THE PERSISTENCE OF REFUGEE CONSCIOUSNESS – THE CASE OF GREEK-CYPRIOT REFUGEES

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Abstract

With an emphasis on assimilation, the refugee literature has not extensively studied why some refugee groups retain a distinct 'refugee consciousness' for years and generations after their dislocation. Using quantitative and qualitative data from interviews with 100 children of Greek-Cypriot refugees, bomafter their families' displacement in 1974, this paper explores the causes and explanations of refugee consciousness and elucidates its persistence. The findings reveal the central role of the family in the transfer and support of refugee consciousness. Moreover, explor- ing further the "depth and strength" of refugee consciousness, the paper shows that the latter is grounded in a feeling of loss, as children continue to mourn for what their families lost as a result of the dislocation.

Being internally displaced since the 1974 Turkish invasion of Cyprus, Greek-Cypriot refugees have been noted to retain a sense of their separate refugee identity for years after their dislocation (King, 1980; Loizos, 1977, 1981; Zetter, 1985, 1994, 1998). Having fled to safety in the southern, government-controlled section of the island, Greek-Cypriot refugees "lost" many facets of their previous identity, as they were forced to abandon everything they had ever known and which gave them a grounding in the world - their places and way of life, houses, status, property, fam- ily, and friends. The plethora of losses endured by Greek-Cypriot refugees as a re- sult of the 1974 dislocation, as well as the difficulties they faced while trying to re- build their lives, such as finding employment and acceptable housing, have been viewed as responsible for the persistence of their separate identity (Loizos, 1981; Zetter, 1994).

A sense of a separate identity, however, has also been noted among the children of Greek-Cypriot refugees. Differentiating refugees who directly experienced dislocation from their descendants, the separate identity of generations born after dislo-cation will be termed 'refugee consciousness'[1] instead of 'refugee identity.' In-

ternationally, little research has been devoted to studying refugee consciousness, partly because most of the research on refugees focuses on the early stages of the refugee experience (Stein, 1986). Similarly, the descendants of Greek-Cypriot refugees born after the invasion have not been the subjects of a major study. The purpose of this paper is to explore the refugee consciousness of children of Greek-Cypriot refugees in an effort to understand its causes and explanations.

Given the exploratory nature of this study, the data used was collected by using a variety of techniques - the primary method being that of focused interviews. In-depth interviews carried out with 100 children of Greek-Cypriot refugees born after the dislocation, plus their refugee parents who since the invasion reside in the government-controlled section of the country (a total of 200 people, 100 households), provided the qualitative and quantitative data used in this paper. The interviews were conducted in the families' homes by the author, between the months of August and November, 1996. Only children of refugees between the ages of six and twen- ty-two were included in the study to ensure that the interviewees were old enough to understand the questions asked (six years old) and that they were born after the invasion of 1974 (twenty-two years old). Interviews were attempted using the oldest child still living in the home who met the age criteria. There were 67 girls and 33 boys in the sample.

Both fixed-answer and open-ended questions were used in the focused interviews allowing for both a quantitative and a qualitative analysis, thus enriching the research (Zeise!, 1991; Babbie, 1995). The paper heavily relies on the analysis of the children's qualitative answers.[2] Following the approach of Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton (1981) in devising categories of meaning of objects in a house, the author grouped responses of similar reasoning into the same category, thus allowing for the exploration of the dimensions that inform refugee consciousness.

As the data used was collected as part of a larger study that examined the impact on refugee consciousness of living in public housing, the sample included 25 households in each of the four housing types in which Greek-Cypriot refugees have been re-housed (government estates, self-help housing, Turkish rehabilitated housing, and private housing). Information collected included demographic and current housing characteristics, as well as the importance of the lost villages, cities, and houses left behind, whether or not the children would want to return and live there (and why), and whether or not they think about this past (and why). Children were also asked to draw the houses their families left behind.

The data confirmed the existence of refugee consciousness among children of Greek-Cypriot refugees twenty-two years after the 1974 dislocation. When asked whether or not they considered themselves to be refugees, most of the children in

the sample (60%) identified themselves as refugees - 37% said they were not refugees and 3% said they did not know whether they were refugees or not. En- countering people who identity themselves as refugees implies, following the in- ternationally accepted United Nations' definition, that those people are outside the country of their nationality due to being persecuted (United Nations, 1951). Having been born and raised in the country of their nationality and not being subject to per- secution, the children of Greek-Cypriot refugees who participated in this study do not fulfil the criteria of being called a refugee. Not conforming to the definition how- ever, did not prevent these children from identifying themselves as *refugees.*

Prior to endeavouring to explore refugee consciousness, two final issues must be highlighted. The first is that the paper retains in the analysis two original Greek words: *topos* and *xenos.* Even though both of these words have English transla- tions - "home" and "foreign" - some of the meaning and strength of the words gets lost. *Topos,* for example, is used in Greek interchangeably to mean "place" and "home," while *xenos* has stronger connotations and implications than the word *for- eign* when used in English. In Greek, the phrase *xenos topos* hides underneath it a level of pain and sorrow that is tied to cultural discourses of permanence and lo- cality. In an effort not to get "lost in translation" (Hoffman, 1987), I opted to retain the original Greek words.

The second issue that needs to be kept in mind is that by focusing on the con- struction of refugee identity among descendants of refugees, the paper does not ex- amine national/ethnic identity. Aspects of one's identity are often intertwined, such as political beliefs, religion, and profession (Naff, 2000). Even though becoming a refugee might accentuate one's national/ethnic identity due to the feeling of differ- ence that is derived from living among people of another ethnic/national origin (Camino, 1994; Markowitz, 1994; Mortland, 1994), or the animosity directed to the group responsible for one's refugeehood and the right to statehood (Roberson, 1992),.for the purposes of this paper, refugee identity has been separated and ex- amined on its own. The reader should note that comments regarding the animosi- ty/togetherness between Greeks and Turks in this paper are used with reference to their impact on refugee identity/consciousness construction and have no further po- litical connotations. Readers interested in Greek/Turkish discourses for national/ethnic/historical/political claims to the island of Cyprus would find little in- terest in this paper.

The Role of the Family

Having never experienced life prior to the invasion or the places their families left behind, children of Greek-Cypriot refugees could only learn about the past from secondary sources. Most of the children in the sample (88%) thought about the lost

places "at least once a week." A summary of the sources that prompted children to think about the occupied places was offered by a 17 year-old girl: *"Like now with the demonstrations [child is referring to the demonstrations of August 11 and 14, 1996 in which Tasos Isaak and Solomos Solomou were ki/led], my father talks to us, I ask him and he explains what happened. The other day they brought some pictures from Assia [occupied village], it was my aunt's house and I took them to look at. The place we store them is easy [in a cabinet in the living room] and I look at them be- cause I like the way my family lived then. Even if the pictures were stored in a dif- ficult place to reach, when you like something... [child implies she would look at the pictures even if retrieving them was time-consuming]. Whenever I am in the living room, even if I don't want to think about Assia, I remember it because we have the map of Assia there [map is framed in the dining room]. Sometimes I go closer to see how the village used to be.....When vii/age gatherings take place there is one arranged for our village too and we take part.[3] The news, the media, help us re- member. For three weeks in a row the families of the missing people used to go and show the pictures of Isaak and Solomou to the tourists" and then I remembered my village, Assia. The radio informs us when something happens and television has programmes about the occupied places. My father watches them and we sit and watch them too. We want to know what is going on because we did not get to know the occupied places."*

When asked to specify who talked to them about the occupied village/city, children reported between '0' and '9' sources, with the average number of sources being 3.13. As shown in Table 1, among the sources mentioned were the child's parents, grandparents and other extended family members, teachers, other refugees, plus books and television.

Table 1
Sources From Which Children Learned About the Occupied Place by Number of Children

Sources	# of children
Refugee parent interviewed	94
Other parent	49
Maternal grandmother	41
Other relatives	32
Maternal grandfather	23
Paternal grandmother	22
Teachers	17
Paternal grandfather	11
Books	8

Other refugees	5
Television	4
Village gatherings	4
Other	3
Siblings	2

It appears that teaching children of the past occurred on three levels: the family, the local, and the national level[5] with the primary transmitters of refugee consciousness being the child's parents. The following is an elaboration on the sources mentioned.

The Family Level

Parents

As Table 1 illustrates, parents were the number one source from which children learned about lost places. This finding establishes the central role of a child's parents and family in forming a child's consciousness. The influence of parents on a child's refugee consciousness was clearly expressed in the words of this 19 year-old girl in explaining why she was a refugee: *"Hearing from my parents that they are refugees, I also feel a part of myself [as] a refugee."* Beginning early in their lives, children are spoken to about their parents' experience. According to a 16 year-old girl: *"I like it here but I don't feel very happy because we can't live in my mother's and father's village – since we were little they have been speaking to us [about the occupied village] and so I feel nostalgia."* Talking about their occupied house with her parents, made the occupied house acquire importance in the life of this 19 year-old girl: *"I know the house [occupied] was very important. From what my parents tell me, they make it very important to me."*

Family discussions about the occupied places start out of anything as mentioned by this 12 year-old girl: *"If we say: 'We are going to play a game' they [family] will say: 'We played [that game] in our village too' and they thus start to explain their games and the conversation gets bigger [child implies the conversation carries on to other aspects of village life]. We ask: 'Do you want to buy an ice cream?' and they will say what kind of ice cream they had in their village, that it was good, that the ice-cream shop was located at the edge of the village, and the discussion will go on."*

Extended Family

Extended family members, such as grandparents and other relatives, were also

important sources from whom the children learned about the occupied places. The stories heard by this 12 year-old girl from her grandmother made her think about the occupied place when she went to bed at night: *"At night, when I go to sleep, I try to bring back pictures and all the characteristics which they say are nice.....Stories I heard from my grandmother. I imagine her as a young girl dancing the apricot dance with the other girls [a celebration in the occupied village of Agios Ambrosias which was known for its apricots], I think of my mother playing with her siblings be- cause I know many such stories."*

Objects

Upon fleeing, refugees were often able to bring with them items from the homes they left behind. These items were often valuable and irreplaceable in the lives of these families. Displaying these objects in their homes or storing them for protection, families transferred to their children the value of these objects and the places they came from. Teaching children of the family's past and experiences, the objects acted as reminders of the lost places as well.

The number of objects reported by the children ranged from '1' to '9,' with the average being 2.04 objects. Pictures were the object cited most often (23 children), followed by gold jewellery (12 children), clothes (8 children), bed covers (5 children), furniture (5 children), silverware (4 children), kitchen utensils (4 children), keys (4 children), electronics (4 children), embroideries (3 children), diaries (2 chil- dren), and bags (2 children). Other items such as a motorcycle, a watch, a fan, a sewing machine, a lamp, coins, and wall pictures were mentioned by only one child each.

Objects gained importance from several dimensions. Pictures enabled children to learn about the occupied places, as this 21 year-old woman explained: *"Since I don't know anything, even seeing for me is important. Even with the pictures I learn something."* Through the pictures children learned how life was in the occupied places or how their parents looked when they were young. Pictures were also a symbol, a proof that their families used to live at one time in the occupied places. Furthermore, pictures depicted an earlier generation in the clothes they used to wear.

Similar reasoning gave importance to diaries written by their parents, which contained accounts of childhood years and related everyday experiences including those from the invasion. Jewellery became important because of its uniqueness in design - old designs no longer found today. Importance was also derived from objects being a tie to the past, such as a dress, which was the only item one girl treasured to remind her of how her mother dressed when young. Even common items

like a fan, blankets, and keys grew in importance to children. These objects acted as both reminders and proof of their link to the past and of the things now lacking in their current lives (like a yard and a place to play).

The Local Level

Other Refugees

Most of the children interviewed (72%) considered spending time with people from their occupied village/city as an important aspect of their lives. The most com- mon reason that prompted children to view spending time with people from the oc- cupied place as important was to learn more about those places (37 children). As a 12 year-old boy said: *"From them I learn other things which maybe my father did- n't explain to me, something I don't know."* Another 13 year-old boy said that it was important to spend time with people from the occupied city of Ammochostos (Fam- agusta) because: *"If I forget Ammochostos or don't know something about Ammo- chostos, they will remind me of it."* Similarly, for a 12 year-old girl it was important to socialise with people from the occupied village of Lysi because: *'They are older and I can ask them to tell me stories of the times when they were young in Lysi or how they did at school."*

Spending time with people from the occupied place ensured some children that they would not forget the places their families came from (9 children). According to this 20 year-old woman: *"When those people from Ammochostos [occupied city] gather, they talk about their topos which means they don't forget it was our topos."* For a 16 year-old girl it was important to spend time with co-villagers because: *"If we didn't socialise we would forget our roots, that we are refugees, that we are from Kondea {occupied village] and that our co-villagers are from Kondea, not just Larnaca [current place of residence]."*

Other Activities

Other activities in which children were involved also taught them about the occupied places. These activities included the girl/boy scouts, dance clubs, and choirs run by the associations of the lost places which refugees formed. A 16 year- old girl scout explained how she learned about the occupied places: *"I* am *a girl scout and we have a leader who is very patriotic and even though he* is *not from the occupied places when he finds a chance, either with slides or with pictures he pass- es it [his knowledge and patriotism] on to us. And so I believe that when they talk about the occupied places, your feelings become reinforced. Or when anniver- saries or other events happen my parents take every opportunity to describe the occupied places."*

Soccer teams also proved to be an important tie to the past. Both the occupied cities of Keryneia and Ammochostos along with many of the villages have pre- served their sports teams, such as their soccer teams, basketball teams, and oth- ers. The importance of Anorthosis, Ammochostos' soccer team, was noted by a 15 year-old girl: *"The Anorthosis soccer team is ve,y much tied to Ammochostos. At the football games, people my age sing songs about Ammochostos instead of Anorthosis. We love our city and Anorthosis preserves that feeling. My children [that she will have in the future] will also feel that they are from Ammochostos."*

The National Level

Teachers

Implemented through the Ministry of Education in all schools in the government-controlled section of the island, the program "Γνωρίζω, δεν Ξεχνώ, και Αγωνίζομαι" (I Know, I don't Forget, and I Struggle) has among its goals: a) to help students learn about the occupied places, b) to keep the memory of the occupied places alive, and c) to cultivate the hope and longing for the return (Cyprus Ministry of Ed- ucation and Culture, 1994). The Ministry assists teachers by providing items, such as books on the subject, like the book 'Δεν Ξεχνώ' (I Don't Forget), maps, posters, and notebooks with pictures of the occupied places. Almost half of the children in- terviewed (42%) said that their teachers at school talked to them about the occu- pied place their families came from.

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The media

As part of the national plan to keep the memory of the lost places alive, televi- sion along with other media (radio, magazines, etc) have programmes that refer to the island's occupation. Political talks and resolutions on the now labelled 'Cyprus problem' reported in the evening news are daily reminders of the occupation. Moreover, special documentaries are shown throughout the year, such as the an- niversary of the invasion.

Books

There are many publications about the lost places among them some involving history books and books published by village/city associations that describe life pri- or to the invasion. Books were another source of information for some of the chil- dren, like this 12 year-old girl: "*I know the church [of the occupied village] from books about the occupied places. I take a book like 'To Kypriako Anthologio' and my first thought is to open it and find something about Agios Ambrosias or the dis- trict of Keryneia [occupied areas] and see some pictures."* Even children as young

as 9 years-old used books to learn about the lost places: *"I look through books and I see Morphou [occupied village], like the book 'I Don't Forget' and I remember the words of my grandmother."*

Songs

Even though songs were not directly reported when children were asked what prompted them to think about the occupied places, songs were mentioned in other answers and were noted on the children's drawings. Yiorgos Ntalaras, a Greek singer, became *very* popular in Cyprus after working with the Cypriot choir of *Dias-. tasis* to create the album 'Ev rriv Evall.iav Kunpov' (For the Sea-rising Land of Cyprus). This album is based on poems written by Cypriots for the occupied places, the war, the missing people, and those who died in the war. A 15 year-old boy wrote the words of a popular song by Ntalaras on his drawing to express his feelings of living in a divided country: *"My own country has been split in two - which of the two pieces am I supposed to love?"*

An Identity Grounded in Loss

In transferring the identity of a refugee to their children, families also transferred the feeling of loss. Even though all of the children in the study were born after their families' displacement, children continued to mourn for what their families lost as a result of their displacement, grounding their refugee consciousness in the feeling of loss: the loss of home and roots, the loss of social network, the loss of continuity, the loss of property, the loss of a house, and the loss of a loved one.

Loss of Home and Roots

When asked where they come from, 79% of the children in the sample men- tioned an occupied place. Being their family's topos as well as origins and roots was the primary reason the lost places were important in the lives of these children. A 15 year-old girl explained when asked why the occupied place was important to her: *"It is a part of my life. I feel that I am from there, it is my topos there, my roots. Everyone's topos is important to them."*

Being their parents' birthplace made the lost places the topos of some of the children. According to a 13 year-old girl: *"No matter how far away you are, your topos pulls you. Even though I wasn't born there, I Jong to go too because my parents were born and raised there."* And according to a 10 year-old girl: *"I wish I hadn't lived a single moment here but lived in the occupied place instead, because my mother lived her childhood years there. If I didn't know this place at all, I wouldn't mind but I want to go and live there, it's where my parents lived their childhood*

years."

For some children, not living at their parents' birthplace prevented them from feeling that their current place was their topos: *"My parents were born elsewhere, we should be living elsewhere, not here, because others lived here before."* In similar terms a 13 year-old boy explained why his current place was not his topos: *"My whole family doesn't have any roots here. Their houses, their topos are all in Ammochostos [occupied city]."*

According to a 19 year-old boy: *'Topos is a place where the family stays forever, to become emotionally attached to the place, to know each other, to know that everyone - my grandfather, my great-grandfather - have lived there forever. Here we didn't know anyone, we had to start from the beginning."* And, while explaining why his current residence could not be his topos, he said: *"There are no ties to the past."*

Loss of Social Network

Family

Being close to all the relatives and friends who after the war have been dispersed all over Cyprus was one of the reasons children mourned the loss of the occupied places. A 15 year-old girl wanted to live in the occupied place *very* much because: *"I think of all the happiness we would have if one day our topos is freed and we go back, I would have all my friends, relatives, and cousins close-by."* Another 21 year-old woman felt sad because: *"I would like to live in my parents' village, to grow-up there.....And, all my relatives would be close, whereas here we came alone. I like life in a village because everyone is close-by."*

Community

Even though Cyprus is a small island, people of different regions have a different way of life. To others, a man or a woman from Cyprus may be a Cypriot, but to the Cypriots themselves., h e/she is a Lysiotis, Kondeatis, Varosiotis (from the village of Lysi, the village of Kondea, the city of Ammochostos respectively). Cypriots are proud of the places tl:ley come from and refer to others as 'xenous,' outsiders, people without the same way of thinking.

The invasion and the dislocation however, led to the break-up of these established communities and the loss of the familiar social networks on which one could depend. Even though many refugee families tried to move close to other refugees from the same place, it was not always possible and only 77% of the families in the

sample had as neighbours other refugees from the same occupied place. The refugee housing projects posed additional problems as 42 new communities were formed with people unknown to each other and from different socio-economic back- grounds. Moreover, with the influx of refugees, 58.8% of the villages in the gov- ernment-controlled section of the country (190 villages) saw their populations rise over the limit of 10%, the target over which smooth community life is disturbed (Pa- papetrou, 2000). This mixing of the population scarred the island's traditional so- cial fabric and now problems, such as drugs, infidelity, and crime are not uncom- mon in Cyprus.

Therefore, experiencing life with people of the same background and way of thinking was another reason children mourned the loss of the occupied places. A 16 year-old girl wanted to live in the occupied house in order: *'To live with the peo- ple, to live first hand the way they lived, their hospitality, their customs, and what- ever they did."*

Loss of Continuity

Being children of refugees, some children tended to see their current residences as temporary, as a makeshift place to stay while waiting tor the return. This lack of continuity prevented them from identifying the places where they lived as 'home' and left them longing for stability and permanence in their lives, virtues that would be found if they could live in the occupied places. According to a 10 year-old girl, the occupied village *"is the village where I would have lived, whereas this one is not my village, it is temporary."* Similarly, living in the occupied place would give this 19 year-old man the stability he currently lacked: "*I want to feel more stable, to know that I will grow up there, make my house, have my property, and not have to think about where I will go to high school, lyceum, where to work, etc."*

Loss of Property

When asked about property lost to the war, families mentioned land (70%), build- ing plots (28%), orchards (27%), businesses (17%), livestock (13%), and even farming equipment (6%). In addition, almost all of the families (99%) mentioned los- ing a house. With home ownership being one of Cyprus' most highly valued norms, it was difficult for the 75 families of the sample living in government-provided refugee housing which at the time of the interview was owned and maintained by the government.[6]

Revisions in government-provided housing had to be approved prior to being funded. Frustration with the approval process intensified the feeling associated with losing a house that was owned. A 15 year-old boy living in government-provided

housing thought about the occupied house: *'When I can't do something to this house, add a second bathroom for example, which I could have done in the house in Lysi [occupied village]. Then I say: 'Where is the house in Lysi?'.....I want to live there, in the house in Lysi, because I believe it would be better. That house would have been mine and I could have done what I wanted with it. I have never felt that this house is mine, they gave it to us, it belongs to the government, my father and mother did not struggle to build it.....The occupied house has been built by our peo- ple.....They did not give it to us, we would love it more, it would feel like ours, we don't feel that this house is ours."*

Lack of ownership and legal title caused insecurity as some children felt that their families could be asked to leave. As expressed by this 13 year-old girl: *"I prefer to live in the occupied house because it is ours. These houses belong to the govern- ment and any time they want, the government can take them, they are not ours."* Feelings of uncertainty were even more intense for children whose families were re- housed in the housing vacated by Turkish-Cypriots as they moved to the occupied north. A 21 year-old woman felt sad when she thought about the occupied house because: *"Now we are refugees and live in a Turkish house, it is not ours, at any time they can come and ask us to leave.....A few months ago the Turkish owner came and saw the house and so we feel that it doesn't belong to us but to some- one else who can come and kick us out. And so we are constantly afraid, we don't feel the house is ours, we are afraid that at anytime they can ask us to leave from here."*

Deprived of their material resources, many Cypriot refugees cannot adhere to the traditional dowry pattern according to which the bride's family provides a house or a large amount of money to the daughter upon marriage. As houses are part of a bride's dowry, girls in the process of building their house are affected by not having access to their property. A married 20 year-old woman who lived with her parents while waiting to build her own house explained the difficulties she was facing: *"I am building my own house now and I have to pay for it myself whereas if I were at my topos I would have a plot on which to build and I would sell another plot to pay-off the house. Now my parents have given me a little money and I must pay off the house myself."*

Loss of a House

The 1974 Turkish invasion made homeless 40% of Greek-Cypriots and led to the loss of 36.2% of the country's housing stock (PIO, 1990). The urgency to re-house the refugee population resulted in Cyprus' first attempt at public housing. Govern- ment-provided refugee housing took the form of government estates, self-help housing, and Turkish-Cypriot housing. Government estates involved townhouses and apartment complexes constructed and maintained by the government in areas

close to urban centres. Self-help housing involved families being given a plot of land, a house plan, and financial assistance towards constructing and maintaining a small, single-family house in designated areas, mostly in villages. And lastly, Turkish rehabilitated housing involved housing units vacated by the Turkish-Cypri- ots as they moved to the northern occupied part of the island.

When asked to compare their current house to the occupied one, 33% of the children thought their current house was not as good as the occupied house. Among the reasons cited by children for preferring to live in the occupied house, were prob- lems relating to the lack of bedrooms in the current house, which they felt would be resolved if they could live in their occupied home. Being built economically and fast, the government-provided housing units in the sample had a lower mean number of bedrooms compared to private housing, 2.84 versus 3.32. As the average number of children of the families in the sample was 2.45, the government-provided refugee housing did not meet the prevailing standard of having one bedroom for each child or having two children of the same sex share a bedroom (Hadjiyanni, 1999). An 18 year-old girl thought of the occupied house because: *"It was much nicer than the one we have now..... I would have my own bedroom, it would be a more comfort- able house, and my dream is to have a large, two-story house just like the occupied house...../ feel happy when I think about the occupied places because I know that when we go back I will find something that I will like a lot.....I hope that I will go to Pirga [occupied village] to live in the house. I feel sad and bitter knowing that there is something better there that was mine and I can't have it now. I have the right to have my house, it belongs to me and the Turks took it from us against our will. They forced us to leave, we didn't leave of our own free will and abandon it. As soon as you get out of Kiti [a village close to her current village], there is a house like our oc- cupied house, and I tell my friends: 'This is how my house was' and I feel happiness because I can see how nice it was. And my friends say: 'Did you have such a nice house?' although some may not believe me. I feel proud that I have the other house and when I go to a similar two-story house I say: 'That's how my house was'."*

Other children mentioned differences in the structure type of the two houses (the occupied versus the current) as the reason they preferred the occupied house. Government estates consist primarily of attached units and apartments, whereas the prevalent structure type on the island for dwellings is that of the single-family detached dwelling (Cyprus Department of Statistics and Research, 1992). For an 11 year-old girl who lived in a two-story government-estate duplex, the ideal house was a free-standing structure similar to the occupied house: *"Outside, my ideal house, should be the same as the house in Assia [occupied village]. It was two storeys, it had a garden, and on the second floor it had a small balcony.....When my friends talk about their houses, I don't know what to say. Most of my friends know that I am a refugee and they do not ask me about my house. I don't say much*

about this house, I tell them: 'My good house is in Assia'."

The presence of a yard was also important, especially for young children. A 7 year-old boy living in a rental apartment would like to live in the occupied house because: *"It has the things we don't have here, it wouldn't be an apattment building, it would have room for me to play...../ want to live better and the occupied house has a yard and shade, and it has many trees."*

Loss of* a *Loved One

The invasion resulted in 1619 people missing, many of them civilians. Of the families in the sample, 10% had lost a loved one as a result of the invasion. A 21 year-old woman explained how growing-up with a missing person in the family was difficult: *"I have an uncle who is a missing person and we often think of him and talk about him. We wonder if he is alive, where he is now, and whether he has a family.....I wish for a solution to be found so we can go back to our houses soon, and find my uncle who is a missing person. It is so difficult for my grandfather whom I see everyday and who wants to see his son. My grandmother died from sadness at not being able to see her son."*

Understanding Refugee Consciousness

By using quantitative and qualitative data from interviews with 100 children of Greek-Cypriot refugees born after their families' dislocation, this paper established the central role of the family and in particular, a child's refugee parents, in forming and supporting the child's refugee identity. Being instrumental in the transfer of refugee consciousness, family members communicated verbally to the children their refugee experience and the pain that accompanies the loss of important places. Moreover, parents urged their children to socialise with other refugees and to participate in school activities or other programmes which involved the occupied places; purchased books about the lost places; formed organisations about lost places and attended meetings and events, and displayed in their homes objects brought from those lost places as constant reminders.

Whilst transferring their refugee identity to their children, families also transferred the pain associated with all they lost as a result of being dislocated, grounding the children's refugee consciousness in the feeling of loss. By adopting the feeling of loss, the depth and strength of children's refugee consciousness was further sustained. Children of Greek-Cypriot refugees mourned for not being able to visit their origins and roots; not being able to live among people with the same way of thinking and customs; not being able to live at a permanent place; not being able to have access to their property; not being able to live in a house that they owned and liked

instead of public housing, and for losing a loved one.

Even though the study identified state policies, such as programmes in schools and the media, among the sources from which the children's refugee consciousness was sustained, their role was minimal in comparison to the role of the family. The central role of the family in the transmittal of refugee consciousness to a future generation is an indication of the trauma of being a refugee or a refugee's child. The study's findings allude to the magnitude of the problem of trying to assist the assimilation of refugees and the difficulties and obstacles that must be overcome. Agencies coming to the assistance of refugees and other displaced people should extent their efforts into assisting generations born after the dislocation and into creating programmes that help refugees and their descendants cope with what was lost.

Notes

1. The term 'refugee consciousness' has been used to explain continued claims for financial assistance on the part of second and third generation descendants of refugees (Hirschon and Thakurdesai, 1979).

2. Please note that the qualitative comments employed in this paper are direct English translations of the spoken narratives. The translation did not adjust the Greek sentences or words used to match the English sentence structure and wording.

3. Refugees try to retain ties to the lost places by forming associations, which as part of their activities hold gatherings throughout the year and publish books about the lost places.

4. Families of missing people and other groups stage weekend demonstrations next to the Ledra Palace United Nations' checkpoint in Nicosia, the main entry-point into the occu- pied areas, in an effort to inform tourists about the murders and to persuade them not to vis- it the occupied places.

5. "National" level includes policies that act as sources of remembering that arise on the state level, such as the programme "I Don't Forget" in schools. However, the heading was termed national level and not state level as it includes sources of remembering that are not determined or devised by the state, such as the songs of popular singers, books, and the media. Another differentiating characteristic is that the national level involves sources of remembering that apply to all Cypriots, regardless of origin and refugee/non-refugee status. This is in contrast to the family level whose influence is primarily confined to the household and the local level where origin is of primary importance.

6. Since the time of the data gathering in 1996 families living in government estates and self-help housing that was not built on Turkish land were granted legal title.

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