The Discourse of Refugee Trauma: Epistemologies of the Displaced, the State, and Mental Health Practitioners

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Abstract

This paper explores the discourse of refugee trauma, analysing ways the displaced, the state, and mental health practitioners think about displacement and other war traumas. Narratives were obtained via in-depth qualitative interviews with displaced Greek Cypriots, newspaper accounts and press releases by elected officials, and through an examination of assumptions and practices of the traditional, medical model. Following a discussion of a range of epistemologies regarding the meaning of displacement, the authors offer a systemic epistemology for practitioners and activists interested in an alternative to the current ontology of fear and insecurity dominating our everyday institutions and social relations. In deconstructing the narratives of traumatisation, the authors suggest that dichotomous, essentialised, and atomistic understandings of self and other, displacement, nation, and health sustain in place "unhealthy" conditions that precipitate further traumatisation. Instead of pills and ethno-nationalist interpretations, the therapeutic witnessing of family dialogues around trauma is suggested for the facilitation of a process that relinquishes the desire to set it "right" and makes room for listening to our restless dead about another mode of living, a current struggle for peace, truth and justice.

Keywords: epistemologies, refugee, trauma, discourse, displacement, affect, systemic, mental health

Introduction

20 July 2008. From a Nicosian veranda, the Turkish flag can be seen burning brightly on the Pentadactylos Mountains commemorating what many in northern Cyprus view as the Turkish "peace operation" on the island thirty-four years ago. While the north-south buffer zone has opened, allowing Greek and Turkish Cypriots to move back and forth, barbed wire and UN troops remain on this segregated island. On 24 April 2004, the north and south communities of Cyprus held a referendum to decide whether or not to accept the Annan plan. Leading up to the crucial vote, the Greek-Cypriot political leadership did one of two things: went on television, tearfully imploring citizens to vote "no", or, alternately, sat silently, waiting for a socio-political firestorm to subside. Both the vociferous debates, and strategic silences, speak volumes about the tensions and the futures that were denied them on both sides of the divide. In each of these

communities, "remains" of the series of violences perpetrated upon their bodies persist. For instance, it may be argued that the north, unable to mourn past losses, has been structured in a manner that sustains in place representations of subjects who need to right past wrongs (i.e. by focusing on the chosen trauma). In the south there is a community that refuses to forget (e.g. I DO NOT FORGET) and has yet to commemorate fully what has repeatedly been called the catastrophe that has become so integral to our lives. The Annan Plan Referendum reopened old wounds, fears, and experiences of violence, including foregone and irreproducible orientations toward the future in both the north and south associated with the conflicts of 1955-1959, 1963, 1964, 1967, and 1974. Many of us carry memories, some our own and some intergenerationally transmitted, and frequently there are disjunctures between inherited collective memories and the personal experiences we ourselves have lived – the memories as articulated in the public domain and those in our most intimate places.

This paper engages with the narratives of the displaced (i.e. the refugee) in order to rigorously interrogate the methods and the kinds of political claims that can be mobilised on behalf of the displaced (refugees, those in enclaves, the dead, and the missing) in the political present. This paper is not an accounting of the displacements and other losses in order to remember and rework historical trauma. As both communities albeit in differential ways try to address violences such as conflict and war and their aftermath, it is crucial to think about it anew with justice instead of calling for fundamentalist revenge or even a commitment to memory of the past without accounting for the ways this "past" itself consolidates our own capacity to embody and engage in living, current struggles for peace, truth and justice. We pose the question of the Cypriot series of displacements as ongoing struggles, a judgement on the forces that animate such displacements while countering alternative memories, the contours of which outline still to be realised alternatives to violence (i.e. continued displacements and violations including the exploitation, the torturing and killing of peoples all in the name of capitalist colonial development and neoliberal projects). In this paper, we are more concerned with the contemporary possibilities of transformation and the ways such possibilities are still tethered to this past of displacement as violence and death. So, questions for us here are the following: what are the epistemological and political questions in writing histories of the present without squarely engaging the problem of life orientations and visions embodied within them? What are the stories about the displaced, (i.e. the refugee to just name one), that continues to inform who we are today – a present in which violence and terror is not contained and/or gone, a present in which persons are daily stripped of their energies as they are violated, a present informed and mediated by ongoing violence?

In this paper, specifically we ask: 1) What traumatic narratives and epistemologies do the state, refugees themselves, and mental health practitioners draw upon and to what consequence regarding redress with justice? 2) Who or what benefits from public re-productions of feelings such as hypermasculine impotentilisation, bereavement, loss, or anger? 3) What kinds of interventions, therapeutic and otherwise, can improve the quality of life within conflict-war-torn communities? To answer these questions, we explore the narratives that emerged from twenty-five

ethnographic interviews and focus groups conducted with Greek-Cypriot refugee families in 2002, 2004, and 2006, and newspaper accounts of statements made by the Greek-Cypriot political leadership. In addition, we engage some narratives that emerged out of a mixed village in the north where we were able to talk to both Greek and Turkish Cypriots still living there. After discussing the theoretical assumptions that guide this article, we present the narratives of refugees and the state, critique linear-causal-nationalist-developmentalist epistemologies, and then offer up systemically informed alternatives to traditional, medical model treatments and practices with displaced peoples.

Epistemologies of Trauma: (Neo) Colonialisms Anew?

> "Haunting is a constituent element of modern social life. It is neither premodern superstition nor individual psychosis; it is a generalizable social phenomenon of great importance. To study social life one must confront the ghostly aspects of it"
>
> (Gordon, 1997)

Since "the end of the 1980s, 'trauma' projects appear ... alongside food, health and shelter interventions" (Bracken and Petty, 1998, p. 1) which has led to the emergence of trauma treatment programmes as if to "tame the unimaginable" (James, 2004, p. 131). As more and more of the language of trauma becomes part of the vernacular by being more accessible, familiar, and normalised in the society (i.e. stress, anxiety, trauma), violences such as warfare waged against civilians unimaginable in the scale of their brutality are less challenged (Bracken and Petty, 1998, p. 1). Challenging such violences becomes even more difficult when the discourse of trauma becomes an organising modality that motivates new forms of technocratic practices. Examples of such practices include the restructuring of states and humanitarian apparatuses designed to manage newly articulated categories of states and people within a social field, i.e. "failed states", "states in crisis", "victims of human rights' violations", victims of war especially with the War on Terror and the brutalities in the Balkans (Agathangelou, 2000), in order to alleviate the suffering of victims and transform their experiences, identity, and "political subjectivity" (Aretxaga, 1997). However, such practices themselves may engender other kinds of violences that reassert social power asymmetries, which inform acts and policies leading to the killing of working class, black and other racialised subjects, and women and children (Agathangelou, 2009). The series of state and other humanitarian projects, which secure in place these power dynamics, require us to ask questions that reject the notion that these asymmetrical social relations are just "business as usual".

With the end of the Cold War, many of these state and humanitarian regimes have asserted their power involving new technologies that would legitimise their interventions in those sites which are undergoing post-conflict reconstruction and/or are desiring to "fit" into the nations of civilisation and integrating themselves in regions like the European Union. In relationship to those states in "crisis", these technologies of governance enable the unfolding of a series of intervention practices such as social rehabilitation and economic change (James, 2003). These

practices are, as James (*ibid.*) claims, reminiscent of what Foucault refers to as bio-power: "techniques of power present at every level of the social body and utilized by very diverse institutions (the family and the army, schools and the police, individual medicine and the administration of collective bodies), operated in the sphere of economic processes, their development, and the forces working to sustain them" (Foucault, 1990, 141). Similarly, discourses of trauma could themselves also be methods of securing and making possible global-power practices (Agathangelou, Bassichis, and Spira 2008; James, 2003; Povinelli, 2000; Basu, 2004) especially for those sites seeking to become "more civilised", their conflict-ridden genes expunged, and to become more competent and accountable to their citizens (James 2004, p. 131). Such demands and practices in the global realm depend extensively, however, on specific epistemologies that are guided by a transcendental politics of relations, including class, gender, sexuality and justice, and also politics that draw on discourses and forces with a continuous historical, colonial logic. For instance, much of the experience of violence, such as displacement and suffering, is appropriated or alienated from the subject and transformed (Das, 1995; Kleinman and Kleinman, 1991) into a series of documentations that articulate persons, families and whole nations into "victims", "killers", etc. (see *Calling the Ghosts* – a film made in 1996; Mandami 1996; Povinelli 2002). Much of this documentation also becomes part of seeking funding and political capital in order to promote persons, families, ethnic groups and nations' institutional security within the international system of states even as they promote the "protection" and "security" of their citizens (Agathangelou, 2009, 2000; James, 2003; Agathangelou and Spira, 2007). While such political contestations are part and parcel of structures and institutional and personal formations, one may ask what are the criteria that make some traumas more legitimate than others and/or more urgent than others? What is at stake in centralising some traumas over others and what does it really do for us politically if we can begin any kind of interrogation of political projects by merely focusing on the "suffering of others" instead of the violent conditions and social relations that make possible their political subjectivity, including their suffering? How do such engagements and political recognitions draw on historical violations such as warfare, exploitation, oppression and also existential denials, and for what purpose?

Gender, sexuality, class, race and (re)production were explicit factors in the mode of violence in Cyprus during and after the many years of conflict both covert and overt since 1960 when the island won its independence from the British colonisers. As the state began its integration in the international structure, many enduring problems remained, such as the accomplishment of a workable Cypriot state, the transformation of dependent subjects/workers to "free" workers within this newly formed state, and the build-up of bureaucratic institutions to facilitate these processes. To this series of questions, the viability of the state, the "conflicts" and the Turkish "peace operation" and/or what has come to be articulated and consolidated temporally in 1960, 1963, 1967, and 1974 as the Cyprus question, provided the appearance of an ethnic problem instead of the many displacements and its contingent traumas, the constant shifts unfolding and the alternative imaginaries defined in conjunction with that violence and its "freezing" (i.e. biomedically reducing

relations) as a form of transformation.

Violence (and more specifically here displacement) can be understood within a context of the formation of a modern state and its contingent epistemic notions about its own power, social order, and health. In the past two decades, an important body of feminist theory has emerged that examines the complicity of nationalism with gender and sexual hierarchies (McClintock, 1995; Anthias and Yuval Davis, 1989; Kandiyoti, 1994; Suàrez-Orozco, 2000; Aretxaga, 2001; Wilce, 2004). McClintock has critiqued extensively how the nation is constructed in terms of familial and domestic metaphors and how "woman" represents the symbolic site, as well as a boundary marker of the nation as "home" and "family". Kandiyoti (1994, p. 382) argues that the project of nationalism draws upon the idea of woman as associated with the private sphere, thus, connecting the nation/community with "selfless mother/devout wife":

> "The very language of nationalism singles out women as the symbolic repository of group identity. As Anderson points out, nationalism describes its object using either the vocabulary of kinship (motherland, patria) or home (heimat) in order to denote something to which one is 'naturally' tied. Nationness is thus equated with gender, parentage, skin color – all those things that are not chosen and by virtue of their inevitability, elicit selfless attachment with sacrifice. The association of women with the private domain reinforces the merging of the nation/community with the selfless mother/devout wife" (p. 382).

According to Kandiyoti, the nation-state presumes that women biologically reproduce national collectivities and embody a nostalgic communal past and tradition (Gopinath, 1997, p. 488). In collapsing women with "home" and "nation" and, in turn, feminising and domesticating that space which is also understood as one of purity and sacred spirituality (*ibid.*, p. 468), nationalist projects end up naturalising women's productive activity. Simultaneously, this dichotomous/essentialised understanding of women as biological reproducers merges models of sexual reproduction (biological and natural) with those of cultural production (social). According to these conceptualisations, membership in the nation is prioritised and it is gained through biology. Of course, this understanding is gendered and ethnicised and further naturalises and heterosexualises the (re)production of the nation by expecting women to produce and attend to the children and men to attend to work. In sum, it silences, with a series of violent interventions, the struggles and labour of producing a home, a family and a nation. Those outside these frameworks (e.g. other ethno-nationalist groups, migrants and workers) cannot achieve membership (Agathangelou, 2004; Trimikliniotis, 2004), the suggestion being that their productive activity does not contribute toward the reproduction of the nation-state, or more specifically, the social relations that constitute it. Thus, their experiences of violation within the borders of the nation can, and with difficulty, be described and articulated as moments of violence. In not examining and disrupting the understanding that the nation imagines itself as a stable and fixed, biological and heterosexual hypermasculine entity (Agathangelou and Ling, 2009; Alexander, 1997; Gopinath, 1997) we end up further producing other kinds of violence. By

imagining that the nation is the "mother", the state is the patriarchal father, and the majority of the people are the children of this union, one can then imagine how some of these children must be sacrificed for the purposes of the national and now the transnationalised/neoliberalised development of Cyprus (Agathangelou, 2006; Robinson, 2004).[1] Nevertheless, this sacrifice is ridden with a major paradox: while the state prefers and works to incorporate productive and "healthy" subjects into a burgeoning international bourgeoisie that consequently could enable its reproduction, its dominant practices and laws depend on violence, including the displacement and their asymmetrical effects within its territory. Engaging with these violences and their mourning practices, could possibly provide insights into other orientations and possibilities of whose recalcitrance and registered defeats (i.e. traumas) could enable us to trace the openings of the "past" to those of the present for an altered vision constituted out of the damaged and defiled livelihoods within Cyprus. What must be "remembered", therefore, is that what make the present are a "composite of present formations" (*ibid*., p. 180) and the pasts from which those have emerged. Thus, such a remembering requires a memory of the displacement, dispossession, of the struggles and conflicts and, of course, those alternatives that have not been realised due to these violent shifts.

Much of the work on memory and trauma that has emerged lately has focused on "remembering" as well as the ways this process is transmitted across generations (Leys, 2000; Caruth, 1996). The study of trauma developed first within medicine and then through the emerging field of psychoanalysis and was intensified and expanded throughout a number of other disciplines in the twentieth century. According to Ruth Leys, trauma refers to "a surgical wound, conceived on the model of a rupture of the skin or protective envelope of the body resulting in a catastrophic global reaction in the entire organism" (2000, p. 19). Although there is disagreement about the methods through which trauma is experienced and remembered, trauma is generally defined as an overwhelmingly life-threatening experience, accompanied by feelings of extreme fright and helplessness. The major epistemological assumptions that guide much of this work are remembering to forget and/or remembering and memorialising the event by adding to the community's knowledge. In *Trauma: A Genealogy* Ruth Leys substantiates that many of the therapeutic approaches to treating survivors of trauma operate within a paradigm that valorises remembrance. Genealogically tracing this development from the era of Freud and Pierre Janet she argues that traumatic memory has become a dominant theoretical approach to our understanding of contemporary trauma discourse (Herman, 1992; Felman and Laub, 1992). Drawing on Pierre Janet, who assumes an epistemology of linearity – a dichotomisation of ordinary and traumatic

1 Arguing that transnationalisation is a defining feature of globalisation, Robinson states that the rise of global production is changing the relation between production and territoriality. "The relationship between nation-states, economic institutions, and social structures becomes modified as each national economy is reorganized and integrated into the new global production system" (p. 34). Robinson further argues that the globalisation of production "provides the basis for the transnationalisation of classes" as well as the transnationalisation of the state into "the transnational state apparatus" (Robinson, 2004, p. 34).

memories – Herman argues that "traumatic memories are not encoded in the brain like normal memories. Unlike traumatic memories, the ordinary memories of adults form a verbal, linear narrative that is assimilated into an ongoing life story" (Herman, 1992, p. 37). Traumatic memories, however, freeze in a timeless state and await cues in the environment to trigger sensory and motoric impulses. As Pierre Janet suggests, it is crucial to lead the "traumatized patients" to convert their traumatic memories into narratives by telling a story:

> "Normal memory, like all psychological phenomena, is an action; essentially it is the action of telling a story ... A situation has not been ... fully assimilated until we have achieved, not merely an outward reaction through our movements, but also an inward reaction through the words we address to ourselves, through the organization of the recital of the event to others and to ourselves, and through the putting of this recital in its place as one of the chapters in our personal history" (Janet cited in Herman, 1992, p. 37).

Similarly to Freudian psychoanalysis, Bessel van der Kolk, Onno van der Hart, Janet Herman, Caruth, and others argue that through a narrative action the survivor can process and know fully what took place. Through telling "the story of the trauma again ... completely, in depth and in detail ... Out of fragmented components of frozen imagery and sensation, the survivor slowly reassembles an organized, detailed, verbal account, oriented in time and historical context" (Herman 1992, p. 175). It is only then that the survivor would no longer suffer "from the reappearance of traumatic memories in the form of flashbacks, behavioural re-enactments, and so on. Instead the story can be told, the person can look back at what happened; he has given it a place in his life history, his autobiography, and thereby in the whole of his personality" (van der Kolk and van der Hart, 1991, p.176). Much of this work is useful in the sense that it centralises agency by arguing that once memory is "converted" into a narrative form then the person is able to "own" control and master his own story in a "flexible" manner (*ibid.*, p. 178). However, as Leys (2000, p. 109) argues, this epistemological approach is ridden with an "entrenched commitment to the redemptive authority of history ... even if the victim of trauma could be cured without obtaining historical insight into the origins of their distress, such a cure would not be morally acceptable". Leys argues that it becomes crucial, for these theorists, that the person who experiences violence bears witness to her experience because "telling the truth has not merely a personal therapeutic but a public or collective value as well. It is because personal testimony concerning the past is inherently political and collective that the narration of the remembered trauma is so important" (*ibid.*). Hence, bearing witness is not just about the person but it also becomes important for the restoration of the social order (Leys, 2000, p. 109 citing Herman, 1992, p. 1). Ley's problematisation of these works highlights that much of the literature on trauma remains epistemologically circumscribed within the modernity projects. As Kaplan (2005, p. 68) states "trauma and modernity are inherently intertwined". She proceeds to ask a series of crucial questions that we think may enable us to ask questions that could engage with the "shocks" produced through different modernisation projects. What symptoms can be found on our bodies and lives that can

point to the shocks registered, and perhaps, negotiated and controlled? How did cultures manage to not "know" the history they had participated in? How are we seduced into remembering mere privatised fragments? (p. 69).

In Cyprus, violence comes in different forms, some emerging out of different development and governance projects (i.e. development of the sovereign state; even in its newer and more neoliberal form; nationalisms; imprisoning people during the junta; relegating people into refugee camps and enclaves). Thus, we locate memory and trauma within contemporary economies of violence such as displacement, enclaving, killing, and the dynamics of naming "trauma" and its valuation. Following Spillers (2003) we begin engaging the narratives of Cypriots and of state political leadership to show the link of trauma, the role of the family in Cyprus with regards to engaging and "dealing" with the displacement, and the methods that health practitioners deploy to appeal to the "national family". More so, we are interested in showing systematically how the time of the present is still ridden, constituted and made possible with violence and trauma or, as Spillers calls it, "death" which is re-enacted and transmitted generationally.

> "Even though the captive flesh/body has been 'liberated,' and no one need pretend that even the quotation marks do not matter, dominant symbolic activity, the ruling episteme that releases the dynamics of naming and valuation, remains grounded in originating metaphors of captivity and mutilation so that it is as if neither time nor history, nor historiography or its topics, show movement, as the human subject is 'murdered' over and over again by the passions of a bloodless and anonymous archaism, showing itself in endless disguise" (Spillers, 2003, p. 208).

In drawing on the narratives of Cypriots we proceed to show that the traumas of the past (and the struggle to remember and to engage with the losses, direct and/or inherited) are not over. They continue today, and the referendum marked it once more as the "sore spot". That moment recentralised again that the ravages of colonisation are not over. The decolonisation of Cyprus (i.e. liberation from the British Empire) did not seal the past and its incompleteness. Rather, colonial episteme such as patriarchal rule, racialised logics (i.e. the Greek is superior and belongs to the West whereas the Turk is the "sick man of Europe"; ultimately, Greeks and Turks are "ethnic" groups whose whole history is marked with conflict and violence; the Cypriot failed state[s]) still dominate many of their practices and activities and much of the valuation of the "other" both within and between the two communities and internationally. The dominant ruling episteme of subordination and mutilation of themselves and of each other are ultimately not over either. Such an episteme becomes mobilised at "opportune moments" to make political claims for projects that could sanctify them in the demonisation of the other, and even in their sacrifice for the nationalist and formation of state family. Furthermore, such political claims sustain in place these displacements and relations of violence, and above all, they lock in them again and again those possibilities that defy notions that the dominant social formations are not the only possibilities. We read the stories people carry about violence – the conscious horror of terror, traumas and death

that allows us to hold the destruction (i.e. material, ecological, corporeal, psychic) long enough and in constellation with the ongoing traumas of our moment – as *refusals to mourn and move on*. Such readings can enable us to imagine ongoing movements (in an Epicurean sense) that link us in the present with those who still suffer in our communities, and those who died in struggle for our communities.

Bodies in Pain: Enduring, and Carrying, Nationalist Injuries

> "The mind that attempted to repair – to compensate for the trauma becomes the trauma itself. The mind, in other words, becomes the patient's cumulative – in fact, accumulating – trauma" (Phillips, 1997, p. 102)

Cyprus won its independence from the British in 1960 and the elites of the Greek and Turkish ethnic communities worked together towards consolidating their power in Cyprus. Three years later, however, this national project of progress, democracy, and development did not resemble the form it had taken in Western Europe. Producing a common "national fantasy" was impossible because the nationalisms of both communities had originated elsewhere and their goals, values, interests, and agents conflicted due to historical political relations and their location in the formation of the international order. In Cyprus, the leadership whose interest was to make the process of two "national fantasies", the Greek and the Turkish, local circulated "images, narratives, monuments, and sites" and "personal/collective consciousness" (Berlant quoted in Elley and Grigor Suny, 1996), stories which ultimately entailed a series of violences and violations. In December 1963 a major crisis between the Greek and Turkish Cypriots erupted when Makarios III, the Archbishop and Primate of the autocephalous Cypriot Orthodox Church and first President of the Republic of Cyprus, proposed constitutional amendments to improve the functionality of the Cypriot state. After the rejection of the constitutional amendments by the Turkish-Cypriot community the situation escalated resulting in severe fighting between extremists from both sides, which lasted throughout 1963 and 1964. Turkish Cypriots, either of their own volition or by force, began retreating from isolated rural areas and villages into enclaves, often giving up their land and houses for security from enemy extremists. In 1974, when the Greek junta invaded, the military of Cyprus (re)organised socio-political and economic power on the island by trying to kill President Makarios and imprisoning and threatening the lives of Turkish Cypriots and Greek-Cypriot men who belonged to parties on the left (communists and socialists). Turkey, claiming its role as guarantor for the Turkish-Cypriot minority, militarily invaded to protect the Turkish ethnic minority from the Greek junta. A firm military presence was established by Turkey which remains on the island even today. Other kinds of violence were sexual violations, and the killing of many on both sides. Such types of violence as embodied through displacement (forced and/or otherwise) were many in Cyprus and yet, this article does not claim to "recover" all these moments. On the contrary, on drawing on the narratives of Cypriots we also engage in tracing their regrets and traumas – in story telling, as feelings and as *modes of analysis*. Through these stories, it seems that

regret and trauma produce a structure that is simultaneously stable and dynamic, which fills us with a set of fictional possibilities or alternatives.

As Cho (2008) states in her experimental piece describing the violence that Korean women experienced transnationally, many years have passed and "thoughts are absented of words that would make any sense to you (or to me, for that matter)", and yet the wounds remain open and the two states in north and south Cyprus still find the language to articulate the "catastrophe" that continues to segregate the island. Its thrust of DO NOT FORGET is not only a way of redressing the violence and displacements that have occurred but it is also an orientation that simultaneously draws on the body as method in gendered, racialised, sexualised and classed ways. The state's attempt to deal with the trauma that "shocked" its power acknowledges at least implicitly that the conflict and series of displacements including the use of gendered and sexualised forms of torture and terror was intended to destroy the productivity and (re) productivity of persons (i.e. Greek-Cypriots); to rupture the social bonds between the direct target of violence and his or her family and community through the use of physical pain, threats, and other coercive acts, and while desiring "healthy" subjects it also paradoxically, through a series of enactments of dominant practices and laws, redirects people to a mourning process that consequently, could possibly heal them. Yet, the many stories themselves become a living witness to the incessant call in codifying people as national subjects, always the potential subjects of nationalist sacrifice, while at the same time calling for a project that could sanctify them in the demonisation of the other.

Scarry (1985) suggests, that power and productivity were stripped from the targets of violence and transferred to the torturer(s), and to the Greek junta apparatus as a whole as it sought to consolidate its hold over the nation. The efficacy of violence used in Cyprus during this period, however, lay beyond its use against the "body" in the short-term. The forms of torture perpetrated were effective in controlling social space and the subjectivity of their targets over time. Beyond the initial attempt to extract legitimacy and power from victims' physical bodies through the use of pain, the purpose of these horrific acts was to inculcate what Patterson (1982) has described as the "social death" of the victim and "natal alienation" from his or her social network of accountability through the violation of moral norms. In this respect, the psychosocial sequelae of torture effects and leaves their traces on the individual psyche or self over time, on the extended family and all the associated communities.

Several Cypriots whom we interviewed prompted an understanding, albeit with contradictions, of the mechanisms by which national belonging is internalised in the process of their own constitution as national subjects. They brought up the issue of how the past, and more specifically, the violations they suffered at the hands of the "enemy", cannot be forgotten.[2] A 30-year-old, middle-class Greek-Cypriot female had this to say about the relations between Greek and Turkish Cypriots:

2 The concept "enemy" must be unpacked. Within an ethno-national imaginary, "enemy" is being understood as anybody who is outside the biological continuation of a specific ethno-nationalism.

> "It is *they* who invaded us, who invaded our lands, and our homes. We cannot forget their violence and just go on as if nothing happened. If we forget our lands, it means that we forget our past and our ancestors who fought for us to even [be] here."

Unpacking this short segment of a narrative in order to understand the epistemologies that inform its constitution, we are confronted with a series of complicated issues: a stringing together of a complex commission of violence, including the invasion of land (either through forced relocation; withdrawal; relocation with compensation during for instance, the Ottoman Empire) and home. The relocation, the loss of and/or withdrawal from lands cannot be forgotten because that would mean shutting out both the past and our ancestors who made our lives possible, including those relations of the land and home. In emphasising the connection between Greek Cypriots and their ancestors who fought against the invading enemy, the narrator pushes to locate herself in this larger collective national project that ultimately demands that the "loss" be not forgotten. Yet, this narrative within a larger context that is informed by a collective ethno-nationalist story presumes a subject whose major project is making political claims (i.e. documenting through story telling) about the violence that the other (i.e. the Turk) committed upon herself, national territory and above all on one's home. It is not that the collective ethno-national story is not intertwined with the personal but that the narrator seems to be expected, at least partially, to tell of the ethno-national violence, and to provide a proof that requires essentialising oneself as a national subject (i.e. being and constituting oneself as Greek Cypriot).

The complexity here is also the way one is expected to detach oneself from his/her own personal memories and experiences of violence, such as the uprooting of all social relations, including the relation of self with land and home[3] to tell the story from the logic of the executioner of the violence (even one's ethno-nation). In story telling, there seems to be an articulation and a recitation of an archive of violence (i.e. how the other used all military hardware at his disposal to displace the Greek Cypriot from his home, his land, and above all, rid him of his political power). Such story telling – with a beginning, a middle, and an end – requires a complete re-orientation of one's life about the other, including the production of abstract facts that can be claimed in the story to contain and even gloss over the traces of not merely the injuries of relocation, conflict and war but also connection and collective. Relocation, conflict, war, and the injuries become the evidence to consolidate a story about the ethnic other, the hyper-masculine violator, and above all, the one who stole property from him in the form of land and home. Indeed, this kind of memory seems to albeit contradictorily collude with a nationalist project that desires to preserve a fixed past.

Read how a 35-year-old, middle-class, displaced male Greek Cypriot tells of the wounds of the nation:

> "Our nation has been wounded since 1974. Our people and our lands are lost in the hands of the Turks. As long as our missing [kin] is not given to us and our lands are not returned

3 This foreclosure violently expels the struggles which are not always about inside/outside racial (i.e., ethnic) relations, but also about the ways these struggles are mediated through class, gender, sexuality, etc.

> to us there is no way that this conflict can be resolved. Our duty is to have back what we lost and have been waiting for [over] the last 27 years."

In this narrative, this Greek Cypriot draws upon collective memory to talk about the victimisation of the nation and individual wounds through the loss of land, property, and people. Implicit in his narrative is the actual event of displacement even though he does not name it. His narrative of displacement ultimately names the crime that gives rise to the compulsion to prove, and primarily the desire to decide a-priori, what the resolution of it would entail. It ends up foreclosing, albeit contradictorily, the possibility of naming that violence destroys people's lives, communities, and also the complex and frequent asymmetrical struggles embodied within them, which no law or legislation can dutifully and cathartically resolve.

Conceptualising the conflict within the two Cypriot communities as a moment of injury and stealing of one's people and land may be a "useful" strategy in that it can potentially explain, in the short term, one's pain and displacement. However, the effect of such a narrative is problematic. It presumes that a kind of hetero-masculine power has been lost in the theft of property, land, and disruption of intimate relations, and thus, the only way to "heal" and "resolve" conflict is by restoring one's property and land, and to demand compensation for lost members of the nation-state. It also avoids thinking that displacement is not only a consequence of war, but a central strategy in the formation of global power, including the shaping of national projects and state relations which are themselves ridden with contradictions, especially in moments of war and conflict, ethnic, gendered and class relations.

A 55-year-old working-class man living in a refugee settlement in Cyprus shared another narrative that linked self and nation, both in injured and traumatised states:

> "Do you see this box [indicates a shoe box]? In it is what keeps us going. I have pills for falling asleep, pills for my stomach, pills for when I get anxious. I also have papers from the doctors stating that my nerves are 'shattered'. These pills are a symbol for the ways the state and other institutions deal with problems. We have been under this constant, low-level pressure for the last thirty years. Every time you turn on the TV or read the newspaper you wait to hear if the politicians have come up with a solution. You end up wondering if they are interested in a solution."

Epistemologically, this man's narrative gestures to the "shock" that shattered him and the nation-state. His "shock"[4] or what this man claims to be his trauma seems to be a much more intertwined question. It is about giving but also *withdrawing sense* and imagination from a

4 According to Leys (2000) "modern understanding of trauma began with the work of the British physician John Erichsen, who during the 1860s identified the trauma syndrome in victims suffering from the fright of railway accidents and attributed the distress to shock or concussion of the spine. Claiming that the traumatic syndrome constituted a distinct disease entity, ... Berlin neurologist Paul Oppeneheim subsequently gave it the name "traumatic neurosis" and ascribed the symptoms to undetectable organic changes in the brain"(p. 3).

problem that continues to "shatter" one's nerves, and basically, one's health. He first shares his insight about the interests of the state in "resolving" the "Cyprus Problem", and also proceeds to argue that this same state "entombs sense and imagination" within the violence and the problem that remains unresolved on the tables of the state/states. He seems to be aware that his individual prescription for pills and the documentations registering his trauma by the medical establishment (i.e. he has mental problems) are really a form of securing the problem in place by making it knowable and easily accessible medically. Here, the trauma of the self and what makes the Greek Cypriot is contained through the "pills". The dependence on them by this man is registered as the "shattered" nerves, an image perhaps, of the exaggerated cuts of the neo-colonial restructurings and internal tensions in which decolonised nations like Cyprus have yielded to disillusionment with the new dispensation. More so, the shattered nerves, the wounded body of this man, seem to be linked to the cuts and the wounds of the (post) colonial nation. This man as well as the nation sustains the trauma as it emerges through the unsettling moment of gaining sovereign independence from Britain and the further displacements to buttress it in place. It seems that this political trauma(s) propel(s) this man to seek comfort in belonging to an ethnic group which eventually, banishes him from what he has a right to claim as his own: his struggles and his life. Ultimately, the trauma seems to be compounded here as the man regretfully expresses as the state's unmitigated tragedy: the multiplicity of possibilities, the multiplicity being curtailed through the orientation of a state that seeks an anterior future.

This linear sequence, with a beginning and end, is embodied in the logic of the executioner of a modern project (i.e. formation of a modern state; formation of an archive of violence that proves the truth of the violence and the injury) and is really about a larger societal crisis: How does one deal with a national "unresolved" problem by transforming the politics of nationalism and specifically at the moment when global forces push for national and other social and political changes to respond to global production? How does one draw upon the creativity of one's communities while deliberating publicly on the crisis, including the memories of "loss" and damage?

The earlier narrative of the man prescribed the pills starts to point to a critique of the state's approach to social relations and the violence that constitutes it. The man argues that no sacrifice can be deemed crucial enough for any formation, including the constitution of a modern and better state (i.e. in this case, the Republic of Cyprus). The process of identifying the "loss" as a way of legitimately locating the subject in an ethnic-national-state is a violent process itself. It makes invisible the "loss" that is infinite in any struggle, including conflict and war, the withdrawal of imagination in understanding the series of violences, and ultimately the denial to be "unable" to name and/or understand that his story is one fragment among many of a larger story about social relations. The "shattered" nerves of this man point to a disarticulation of himself as a subject, a mark of disruption of self-determination (i.e. unmaking of the subject) but also a kind of traumatic disruption of the nation. What are the political stakes in a project that suffocates and banishes

multiplicity and, ultimately, shatters those subjects who are supposed to sexually reproduce it with their sweat, life, and above all their dreams? What political stakes can such shattered subjects have in a society that they come to perceive as disinterested, as withdrawing its resources from their possibility, including the majority's development and well-being?

The National Family and its Tragic (T) errors[5]

As the man with "shattered nerves" problematises simultaneously the epistemological concern regarding the constitution of the individual under the condition of displacement (i.e. who am I?) and also the political concern of the construction of socio-political agency (i.e. what is being done, and what can be done) when the state and the medical establishment "fix" their responses, we also want to problematise narratological and political fixities and argue that immutable traumas that anchor personal and national history do not exist but are rather constituted as such with material asymmetrical effects on different peoples' bodies and lives. This is elaborated further by Greek Cypriots during interviews, narrated to us through stories, about the nation and themselves as in the making (incomplete postcolonial subjects; failed states). The catachresis (i.e. not quite sovereign as for instance, British subjects) as a moment and event may not be able to be as easily introjected into nationalist projects as it seeps through and merges with that which is non-desirable (i.e. other ways of life and in relation with others).

Often the narratives focus on the central theme of losing one's home, property, and losing family members but sometimes the stories veered into a different kind of "loss". A 57-year-old working-class man reported the following experience:

> "That Monday morning, when the junta took over, six men clothed in army uniform knocked loudly on my house front door. My nine-year-old daughter opened the door and summoned me when they began interrogating her about the guns that her dad possessed. Two of the soldiers ran to the stairs, the other two ran to the kitchen and the other two guarded the front door. They searched everywhere for guns, and finding nothing, pushed me to their landrover to take me to the station to question me about who has the guns in the village. During the interrogations they beat me and they demanded I tell them the secrets. *What* secrets? On Friday morning, following another beating, the husband of one [of] my cousins, a member of EOKA B, after beating me, summoned me into the yard and with a gun beating me on my back asked me to dig my grave for our Saturday execution ... On Saturday morning, when Turkey forced itself on the island they gave us guns and asked us: 'Brothers, we have to unify and fight our enemy'. I threw away the gun and said: 'Yesterday, we were the enemies of the nation, and today we are your brothers?'"

This narrative of "loss" is complicated when it disrupts the familiar notion of an Us (insiders) and Them (outsiders), as when violence is committed on "us" by members of our own community.

5 We credit this idea to Bulent Diken.

The "us" and "them" descriptions narrowly punctuate communities of which we are part. This narrative, this man's painful ethnic liminality throws into relief the rhetoric of Greekness which gained ascendancy by manufacturing an ideology of the *future anterior* where the only legitimate history for the Cypriot citizen was a history that began with a Greek past and followed that past's determined history into the future foretold. Moreover, as this narrative highlights, the national formation is not itself empty of violence even after decolonisation. Its formation is made possible through a series of displacements and violent interventions. For instance, while stress and anxieties are frequently indicators of experiences of violence and coercion at the hands of a perpetrating enemy, traumatic stress (Agathangelou and Killian, 2002; Loizos and Constantinou, 2007) can also communicate a "betrayal of trust":

> "trauma takes place when the very powers that we are convinced will protect us and give us security become our tormentors: when the community of which we considered ourselves members turns against us or when our family is no longer a source of refuge but a site of danger ... This can be devastating because who we are, or who we think we may be, depends very closely on the social context in which we place and find ourselves. Our existence relies not only on our personal survival as individual beings but also, in a very profound sense, on the continuance of the social order that gives our existence meaning and dignity: family, friend, political community, beliefs" (Edkins, 2003, p. 4).

Nationalist power can be manifested in our relatives, dressed in army uniforms and bearing arms, bursting into our homes looking for guns that could be used against their righteous cause (i.e. a universalist colonisation nevertheless, even when it is not a Eurocentric one). It seems that Greek nationalism emerges at the conjuncture of universalist (sovereign nation state), racialised, and classed (i.e. ethnicity collapsing into one and the same class ultimately mediating the racialised and classed frustrations of different elites within Cyprus) impulses (i.e. Greek over the Turkish nationalism). This man's narrative deconstructs the biological argument that the state repeatedly expects its citizens to swallow: that blood, in the familial and ethno-nationalist sense, is thicker than water. The fact that it was the spouse of his cousin who asked him to dig his grave pushes us to rethink the nationalist project, as "we are all in it together, equally, and in solidarity with each other". It turns out that while sometimes blood is thicker than ethno-nationalism, sometimes it is not; they could not be brothers today, because yesterday the *left* hand was the enemy of the *right*, metaphorically speaking.

Another 40-year-old working-class man, Kostas, shared the following story regarding a different kind of pain: the pain that one experiences when a fellow soldier is being killed and he is so terrified for his life that he is paralysed and unable to do anything.

> "Kostas: I still wake up at night with nightmares. When the Turkish military started bombing Ayios Pavlos our lieutenant, a Greek man of the extreme right shouted to us to leave.
>
> First author: Really? Didn't he demand that you stay and fight Turkey? Didn't he consider running to escape to be anti-patriotic?

> Kostas: No, he realised that we did not have the military strength to fight Turkey, which was using cutting edge NATO weaponry. We started running, running, and running. In our attempt to escape some of us were injured. One of them was a member of my platoon, Yiorgos. He tried to climb the fences, but was shot and did not make it. If somebody saw him and moved him, he could have been saved but everybody was running to save himself."

This process of externalising is prevalent in the face of violence and brutality. Kostas mentions that if "somebody" had seen Yiorgos and moved him in time, he could have been saved. Kostas was in the platoon himself, and yet, his fear of being hit by gunfire prevented him from protecting Yiorgos. His feeling about the disappearance of Yiorgos and his explanation is informed by an understanding of masculine power that focuses on one's ability to protect others. His inability to be a "man" and protect his fellow soldier, and his survival in contrast to a comrade's death, sustain feelings of pain and guilt that inform his relations today. Unable to locate himself in that moment of pure violence where he was running to escape the bullets while some of his brothers were trampled to death, he is found again reciting a story that is supposed to sanctify him of that destructive event. This incessant back and forth between the moment of violence which exposes the limits of identification and the qualification of the event as a destruction of the nation is crucial for those of us who are interested in examining the ontological difference between a *destruction and a legal proof of violence*. Moreover, this moment also marks the contours of the Greek-Cypriot nationalism at the current historical moment in which the masses do not participate equally: Some are the heady political lieutenants, the head of the national body politic who give the orders, and others are the foot soldiers, the armed bodies of the national project who can become the *fodder of a conflict and war* anytime.

(National) Families and "Missing" Murmurs and Trembles

our
"missing"
everywhere

khaki and cold metal
hard triggers wrapped
in soft youth
and innocence

The ripper, in zealous love
screams the goal
that sound, like metal tearing itself apart
extinguishing life and hope

On those grounds
ancestral and our own
the red stain spreads

The ground murmurs, trembles
Vibrates with the screams
"run Run RUN"
But my feet are two great stones
Wet with blood and urine

Doors and alleyways are choked
Waves of "us" are still running
Rope sinks into wrists
Faces
frozen, pale
like yellow sheets
And so many belts
piled on our school floor
What are we learning today

How did I make it out of there?

This poem, recited by the authors, intimates that the material sites of violence are not merely derived from the time and space in which they 'took place'. This poem punctuates how 'sites of trauma' are complexly related to the material sites of violence within specific social environments. Indeed, these sites are reconstituted by the violence itself, and landscapes of violence, horror, and other kinds of traumas become memorial markers. Even in its despair and horror, this poem brings together processes that tie the subject's identity to multiple registers and landscapes that consolidate the trauma, in its fleshy and complex materiality, as that which mediates between these multiple registers and dimensions to give a place to an event that cannot be contained. The moment and event itself rather murmurs, trembles and even screams displacement of a certainty of self, place, memory and even the different registers of expression (i.e. the personal narration, information extraction for the purpose of public testimony).[6] So, if the trauma itself changes and transforms the subject, his/her place, and his/her memory, how do we listen to the stories that people tell of their experience of violence/displacement? How do these stories also reveal the methods "conditions of trauma within biopolitics [that] facilitate, develop, submerge, or redirect capacities"? (Clough and Halley, 2007, p. 282). Below, we first read the narratives of Cypriots to see how they describe and articulate displacements. Second, we review which displacements become centralised as uncertain and/or urgent and how. Realising that none of the narratives we write below are "complete" accounts of what took place in Cyprus, but rather fragments of larger and

6 It is important for us to recognise that even narrations are much more complex than we understand them. For instance, how does a person who experienced displacement and violence (their "unmaking") push in their description of it to speak up and even use the instruments of the state that may come to argue that the "speech" itself of trauma and/of pain is inappropriate?

many more stories that we are juxtaposing, we nevertheless try to work with these partial renditions to articulate a history of displacement, family, sexual relations, conflict, war, and bodies. We suggest that in doing so (i.e. pointing here to a method of redress and justice), we could explore the broader political aspirations about "settlement" by focusing on what is at stake in the Cyprus problem and its contingent conflicts including the ways identities of participants are structured.

A 53-year-old woman who lost her husband in the war shared the following story with us:

> "After the war subsided, for many nights I would wake up at 2:00 a.m. in the morning and check if my husband had come back. He never returned to me. I would check if the kids and my parents were sleeping and then I would get out of my pyjamas and dress up quickly and run to the church. I would just sit there talking to the icons and waiting for them to reply, answering whether my husband was alive and when he was to come back."

This woman narrates her struggle and the ways in which she was mediating her pain. One may find this ritual of running to a space to petition God and saints as reproducing the patriarchal authority of another institution: the church, and perhaps it is so. In this assumed sacred space, the "woman" brings to God and the saints her questions about what is considered a major loss – that of her husband and the father of her children. However, "fleeing" from the public space of the state whose politics do not deal adequately with the violence, to the sacred and spiritual one of the church is also a way of asserting one's agency regarding one's life and future possibilities especially in a context that demands the presence and (re)covering (an emphasis here on the covering) of the bodies of the missing in order to "mourn" the loss of the loved ones. Nevertheless, the family, who decides to intervene to manage the uncontrolled "feelings about her" loss, deems her approach problematic.

> "When my family discovered these escapades they took me to a psychiatrist who immediately prescribed me tons of pills. He didn't ask a thing about what it means to live without a partner in a community where everybody looks down on you if you do not have a husband; the community pities you if you are raising your kids on your own."

Unpacking here the dominant episteme that guides the decision of the family to take her to a psychiatrist reveals how this institution itself participates as a governance mechanism (Foucault) through the use of trauma. Through this narrative the woman also intervenes to disrupt dominant discourses that circulate regarding home and ethnos as fixed and secure social locations, irrespective of one's positionality and power within those structures. The normative "truths" inscribed within these discourses inform how people, bodies, and social problems are very often to be approached irrespective of their power in the social politic. Going to church and speaking to the icons may be a paradoxical activity that announces – that finally reveals the nationalist/familial (t)errors in this woman's life – the loss that the nation wants to appropriate long enough to prove its own "loss" of power internationally to another state, that of Turkey. Indeed, this intervention itself by the family also seems to be an intervention that changes social problems (i.e. conflict, violence, displacements) into problems that need to be managed.

Though given to heal, the "pills" choke the screaming and crying about the husband's death, ultimately, the disaster experience(s) that she has suffered. This set of experiences have now become intertwined with the medical institution, whose goal is to identify and treat symptoms; the doctor through his interventions abstracts the patient's personal experience from those social structures and relations that made it possible at the outset. These institutions' (i.e. the state, the medical institution, and the family) interventions seem to shift the ground of understanding the violence and displacement. Instead of sustaining it within the social realm and, therefore, within the context that enables its emergence, the state, the family, the medical establishment and particular bodies shift the sociality to a relation of management: perhaps the social problems will go away, especially if they are displaced themselves to issues like the recovering of bodies, the losses of property and land, their quintessential qualities, trauma emerging out of the disappearance of people, and their bodies can be wiped out once the bodies or the bones are recovered (Uludağ, 2005; Yakinthou, 2008).[7]

Loizos and Constantinou (2007, pp. 99-100) argue that the 'refugee condition' is mediated by other factors such as human mortality. We argue that this "tendency to attribute death to 'the refugee condition' (*prosphygia*) and 'stress' (*angkos*)" is not merely about integrating the "more rationalist bio-medical arguments, if they are offered them, for they are a health-conscious group of people" but rather how these models also become normative approaches (governance/management approaches) to other and more difficult questions. Loizos and Constantinou (2007, p. 100) argue that refugees' "explanation of first recourse is to point to the stresses of refugee life [which] ... is consistent with other aspects of their cognitive-affective outlooks". We argue that this perspective is informed by dominant presumptions about loss, nationalism, bodies, conflict, etc., that emerge long before the 'refugee condition' that demand that when people are out of equilibrium, they have to be brought back to it in order for them to feel "normal" – integrated well-enough into the social order. Prescribing pills is also a method of bio-political governance in a Foucauldian sense. It seems here that the family's, the medical establishment's, and the state's discourses about "healthy lives" regarding its ethnic citizens have worked, once more, to position women of "missing" spouses as fragmented and ultimately, diseased bodies. Above all, what we see with this narration is the struggle of this Cypriot woman to speak of the pain of herself/family "unmaking" by placing the story at the very heart of a patriarchal and virile nationalism. Similarly to the state, the family imbues those gendered traumatised bodies, displacing the effects of the punctual trauma, that is, the war and the loss of her husband and relocates it as a non-punctual event, natural and inevitable,[8] and perceives it merely as an organisational issue to be managed. The psychic violence

7 Ironically, the sociality of the problem of the missing and the displacement of peoples from their communities is rendered a statistical and measurable issue that could help the state and other institutions assess the damage that has been committed and thereby, establish the ways the state is supposed to perform.

8 Victoria Burrows (2004) engages with trauma theory and critically argues that it still operates within an epistemological framework that privileges whiteness. She argues that racism is "one of the major traumas of the

of this gendered and racialised (i.e. what we have come to articulate as ethnic) violence itself may also crystallise in particular moments, as – the moment when this woman becomes conscious of her "difference" (i.e. she is basically fragmented and with mental problems) – a deviation from the healthy psychic norm which demands familial and other interventions such as that of the psychiatrist in order to contain those symptoms like intrusive flashbacks, hypervigilance, and depression. More so, it seems that the experience of the (t)errors of the state and the family intersect in the daily and often naturalised experience of gender, class and other punctual traumatic events (Hirsch, 1992-1993). Of course, here we need to point out that the consciousness around the family's trauma is not merely an illustration of the blind spots of nationalism, although they certainly repeat some of its (t)errors, first in moving to displace the sociality of problems such as a spatial organisation and the cultural formations it sustains, such as war to a governance issue of "control" and "management" of the effects of violence (i.e. prescribing their daughter pills as if the effects of violence would simply disappear once she takes them irrespective of whether the "bones" of those missing family members would be located and found).

In narrating this story, this working class Greek-Cypriot woman questions the clinical or medical model that assumes that disease is a "malfunction of systems and organs" of individual patients that can be "fixed" through the intervention of health practitioners. In this case, for the psychiatrist the major concern is the symptom rather than the larger conditions creating violence. This model of health, and the responses by family members and the professional communities, are clearly linearly deterministic, showcasing past causes and their effects without much attention to important, current, and larger systemic contextual factors (Loizos, 1988, 2007). Perhaps, these different communities' internalisation of the ontology of security and stability makes this response possible, and yet, this approach also prompts the emergence of more violence through the governance of social problems as management issues (i.e. the production of victimisation-as-collective-memory in the nation's historical mythos displaces the intra gender and class violence as inter-ethnicised us and them violence). Thus, this series of displacements (e.g. disappearance of one's partner, fragmenting of families through the killing of their family members, reorganisation of bodies, their activities, and their relations, prescription of drugs, spatial (re) organisations, epistemic violence of containing the violence as individual and private without a gender, a race, and/or class) are fundamental factors of how the nation and its contingent understanding of home,

twentieth century" and trauma theory has to acknowledge and examine instead of accepting whiteness as a normative category. Thus, she moves on to suggest that we urgently need "a comprehensive remapping of trauma theory that is not white-centric and gender blind" (p. 17). Engaging Dominick LaCapra's distinction between structural and historical traumas, she suggests that the "foundational" nature of the historical trauma of slavery, although historical, comes to act as structural and thus, it is imperative that we examine this relation more closely: "Until the daily occurrence of racial trauma becomes an important part of trauma theory, it will be addressing neither the structural nor the historical traumas of the twentieth century, nor will it provide a viable theoretical paradigm for the twenty-first" (p. 19).

people's bodies and lives, are being constituted as problems to be contained and managed.

During a conjoint interview with a family (mother, son, wife, and two grandchildren) whose father and grandfather were missing in the 1974 war, the son Nicos began telling us that he feels "angry all the time":

> "I was only seven years old. I remember a lot of things from the village. The major thing I remember is when the Turkish Cypriots asked my father and the other seven men to stay behind. I do not know [why] but every time I think of that scene I get *really* angry. My anger comes out though the most in the soccer field. Last year, I became enraged because this guy was trying to say that the goal was not "legit". I grabbed him and hit his head on the fence. Would have kept on hitting him, but my team mates stopped me.
> Interviewer: When do you find yourself being angry?
> Nicos: When I think that somebody is committing an injustice on me. Sometimes, they may not be, but if I think they are, I do get really angry.
> Mother: [starts to wheeze and gasp for breath] My son, let's not talk about this anger."

Nicos' mother, 60 years old, talked to us about the traumatic events she had experienced:

> "I lost my husband, my father, and our house. I am very sad for my father, he did not know much about politics [the political situation nationally, and more specifically, divisions between the right and the left in their village]. He did not bother anybody. Being in a field and having Turks surrounding you and not knowing what will happen to you was very painful ... they [the government] gave us a house – is that help? They gave it to everybody, those who still have their husbands and those who do not. My problem is that everybody does not understand me – my husband and my father are still missing. I used to beat up my kids and throw away the food and not let them eat. Why did nothing happen to the ones who created this havoc, while I lost my husband?"

The pain that Nicos carries, his symptoms (explosions of rage), and the somatic symptoms exhibited by his mother (e.g. laboured breathing, hyperventilation, trembling, stomach complaints, etc.) are manifestations of "unprocessed", and/or what we call here foreclosed struggles pointing to alternative tracks of human and social unfolding. In a context that emphasises the importance of intact and nuclear families, displaced families[9] who have missing or dead family members feel out of step with normative social relations, and marked as somehow inadequate. The ensuing embarrassment and shame represent further displacements (i.e. traumatisations) that are generated in a context that, for the longest time, shied away from providing support in processing and understanding the pain beyond its hyper-virile nationalist-man-hood imaginary as if both of these groups cannot belong to the human race simultaneously.

9 For an in-depth analysis of trauma and well-being study of displaced and non-displaced Cypriots see Agathangelou and Killian (2002). See also Loizos (2008) for an extensive analysis of health of refugees from Argaki.

There has been a changed response to the missing/martyrs issue in Cyprus since 2004 (Yakinthou, 2008; Uludağ, 2005). For a prolonged period, the issue for both the Republic of Cyprus and the 'Turkish Republic of North Cyprus', was the rabbit they pull out of their hats to rekindle ethno-nationalist feelings toward each side. Abstracting the pain of the displaced, hijacking trauma, and waving it around like a flag was also a way the conflict and its contingent violences were inflated to what we call the "normal" condition cultivated with displaced, refugees and other up-rooted and pained subjects.

In the case of Nicos this galvanisation and restoring the flame of ethno-nationalism continues today on both sides of the divide. Crossing the buffer zone this summer and walking into the neighbourhoods where Turkish Cypriots captured Nicos' father, we talked to a group of Greek and Turkish Cypriots from his village. This is what they had to say:

> "He came to the village and he was demanding to find his father. What happened to him? Who took him and what did they do with him? We were scared for him in the village – we do not want to talk about politics again. We just want to live happily with each other (four Turkish-Cypriot men and women of working-class background who also speak Greek). We just want peace."

Similarly, this is what some Greek Cypriots (three working-class women in their sixties, from the same village, who also speak Turkish) had to say:

> "I do not think he should go to the village again. Why should he be putting himself in danger especially when the Turkish Cypriots think that he is stirring up trouble? Does he want to get killed? We cannot bring his father and grandfather back. They are gone. If we really want to live peacefully with each other we cannot stir trouble again.
> First Author: What do you mean?
> Women: Well, perhaps the Turkish Cypriots killed them. So, what can we do now? Are we going to bring them back? Excavating these issues does not create peace, but more war. We are afraid for him."

These narratives are all guided once more by an ontology of fear, anxiety, and passive resistance as if the silence about the disappearances of people is not a political intervention. More so, these narratives articulate and we argue mobilise anxieties and fears about the "repetition of violence" and the instigation of war that, ultimately, demand a response. How does one gesture to these narratives as attempts to express accumulated and collective racialised, class, gendered unspeakable traumas? As Cho (2008) argues when speaking about the Korean diaspora, "an unspeakable trauma does not die out with the person who first experienced it. Rather, it takes on a life of its own, emerging from the spaces where secrets are concealed" (p. 22). In Cyprus, and we experienced this first hand, such anxiety and fear were mobilised during the 2004 referendum and were incorporated into a dominant ethno-nationalist narrative which chooses to erect itself on the social divisions of class, gender, sexuality, and race by sustaining in place the Greek "us" and Turks "them" political dichotomisations. Such dominant discursive regimes, embodied through the state, the

medical establishment, the market, the educational and media structures, redirect us to fixing the past instead of loosening from it the fluid possibilities that do not foundationally depend on the death of many for a security of the few. Pausing and remembering the force of the accumulated and collective traumas is a way to consider the sort of relations we want and are willing to live and work for.

Perhaps Nicos' mother talks of the innocence of her father because she thinks, as a member of the left herself, that her husband, a member of the right, played a role in the coup that immediately preceded the invasion. The tensions between the intra-racial/ethnic right and left Greek-Cypriot parties regarding the Greek junta coup are still informing the ways that discourses and possibilities unfold. Whether those on the right who supported the assassins of the communists, the socialists and Turkish Cypriots are themselves considered assassins remains an open question. Whether those on the left still "remember to forget" and how is still a festering question, a material fragment, if you will, in Cypriot relations. We know that these issues are festering questions still, especially when we look at the unfolding of different moments. During and/or after the Annan plan the political leadership moved to effect the political landscape of Cyprus (i.e. the hegemonic resounding of NO to the referendum, and the loss of the centre liberal party in the Republic of Cyprus with the counter-hegemonic election of the communist party). This tension must be continually reassessed and reconfigured as the social relations in Cyprus shift and become restructured. The ambiguity of this moment is engendered not only by the uncertainty of the guilt of Nicos' mother but also of his own affects (he tells us that when he sees injustices on the soccer field that he rages and he beats up people in defence of justice). Are there still injustices in the Republic of Cyprus even when the north and the south do not rule together? *Who* are those who continue to generate injustice to him, his family, and his society?

Sexualized (T)errors and Displacements

Much of the discourse around the missing and its contingent traumas is introjected into the ethno-hyper-muscular-virile-nationalist discourses and practices and centralises on the bodies of women. It seems that those bodies in trauma are mobilised to cite the injuries of the nation/the state but without accounting for "the uneven distribution of exposure to and security from trauma and the directions and intensities of violence within those distributions" (Clough and Halley, 2007, p. 282). The way in which we read the narratives above and below points to how the articulation of the national family itself as injured, facilitates, develops, submerges and/or redirects capacities and exposes some bodies to further insecurities, traumas and "intensities of violence" (Clough and Halley, 2007, p. 282).

Epistemologically, the naturalisation and even displacement of socially constructed beliefs or modes of being as transhistorical and immutable, plays a crucial role in certain forms of racialised, gendered, and classed trauma, like those depicted in *the narratives of Greek and Turkish Cypriots, which ultimately, enable the reproduction of social structures that hold different people and their*

own visions of life subordinated. Perhaps, the fear of speaking up by those living in Cyprus is really the fear that the same series of violations are ready to explode on their bodies again and again at any moment, which brings us back to the point that there is a passive acceptance of a peace that is not really peace, and of bodies that although they seem secure, stable, and whole, are not really. The assertion that Nicos should not return to the village and demand explanations enables yet another unfolding of "displacement".

Similarly, in relation to the narratives around the loss of the missing, the Greek-Cypriot women we interviewed in Cyprus in 1993, 1995, and 2002 did not volunteer any information about sexual violence against Greek or Turkish-Cypriot women during the 1974 war. When the first author broached the topic, they expressed concern that discussing such violence might endanger themselves or those who had been attacked. A 50-year-old Greek-Cypriot working-class woman who originally came from a mixed village said:

> "What's the point of bringing up the past? We were all, both women and men, incarcerated in two rooms in our village. The women were put in one room and the men in another. One night several Turks and Turkish Cypriots showed up and grabbed four women. Some of the mothers were pulling their daughters by their arms and screaming and shouting at the soldiers. The soldiers, pointing guns at the daughters, angrily told the mothers to let them go. You know what happened after that. You know (gesturing to a woman who is sitting two doors down)? She is married now with children but she still carries the 'weight'. Do you understand what I mean?" (Interviewee 24, 1993, p. 5, cited in Agathangelou, 2000).[10]

Despite framing the violence by expressing hesitation to talk about it, the trauma of specific bodies here that are "still carrying the weight" comes to present an alarming relation that troubles the ethno-virile-hyper-muscular-nationalist discourse of "protection". Simultaneously, this narration of sexual trauma facilitates the reorganisation of bodies to "shut up" about such uneven distributions of violence: specific bodies were raped and those bodies are still with us – a reminder that the shelter of domestic life is a myth dissolved along with the entire domestic sovereignty/economy of the Republic of Cyprus. The collapse of the boundaries of family/familiar relations and ethnic relations dissolves and such bodies are obliged to seek refuge not in national/familiar contexts but perhaps, even in direct confrontation with them and their dominant stories.

Another 62-year-old Greek-Cypriot woman said the following when asked about her experiences of trauma during the 1974 war:

> "My husband was killed in our village and I wore a black dress once they killed him.
> First author: Who killed him?
> The Turks. These same men closed me in a bathroom and there was another woman from my village whose daughter was raped in front of her and they killed her father in front of

10 See Agathangelou (2000).

> her. Then they came for me while I was in the bathroom in this one house ... they captured us and held us for three and a half months. When I asked for this friend of mine, a Turkish Cypriot, he came and brought me tea. I joked to him: 'You brought me the tea of death', and he responded: 'You are lucky because they were planning to kill you ... but the Red Cross can take you to the south now'."

In the above narrative, this Greek-Cypriot woman testifies that Turks killed her husband in her village. Simultaneously, a Turkish Cypriot protected her. This narration disrupts the dominant understanding that ***all*** are equal under the eyes of the state. Even when her own construction of the story is still based on the "loss" of her husband and can be introjected into the ethnic-virile-hyper-muscular-nationalist narrative, she still disrupts it by juxtaposing the Turk that killed her husband and the Turk that protected her. The discourse is still patriarchal and yet, it contains an alternative, marginalised story that is subversive to the familiar/family/ethnic/nationalist one: the us and them (Turk and Turkish Cypriot) and also the idea that national and domestic space can be safe havens. Her narration could (and it has within dominant discourses) be introjected into those practices that consolidate and manage different populations: the Greek- and Turkish-Cypriots' bodies have longer claim to Cypriot sovereignty/sovereignties and thus, are legitimate heirs of Cyprus whereas the Turk of Turkey does not.[11] For instance, despite the collapse of the intact national and domestic family, the collapse and violation of heterosexual relations (i.e. men and women separated by war) and disruption of virile-hyper-muscular-ethno-nationalism(s), the Republic of Cyprus operates to shift these displacements and violences by metaphorising the traumas and drawing on them to re-make anew the Cypriot family, the domestic site, and body economies and spaces. It accomplishes this by marking the traumas in a way that facilitates its sovereign power within the international community/order: by marking Turkey, as the former brutal invader and still the implacable enemy of Greek Cypriots, and, especially, of women. For example, several pronouncements by the state of Cyprus centralise the discourse of rape against women under the category of "ethnic cleansing":

> "The atrocities of the Turkish army included wholesale and repeated rapes of women of all ages, systematic torture, savage and humiliating treatment of hundreds of people, including children, women and pensioners during their detention by the Turkish forces, as well as looting and robbery on an extensive scale, by Turkish troops and Turkish Cypriots" (cited in Agathangelou 2000; www.kypros.org/Cyprus_Problem/overview.html).

This intervention by the state is a governance "management" practice that includes efforts to both recover *and* forget the 1974 war rapes of Greek women. Remembering sexual violence against women is articulated as a metonym for ethno-national power and it is a method to draw upon

11 See for instance, around the discussions of Turkey as a "foreign coloniser". This discussion deems a longer and much more complex engagement that we do not have space to discuss here.

international resources for "health". In this fashion, ethno-nationalist discourses subordinate gender and ethnicity to an idealised masculinised ethno-national group. As institutions in other contexts, the state of the Republic of Cyprus shows signs of "progressive intentions" (Anderson, 1983). It raises the issue of rapes during national wars but only to demonstrate its "good" victim status internationally. As with Anderson's approach to nationalism, the Greek-Cypriot state fails to acknowledge that women's bodies become sites of domination in the constitution of any ethno-nationalism, and that the elite powers of postcolonial states objectify them. The Greek Cypriot ignores that the individual testimonies of rapes are not mere fodder for proof of violence for and/or against the dominant national history. In fact, women who are interested in being raised to the witness stand to testify are doing so to stop such atrocious experiences before, during, and after war (*Calling the Ghosts* depicts such a public intervention).

Writing these traumatic relations points to the disruption and displacements of how the social relations and rituals of daily life are fundamentally altered. These narratives form a picture of a state, of different subjects and bodies, grappling with displacements today. They also point to the ways in which writing itself can be introjected into managing traumatised populations by acting as a humanising and feminised practice to the hyper-muscular-ethnic-virile-nationalist establishment rather than *an antagonist* one in an intimate relation between a political economy and a politics that seeks to manage the trauma of Cypriots, their injured economies and states in the process of remaking and realigning them with worldwide shifts. This writing is an intervention to disrupt these dominant economies of trauma, state relations, ethnic and sexual relations. It is a struggle to push ourselves to look at the "fictions" that we hear including those produced daily as the truth. Through the writing of this article we want to systematically make connections out of those resonant and troubling places, fragments, bodies, traumas, memories and relations that are non-redeemable by any means, by any progressive ethno-racialised-project. A project and a narrative which is busy figuring out its newer practices to organise and facilitate other relations – other redefinitional approaches, thereby engendering the kind of historic action(s) we associate with the heroic/muscular/virile/ethno-racialised-national protective agency of the state, the domestic family, and the hetero-patriarch.

Writing in this way enables us to ask questions of these shifts in governance and of the troubling places, fragments, bodies, traumas, and memories. It allows us to recognise that what the reproduction of social relations could entail, and how the trauma itself would be mobilised – including the specificity of those relations as imagined even by the state – is an open question. It is an open question in the sense that even out of a memory of dispossession, coercion, killing and disappointments, alternative possibilities can flow to defy the dominant notions that the only viable social formations are those whose constitution depends intensely on violence. Thus, our approach to displacement and trauma requires more than just what we call "identitarian blaming" (i.e. it is the Greek and the Turk's fault/fold, it is the state's fold/fault; it is the women's fault/fold; it is the bourgeoisie's fault); rather, we must begin to think in terms of relations occurring simultaneously to "metastasize" in its many forms of violence and not merely the killing of bodies,

the loss of virility, the loss of national and other power in a capitalist-patriarchal context. We began this intervention (production) of a countermemory by not arguing that trauma is an indicator of displacement and violence of family, social, or bodily relations, which it is, but also by gleaning together the structural material formations of those violences including the narratives to show that alternative memories that trouble these dominant epistemologies arise out of the past and in conjunction with the displacements of every subsequent present and demand the centralisation of the struggle of, and against, a system that wants to colonise everything and everybody including imaginaries. These are still questions for those who are interested in developing a political ground adequate for responses to (neo) colonialisms.

What, for instance, if "displacements" are not what happened just in 1958, 1963, 1964, 1967 and 1974 but they are also shaping the formation of the present right now as the partitions have opened and as Cypriots of all ethnic backgrounds attempt to deliberate a future together in the European Union, and as Cypriots participate in the further privatisation of their "homes" and their states? What, if "peace" as discussed above in our narrative with Greek and Turkish Cypriots, can be as uneasy and oppressive as war? "Peace", as it is institutionalised is not an easy "home" to which we return and it does not take away the doubts we harbour about our social relations. Thus, as the narratives from these women and men put forward, returning home and finding the disappeared people as an essential feature of "peace" is impossible to come to terms with for communities displaced by war and structural violence, such as exploitation, oppression, and even ontological annihilation (Agathangelou, 2009). The series of conflicts and war in Cyprus, necessitated by larger forces such as neo-liberal capital – all in the name of progress and development of a modern nation-state and market – is intricately tied to the ways in which market and state driven structures of "white but not quite" supremacy racialise particular bodies and deem them expendable "cannon fodder" at moments of conflict, war, and even in more "peaceful" periods. Racialised and gendered violence seem to be integral to the functioning of the international political economy, not an exception. What is required to counter such social structures? We argue that it is first a process of anamnesis, that is, a recuperation of the historical and fundamentally the arbitrary nature of categories of understanding including the "*taking over" of struggles*.

The Productive Capacities of Technologies of Displacement

the missing
the way loss seeps
into neck hollows
and curls at temples
sits between front teeth
cavity
empty and waiting
for mourning to open
(Suheir Hammad, 2001)

Hammad argues that "the loss" does not go away. It sits there like a cavity waiting for mourning to open, perhaps, the conscious horror of conflict and war, which seems to be "safeguarded" in a configuration of ongoing present violences and losses. In an article published by BBC News, there is a picture of Marios Kouloumas, who was 10 years old when his father disappeared, juxtaposed with a photograph of three women who are holding photos of their missing sons, husbands, and brothers. One of those women, Kouloumas states, is "my mother at a demonstration of the relatives". He goes on to say that "we always ask about the fate of our people and we will never stop" (Rainsford, 2006).[12] Similarly, this article presents a series of images and evidences to give "life" to the social problem they are addressing: the excavation of bones and the gleaning together of the missing of Cyprus. According to John Tagg, photography is one of the technologies that is central to the management techniques of man, a technology that is productive of subjects.

> "Whatever the claims of the traditional evaluations of such photographic 'records', whatever the pretensions of the 'humane' and documentary tradition, we must see them now in relation to the 'small' historical problems with which Foucault concerns himself: problems of the entry of the individual into the field of knowledge, of the entry of the individual description, of the cross-examination and the file. It is in what he calls these 'ignoble' archives that Foucault sees the emergence of that modern" (Willse, 2008, pp. 241-242 citing Tagg, 1993).

We argue that technology is productive of the displacement of social problems but also of its intervention to produce the subject of trauma anew. It is "a tool taken up by the [health worker] in support of the central, intersubjective tasks" (Willse, 2008, pp. 241-242). Willse (*ibid*., p. 242) who studies technologies such as the Management Information Systems programme used by the US to "deal" with homeless populations engages with social work and argues that:

> "Social work is always already technologized. The use of technology in social work neither enhances nor degrades a core or true practice of the service provider, but rather, the act of service provision is a set of technical operations for the disciplining of the subject. Recognizing this moves us toward an understanding of technology as productive, or constitutive. Here I do not mean to fall into technological reductionism or social constructivism, but to point to the indistinguishability of the technological and the social when we think both in terms of the organization of matter toward its openness to intervention ... the interdisciplinary field of surveillance studies usefully takes up the productive capacities of the social and technological. While this literature often picks up on anticapitalist technophobic themes, it also draws attention to what information technologies of surveillance create and make possible, not simply what they corrupt."

12 Sarah Rainsford (21 November 2006) 'Bones of Cyprus missing unearthed'. UK: BBC News. Available from [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/6166560.stm], accessed 10 March 2008.

Similarly, we argue that the desire to use the technology of the DNA now to access the missing peoples could be a displacement of the larger social problem (i.e. the life and death of people within sovereign states) and also constitutive of something anew. Willse (*ibid.*, p. 243), following Foucault, argues that in this moment there needs to be a new technology that facilitates the formation of new subjects with a focus on the "resources and life chances in arenas of health, education, employment, consumption and civic life". Similarly, we are also arguing that through this disciplinary management (i.e. the psychodynamic model of case management) and control more enclosures are thrown open. This tool is directed "at the human subject, the body and soul of that subject, and its relationship to other subjects in space" as opposed to "biopolitics, [which] seek ... to regulate the social or collective processes of life, death and productivity across a population" (Foucault, 1978, p. 139; See also Foucault, 2003, pp. 239-264). "Together, discipline and biopolitics function to bring biological objects and processes into political and economic calculation; discipline does so by addressing the animal body of individualized man whereas biopolitics does so by addressing the species body of the total population" (Willse, 2008, pp.243).

Drawing on DNA to locate the bones of the missing, the state depends on the medical establishment. This is how Cypriots struggle, contest and engage this new form of discipline and biopolitisation that seeks to regulate processes of life, death, productivity, etc. A 50-year-old Greek-Cypriot woman shared the following about her missing husband:

> "The years are passing very fast. I am still waiting for him. Now, he has 5 grandchildren and I want him to see how they are beautiful like him. He is going to come. They did not find his bones after my sons gave their DNA. I feel as nobody cares and nobody knows of our pain and suffering behind closed doors. The black clothes I am wearing represent the blackness of my heart."

Saturated with the logics of management, control, and even internalised colonisation, these subjects struggle to puncture the displacements on the collective, familial, and also bodily relations while recognising that such technological penetrations do not leave behind "winners". The medical establishment takes DNA as "a tool" and uses it to participate in "intersubjective tasks" while promising "closure" about the problem of the missing. Its viability at this moment depends, and "function(s) at the level of a population organized by a socio-technical apparatus of [state] agencies, social policies, service providers, databases and networks. The surplus created by [DNA programs] is a ... population ... biopolitics manages the population by organizing the biological species as a population plane of intervention ... This is not a population as a representation of 'the people', but rather a plane of intervention formed from the raw material [of missing and other Cypriots] that draws bodies back into itself" (Willse, 2008, p. 245). While numerous Cypriots celebrated the testing of DNA to ascertain who was killed during the many displacements in Cyprus and to determine whether someone is dead or missing as a strategy of moving forward, many others challenge and/or say no to this drawing out of raw bodily matter because they are perhaps refusing to become the living surplus of the remnants of the series of conflicts and war in Cyprus and are

even perhaps resisting another kind of familiar "displacement" in their everyday routinised lives. Giving DNA as the united Nations and the state expects to help "put to bed" the issue of the missing does not eradicate the displacements that people are facing daily, especially if they are struggling to make ends meet (Sant Cassia, 2005; Yakinthou, 2008; Saoulli, 2007). Indeed, the penetration of this newer productive governance technology seems to be about incorporating and encrypting the Cypriots as specific populations and Cyprus "for governance and as governance" (Willse, 2008, p. 247) within the new emerging international order rather than transforming them into weapons of mass discussion.

The Greek-Cypriot leadership's recent position regarding those involved in bi-communal projects opens the space to ask once again, "why these particular narratives, and why now?" Collapsing bi-communal bridge-building efforts with the Annan Plan, the political leadership announced, "that anyone who had received money to support this plan should publicly commit suicide to serve as an example to others" (See Drousiotis 2005 for this statement by Pittokopitis). Such public appeals or "public figurations" of trauma document a crisis within the Cypriot context and politics: an ideological conflict between different nationalisms (e.g. mono-nationalism, bi-nationalism, trans-nationalism) and the emerging sense of a Europe without borders, with which every citizen of Cyprus is expected to join. The political leadership attempts to offer this translation of the country's crisis by appealing to a long-standing, and sometimes valid, narrative of external powers or agents (i.e. the US, the UN, and the EU) who are involving themselves via funding for bi-communal initiatives. The leadership in this case points to the fact that many of the persons involved in bi-communal programmes and activities also supported the Annan Plan (Christou, 2006; *Cyprus Mail*, 30 October, p. 13) as evidence of a betrayal, or heresy to the national cause, punishable by the cardinal sin of self-murder.

These claims silence further the structural complicity of the political leadership in sustaining in place the socioeconomic and political inequalities between different communities in Cyprus including the displacement of their struggles for just communities where violence is not the constitutive element of social relations. In essence, the state is obfuscating and mythologizing the political economy of conflict and division within the island while trying to signal the money interests behind any plan. This is a new layer of meaning which draws upon a plethora of easily recognisable symbols in which to code its nationalist politics and traumas, simultaneously harnessing a politics of re-traumatisation while repressing any meaningful, critical, therapeutic, or public examinations of the effects of struggle: *travmata*. The state's discourse erases and/or marginalises the fact that violations and violences are not mere results of external "superpowers" and imperialists like the United States and its contingent agents like the United Nations – which they are – but they are also the results of local alliances and complicities with such powers to push and sustain in place, albeit contradictorily, power structures and regimes and their contingent (dis)eases. Finally, the integration of Cyprus in Europe challenges the narrowly punctuated ethno-nationalisms and problematises their homogeneity, so much so that it drives us to engage once more the coping mechanisms of national and individual traumas crucial in the co-creation of a

new imaginary, necessitated by the larger process of globalisation and the entry of Cyprus into the "new" Europe. For instance, the humanitarian intervention since 2004 "by the United Nations' (UN) Committee for Missing Persons (CMP) in locating and exhuming bodies buried in mass graves all over the island" (Yakinthou, 2008, p. 15) though ridden with tensions (as stated previously) has reopened inquiry about the violence of nationalist powers and their contingent interests. More so, this inquiry has pushed to the surface the struggles, violences and affects such as pain in the formation of communities. Shifts in epistemological understandings are beginning to happen as a result of the work of these communities and also from a series of legal cases such as those of Christofis Pashas and Charalambos Palmas against the Republic of Cyprus "for withholding information on the whereabouts of their missing loved ones" (Yakinthou, 2008, p. 16) and the case of Varnavas a.o.v. Turkey "regarding its responsibility to assist resolution of the missing persons issue in Cyprus" (*ibid.*). Thus, it is timely to turn these discourses and other critical ones into weapons of mass discussion about the ways our communities are formed and shaped. Let us conclude with a discussion of the epistemologies and the positionality of mental health practitioners themselves.

As a Way of Conclusion: Moving from Control and Governance to Tracing Possibilities for Transformation

What do the narratives shared by displaced families say about traditional models of conceptualising, and treating, trauma? Clearly the refugee phenomenon is not ensconced exclusively in the domain of psychology. Refugeedom intersects political (including domestic and foreign policies), religious, ethnic, sociological, financial, and ecological dimensions (e.g. where refugee housing is constructed, etc.) (Papadopoulos, 2001). What approach takes into account these dimensions, and permits helping professionals to also locate themselves in the context of the service systems in which they belong? We argue that a politico-economic, systemic approach that also accounts for the constitutive aspects of trauma and subjects is most appropriate. As Papadopoulos (2001) asserts, "systemic approaches are useful in working with refugees because they can sharpen the professionals' epistemological sensitivity and inform them about the interaction of the various narratives that each one of these systems uses to express itself" (p. 406).

Many, though certainly not all displaced peoples, experience chronic anxiety, panic attacks, and myriad somatic complaints when facing the intractable stresses of not knowing the fate of a loved one and not being able to return to their homes. Such symptoms can be quite distressing, and the persons experiencing them, or their immediate family, appeal to doctors and psychiatrists for medication to treat the symptoms. For approximately 20% of displaced persons, such indicators may be only the tip of the proverbial iceberg of ongoing-traumatic stress. As described by one interviewee, a psychiatrist operating from the medical model may prescribe pills for outward physical signs without asking about the larger familial, community, and sociohistorical contexts of the person's distress (Greek-Cypriot refugee, 45 years old, working class). This

individualisation, or atomisation, of patients/clients' experiences makes the medical model a useful epistemological tool especially in contexts and at moments when the treatment of events and approaches to civic problems becomes atomised.

Even when a clinical diagnosis of traumatic stress can be accurately made, albeit within the individualistic medical model,[13] there is a gap between a "post traumatic stress disorder" (PTSD) approach to refugees and the lived experience of refugee families (Weine *et al.*, 2004). While many Cypriot refugees appear to exhibit symptoms of PTSD (Agathangelou and Killian, 2002), few Cypriot refugees view their experiences within a framework of diagnostic criteria, PTSD treatment, or a clinical/medical model of trauma and recovery. One Greek-Cypriot male, for example, who scored significantly above the "clinical cut-off score" required for a diagnosis of PTSD, denied that war traumas played any role in his current state and situation. Conversations with this man revealed that he had experienced a range of severe traumatic episodes, including interrogations and beatings while imprisoned by Greek Cypriots, plus threats to his life, digging his own grave, and searching cemeteries for his missing, now confirmed dead brother. His chronic anxiety, anger, foreshortened sense of future, inability to hold a job, and a host of other problems and symptoms readily indicated a PTSD-like syndrome, but he and his family discounted any such *clinical* interpretations. In a context where family is the focal point (Killian and Agathangelou, 2005), family members are more likely to see the manifestations and costs of war trauma through a family lens (Weine *et al.*, 1997). We concur with Weine *et al.*, (2004) that for displaced peoples whose homes and communities have been ripped from them, family could be one of the social institutions, albeit with many contradictions, for making claims about social relations within our communities. We want to go further and argue that other public institutions can be just as crucial (e.g. one's party, the state, and/or non-profit organisation). What then are the options for transforming trauma other than through pills and diagnoses?

Instead of handing out prescriptions of medicine, helping professionals can provide opportunities for trauma survivors to express their pain, fear and anger at the perpetrators, the state, or even at mental health service agents and agencies and to also engage more with the (t)erroristic practices of different registers (i.e. the state, the family, the medical establishment, the relation of the state with international organisations). A focus group of refugees did in fact state that rather than expecting Cypriots to self-identify clinical needs and then get up and go to the offices of mental health professionals, the professionals could visit the communities in an outreach

13 Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a problematic DSM-IV diagnostic category because the stresses associated with an unresolved event producing profound discontinuity (e.g. losing one's home and all possessions), or an ongoing experience, such as socio-cultural oppression and discrimination (e.g. such as that experienced by displaced or politically persecuted peoples, or ethnic minorities), represent continuous conditions or circumstances, and this situation combined with the possibility of vivid flashbacks, raises the question of whether the symptoms can be designated as occurring "after" or "post" an event(s) still happening now.

capacity and facilitate large group discussions there, basically creating the possibility of inquiring into those grey areas of social relations (i.e. healthy modes of living) and to disrupt the idea of them being "damaged goods". As the family is central to Cypriots, creating spaces in community settings where extended family members can discuss the vast changes that conflict, war, and even global changes have now brought and are bringing to their family system would be a more appropriate approach. Topics of discussion at such meetings might include the difficulties associated with losing one's continuity with the past through displacement from one's home, possessions, and community (Agathangelou and Killian, 2002; Zetter, 1999); the dissonance encountered at the nexus of the ethno-nationalist push to "NOT forget", the personal prohibitions of "I don't want to talk about it" or "I cannot burden my family with the terrible things only I experienced", and the familial injunctions, often from the next generation, of "Don't talk about the past/the war". It is hoped that such an outreach would create spaces for *therapeutic witnessing* (Papadopoulos, 1996, 1998). In the context of "ordinary conversations" about unpleasant experiences of destructiveness, a therapist is present to listen with minimal facilitation as a "human witness", allowing persons to thaw trauma and reconnect various parts of their personal and collective narratives (Papadopoulos, 1998, p. 472). When people come together and engage in "ordinary" dialogue about events and experiences – both the ordinary and extraordinary – they can begin the process of regenerating a sense of trust, and in some circumstances shed what is often an illusory isolation in their traumatic experiences including that their "disappointed hope" may be productive of an alternative "setting" of alternative relations. It is through this process that the therapist comes together as a member of the community/ties s/he is part of, to collectively participate in the process of working with memory to loosen the fluid possibilities and fluid alternatives from the becoming of the past that point to other worlds other than the dominant ones.

What constitutes a transformative, just process? One research participant wrote on the last page of our questionnaire for the 2002 study, "Thank you – I feel better now", indicating a degree of appreciation for having been able to share a part of her experience of the war. Telling our stories, in public or private spheres, can be therapeutic at the personal and larger systemic levels, and such communication challenges the ontology of fear and insecurity guiding modern politics, including the need to legally prove – and in the logic of the executioner – the violence that the executioner(s) have committed. Hence, a distinction of proof and witness becomes significant as an entry point into a struggle and transformative process. Articulating intertwined sets of events which disrupted one's positionality within multiple communities, including their systems of thought and imagination, may be crucial toward a shift of one's ontological grounding. Even when speaking publicly does not provide "emotional or personal transformation" (Cvetkovich, 2003, p. 2), our reticence and hesitation to question the social status quo carry their own costs in our lives and communities.

Researchers like James Pennebaker (Cohn *et al.,* 2004; Ramirez-Esparza and Pennebaker, 2006; Pennebaker and Seagal, 1999) have examined the relationship between written disclosure (under secure and predictable conditions) of traumatic events and consequent physiological and

psychological change. They found that participants in their study who chose to write about traumas showed an improvement in immunological functioning, greater reduction in subjective distress, and fewer health centre visits than participants who wrote about trivial events. Furthermore, participants who included both "facts" and emotions around those "facts" were able to experience fewer health problems than those who included only the "facts." Brown and Heimberg (2001) evaluated Pennebaker's paradigm by focusing on the trauma of rape, arguing that the participants who included "the facts" and the emotions surrounding those facts in their writings experienced less severe symptoms of dysphoria and social anxiety. Thus, an alternative to simple medication or psychotherapy's "talking cure" might be the *writing* and/or story telling cure.

In what contexts can the "writing cure" be effective? A recent study suggests that emotionally disclosing writers accrue measurable benefits even in cyberspace. Sheese, Brown and Graziano (2004) found that e-mail implementation of Pennebaker's emotional disclosure paradigm of writing about one's trauma was an effective tool for enhancing health outcomes when compared to an email-based control group. This study's findings suggest that opportunities for processing traumatic experiences could be provided to persons who would not be accessible otherwise[14] (persons in rural areas, with little or no public/educational access to computers/internet), though it would be more likely to target younger populations – those having access to and comfort with computers, and those with the ability to purchase connectivity. Even so, the idea of being able to provide therapeutic benefits via the Internet without public testimonials or traditional one-on-one psychotherapy in an office is exciting and worthy of further exploration, especially in a context where therapy is still considered with suspicion.

Finally, the helping professionals' own tendency to subscribe to the discourse of refugee trauma may not be all that helpful. How prevalent is traumatic stress in refugees? Twenty-eight years after the war, 22% of a sample of Greek-Cypriot refugees appeared to be suffering from traumatic stress symptoms (Agathangelou and Killian, 2002). This finding is consistent with other studies of refugees and trauma survivors (Johnson and Thompson, 2008). In studies of Cambodian refugees, Gong-Guy (1987) found 16% and Clarke *et al.,* (1999) found 22% were diagnosable with PTSD twelve and fifteen years, respectively, after their displacement. In a study of Bosnian refugees, Thulesius and Hakansson (1999) found a PTSD prevalence of 18%. The literature, therefore, suggests that as many as four out of five of survivors of war trauma in general (and 78% of Cypriot refugees, in particular) do not develop PTSD. In addition, while Loizos and Constantinou (2007) found a possible link between refugee status and a greater probability of cardiovascular illness and depressive illness in displaced Cypriots, the relative wellness of Cypriot refugees when compared with the 'demographic shock' victims of post-socialist Europe between 1989 and 1995 suggests that refugees are not rife with disease and disorder, but frequently demonstrate good health outcomes. These findings speak to resilience, an alternative to the

14 In rural communities, story telling and conversation can be useful starting points for public dialogue.

dominant discourse of traumatisation. While older age and female gender are risk variables for developing PTSD after exposure to war trauma, other factors such as social support, family solidarity, and education may serve as protective factors following displacement (Agathangelou and Killian, 2002; Johnson and Thompson, 2008). Is there room for a discourse of resilience in refugeedom?

As Papadopoulos (2001) posits,

> "the wider social discourse around refugee trauma: pervades our whole social fabric. The media, politicians, and the general public have been saturated by the trauma discourse to the extent that all assume that, more or less, all refugees are 'traumatized'. The word 'trauma' ... tends to mobilize people ... politicians take various forms of action (from offering aid to ordering military action) when faced with the movement of massive proportions of 'traumatized' population" (p. 409).

It is crucial for mental health practitioners to recognise the ways in which they relate and engage with subjects. This process is itself one of intersubjective relations and thus, practices such as reflexive positioning, and close examination of the ways health practitioners use tools (such as subscription to the refugee trauma narrative) may become productive in a way that does not kill people. In fact, there are times when trauma precipitates positive growth or a kind of rejuvenation or renewal (Salter and Stallard, 2004; Tedeschi *et al.,* 1998). Tedeschi and Calhoun (2004) state that, "reports of growth experiences in the aftermath of traumatic events far outnumber reports of psychiatric disorders" (p. 58). The changes include new possibilities for one's life, a greater sense of personal strength, spiritual development, greater appreciation for life, and relationships that are not constituted only through violence. Engaging the negative connotation of trauma in this paper has pointed to the role of violence as a central technology for, and of, governance and how the static retelling of an event by the state encourages an entrenchment, a "refusal to mourn and move on" that fixes in place the past or nostalgises it. However, this "refusal to mourn and move on" may not be exactly the same refusal for everyone; a refusal by those who embody the effects of violence may be an ongoing struggle to re-establish community and to imagine other futures, albeit those that at times require quite discomfiting conversations within and between the two communities. Our talking and writing about the *productive aspects* of trauma, especially in a larger social context where ample support has been present – or if interrupted, has been effectively reconstituted – is an attempt to examine closely those composites of our present communities and use these examinations as weapons of public deliberations about alternative embodiments and practices frequently marginalised by international organisations, the market, the state and their technologies of governance. While many therapeutic approaches, focused on pure utility, may intentionally or unintentionally support the political status quo, other systemic approaches such as narrative therapy (see White and Epston, 1990; Sluzki, 1992) and inquiry encourage therapists to make visible these dominant discursive strands and to release space for those subaltern families' and communities' practices as ongoing struggles of viability and vitality. Practitioners, guided by a

systemic approach, acknowledge and engage larger social and political systems and go beyond being agents of social control and governance to becoming agents of social transformation who work collectively to trace transformable just forms of life (Killian, 2002). It is hoped that our narratives of refugeedom and trauma can move from being a touchstone measuring our patriotism, and a tool for maintaining rigid dichotomies of us and them and galvanising ethno nationalist discourses against the Other, and become weapons of social deliberation and struggle that generate just worlds.

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