybe meet physically to deepen the discussion and debate. A digital first exchange can develop into a physical meeting and beyond later on. Steps are created by civil society and citizens willing to “cross” the divide in many ways. “Debordering” processes can occur by those news modes of action.

⁴⁵ `<blockquote class="twitter-tweet"><p lang="en" dir="ltr">The actions of the racist Greek/Greek Cypriot rally once again proves why there NEEDS to be two separate states in Cyprus.

The Turkish world collectively came together yesterday on social media to condemn the attack on the President of the TRNC, @ErsinrTatar #2statesinCyprus pic.twitter.com/LR296Z81Qn</p>— Y.T.C (@Young_Turk_Cyp) March 30, 2023</blockquote> <script async src="https://platform.twitter.com/widgets.js" charset="utf-8"></script>`

⁴⁶ As the ones organised by Bicomunal Network of Cypriot Youth via Zoom or Facebook live

Figure 4: Screenshot from the Instagram account “thecypriotstory” discussing the memory of the Cyprus conflict (2022)



  Aimé par **karpassia** et **561** autres personnes

thecypriotstory We live on an island full of refugees. Cypriots originally from the north of the island have been living in the south for 48 years, Cypriots originally from the south have been living in the north for 48 years. Our grandparents and our parents still have vivid memories of their villages, their homes, their shops, their jobs, their schools,

Discussion: Conclusion, Limitations & Future scope of the research

1. Summary of the paper

As a conclusion, I summarize the points discussed in this paper that are subject to further analyse. First, I'd like to recall the objective of the debuting research, which tend to analyse the various upheavals that ensued since 2020' decade in Cyprus. Some hypotheses and first results were engaged to discussion in this paper. Three sections divided the article to answer the research question: what are the physical and social upheavals regarding the Cyprus status quo since the 2020 crisis? I engaged the discussion by proposing some definitions on borders, geopolitical and education studies to step the tone of this article. Those definitions in introduction were grounding the paper in some theoretical meanings. I reviewed physical upheavals in the first section of the article, such as the Covid-19 crisis, the election of Tatar in the North and the change of negotiations strategies with the adoption of the two-states solution approach by the TRNC. Several human, climate and natural disruptions were also put into the analysis. The societal upheaval was forming the second part of the questioning. Different actions were observed, such as the discourses stated on both sides of the divide by officials. They were both referring to the war in Ukraine by drawing parallels with the Cyprus Issue. The South was mentioning similarities with the two conflicts, while the North was using it to legitimize the urge and need of a two-states solution for "security" reasons. The opening of Varosha and its turmoil was also part of the discussion to see how it fuelled the flames and reheated the frozen conflict. The inference of the Northern leader into a pro-rapprochement program has been a point drawn to the analyse. Finally, I tried to see the aftermaths of all the upheavals discussed earlier. One part tends to think above the "crisis" and focus on other difficulties and scandals faced by the population inherent to each sides. The second one was trying to enlarge the scope by seeing the issue from the actions and discourses of overseas Cypriots, that tend to fracture the process of confidence building measures. The last one was putting to the stage the actions by Cypriots on virtual spaces, and especially on Digital Social Medias. Those initiatives tend to build virtual bridges to reassemble the divided communities. To summarize in a word, "border regimes in Cyprus have since been ambiguous owing to the multiple divisions of the island." as scholars stated recently (Trimikliniotis and al., 2023, p.41). I tried to put into perspective the various "debordering" and "rebordering" processes that happened in Cyprus since 2020.

2. Limits of the article

It is challenging to discuss the Cyprus Problem in "an era of uncertainty" as explained by James Ker-Lindsay (2019). Some limitations need to be addressed concerning this paper. First, it is analysing very recent events. The time of research is not the time of actuality. While the latter keeps moving, one needs to stop to reflect and propose a scientific approach to the news and events. The article is solely a draft to discuss hypotheses and very first results during the Symposium. Nikos Skoutaris, who was moderating the panel raised questions from the presentation. He mentioned the inertia and the lack of changes on the "Cyprob". He questioned the problem of the North non-recognition and asked about the limits of interactions between the divided communities and what could be considered as "too much" by parties. I answered by raising another question and asking who is defining the scale and limits of such interaction's intensity. The second remark was concerning the "two states solution" proposal, which I chose to depict as a "rebordering" process in my analyse. The academic was wondering if we could define it as such since it could still be a "settlement" to the "Cyprob". I answered again to this discussion by asking a question. In the event of a "two-state solution", would ratifying a

definitive physical partition be beneficial to bringing the island's communities closer together, or would it be a reason for further division? Hence the questioning on “(de/re)bordering” matters in my paper and presentation. Overall, this article is supposed to raise further questions and discussion to nourish the debate and the research. It should not be read as a finished piece of research but as a work in progress that is only beginning and addressing questions.

3.Future scope and message

After the questions and answers raised during the Symposium panels, this first draft will be used to be affined as a subchapter of my PhD thesis. Further research can also emerge from this draft, by involving different researchers from diverse fields to propose another article or report that would emphasize the very first steps of the new research. Other critical events are to be tackle, such as the recent presidential elections in the ROC⁴⁷. Nikos Christodoulides stated that the Cyprus Problem was his “top priority”⁴⁸ as a president. He also “predicts revival of reunification talks after Turkish election”⁴⁹ that took place on the 28th of May 2023. However, Pavlos Xanthoulis explains that “the Turkish formula for Cyprus is challenging” and that “the European Union is not optimistic about developments in the near future with either Erdogan or Kilicdaroglu”.⁵⁰

For the moment being, the overall message of the paper is that even if the Cypriot Question is a frozen conflict, several reheating events are changing the paradigm on the future scope of the status quo. As an “accordion” image, various “debordering” and “rebordering” episodes took place since 2020 around the “Cyprus problem”, still embedded in an untenable status quo. Like the music instrument that “expands” and “narrows”, “rebordering” processes seem to “keep away” both sides of the divide. On the contrary, when “debordering” events happen, it seems to bring them closer. A movement of fluctuation is observed and plays the theme of the “Cyprob”. All the latest upheavals discussed could carry weight in future peace negotiations when the time comes and need to be further analysed.

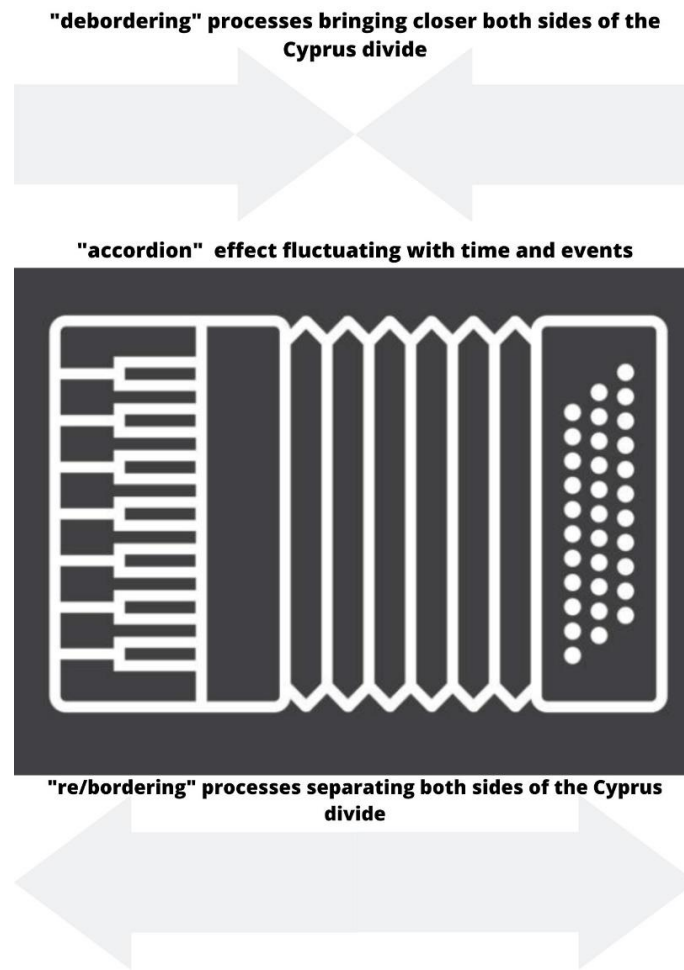
⁴⁷ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/feb/12/nikos-christodoulides-elected-cypruss-president-with-52-of-vote>

⁴⁸ <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/nikos-christodoulides-new-cyprus-president-sworn-2023-02-28/>

⁴⁹ <https://www.politico.eu/article/cyprus-president-nikos-christodoulides-predict-revival-reunification-talks-turkish-election/>

⁵⁰ <https://knews.kathimerini.com.cy/en/news/the-turkish-formula-for-cyprus-is-challenging>

Figure 5: the “accordion” image of fluctuating “debordering” and “rebordering” processes in Cyprus since 2020 (Marie Pouillès Garonzi on Canva.com, 2023)⁵¹



Acknowledgments

I would like to thank the London School of Economics and the Hellenic Observatory for the organisation of the 10th PhD Symposium on Greece and Cyprus that permits to tackle this work in progress. The discussion during the session will allow to follow up the discussion and defines the hypotheses and the very first results. I am very thankful to all the interviewees that gave me some of their time and thinking. Thank you all for your trust and benevolence.

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⁵¹ Accordion drawing created by Amin Yusifov available on Istock, royalty-free image

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