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**CYPRUSREVIEW**  
A Journal of Social Sciences

Spring 2025, Volume 37, Number 1

Published by the University of Nicosia  
ISSN 1015-2881 (Print) | ISSN 2547-8974 (Online)

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P.O. Box 24005  
1700 Nicosia, Cyprus  
T: 22-842301, 22-841500  
E: [cy\\_review@unic.ac.cy](mailto:cy_review@unic.ac.cy)  
[www.cyprusreview.org](http://www.cyprusreview.org)

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*The Cyprus Review*  
University of Nicosia  
46 Makedonitissas Avenue  
1700 Nicosia, Cyprus

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ISSN 1015-2881 (Print), 2547-8974 (Online)

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**CONTRIBUTORS**

**Themis Anthrakidis** is a PhD candidate at the University of Macedonia, Thessaloniki, Greece. He received a Master's degree in Economics from the University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands, a Bachelor's degree in Economics from the University of Macedonia in Thessaloniki and a Bachelor's degree in Laws from the Democritus University of Thrace, Greece. He currently works as a special adviser in the field of public economics. His main research interests are in Political Economy, Comparative Political Economy, Economic and Financial Crises.

**Nikos Astroulakis** holds a Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Crete. His position is based in the Tax and Customs Academy of the Independent Authority for Public Revenue. He also is a member of the collaborative academic staff in the Hellenic Open University. Nikos' main research interests are in Political Economy and Development Ethics. In his publications are included numerous book chapters and refereed journal articles. Part of his research has been awarded by Emerald with the "Highly Commended Award Winner for Excellence 2012" and with the honorable mention "Maestro Jesús Silva Herzog, Versión 2014" by the Instituto de Investigaciones Económicas Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.

**Stelios Hadjisavvas** is an adjunct faculty at the University of Nicosia (UNIC), Cyprus. His PhD research, at UNIC, examines shoulder injuries in handball players. He holds two MSc degrees, one in MSc in Musculoskeletal Physiotherapy (Manual Therapy) from UNIC and one in in Sports Physiotherapy from European University, Cyprus. He also received a Certificate in acupuncture from University of West Attica, Greece. His research interest include pain, fatigue and quality of life.

**Anthi Kellari** is a PhD candidate and laboratory collaborator at the Department of Physiotherapy, University of Thessaly, Greece. She studied BSc in Physiotherapy and awarded a Master of Science degree (MSc) in Advanced Physiotherapy, at the Technological Educational Institute of Central Greece. Her postgraduate education and her scientific interests include kinetic and kinematic analysis of human movement and geriatric rehabilitation.

**Giorgos Kentas** (PhD Vrije Universiteit Brussel, 2009) is Associate Professor (tenured) of International Politics and Governance at the University of Nicosia and Director of a Graduate Program in Public Administration. His research interests focus on strategic governance, strategic management, European governance and politics, theories of politics and governance, conflict management. He published in peer-reviewed

journals and written and/or co-authored a number of books. Currently, he works on a book on strategic management.

**Theodoros Kontakos** is an experienced lawyer practicing since 2017 at A.& E. C. Aimilianides, C. Katsaros & Associates LLC, specialising in criminal law, and has worked on various criminal, civil, administrative, immigration, ecclesiastical and real estate law cases. He provides legal representation and consultancy services, including work for ecclesiastical and bank institutions. He holds an LLB from the University of Nicosia (2017), a Master's in Educational Management from the University of the Aegean (2012) and a BA in Preschool Education (2010) also from the University of the Aegean. Additionally, he is certified in Data Protection (2020) and has attended multiple legal conferences on criminal law, international law, and legislative studies. He is fluent in Greek and English.

**Maria Kouvarou** holds a PhD in Music from Durham University. She published papers in *Popular Music*, *Popular Music and Society*, *Historia Critica*, etc. She recently completed the research programme 'MU.DI.RE' (funded by A.G. Leventis foundation), at the Department of Social and Political Sciences, University of Cyprus, where she is also an adjunct lecturer.

**Christina Michailidou** is the program coordinator of Physiotherapy at the University of Nicosia, Cyprus. She received her Masters and PhD degree from Brunel University and she held a post-doc position at UCL, London, UK. She is a specialist in Graded Exercise Therapy for Chronic Fatigue and has worked for years at King's College Health Partners and Royal Free Hospital, London, UK. Her interests include chronic fatigue, Long-Covid, burnout, chronic pain, quality of life and rehabilitation.

**Anastasia Papamichael** is a Partner at A & E. C. Emilianides, C. Katsaros & Associates LLC, one of the most prestigious law firms in Cyprus. She leads the firm's Public, Property and Criminal Law sectors and is also an active member of the Regulatory Law sector. Anastasia has broad experience in litigation before all Cypriot courts, as well as international courts. Regarding her academic background, Anastasia studied Law at Middlesex University and holds an MSc in Development and Security from the University of Bristol. She is currently a member of the Adjunct Faculty at the University of Nicosia, Law Department, and has previously served as an assistant lecturer in inheritance and property law for the Cyprus Bar Association's training program for trainee lawyers.

**Giovanni Parente** is a PhD graduate in History from Maynooth University and is a Research Ireland's "Government of Ireland" scholar. His doctoral thesis is supervised by Professor Ian Speller and is titled "The European Union at Sea: A Historical and Geopolitical Analysis of EU Maritime Operations and Their Impact on Maritime Governance and Security, 2008-2024". His primary research areas include maritime security, strategic studies, defence studies, and the European Union's security and defence policy, on which he has lectured for the Irish Naval Service, Irish Military College, Maynooth University, the Armed Forces of Malta and the Irish Department of Defence. Giovanni studied public policy in the Netherlands, international relations in the United Kingdom, and economics in Italy.

**Theoharis Stavrides** is an Associate Professor in the Department of Turkish and Middle Eastern Studies of the University of Cyprus. He holds a BA in History from Amherst College and an MA and a PhD in History from Harvard University. His research interests focus mainly on the study of the history of the early Ottoman Empire and the history of Cyprus during the Ottoman period.

**Irene-Chrysovalanto Themistocleous** works at the Physiotherapy program of the University of Nicosia (UNIC), Cyprus. She received her PhD from UNIC, her MSc in Cardiovascular Health and Rehabilitation from University of Chester, United Kingdom and her BSc from the European University Cyprus, Cyprus. Her interests include Cardiovascular rehabilitation, Pulmonary rehabilitation, Exercise and clinical population and Quality of Life.

**Stylianos Vrakas** is an undergraduate student in Primary Education at the University of Cyprus. His research interests include International & Comparative Education, Education Policy & Law, Curriculum Studies, Sociology & Philosophy of Education, History of Education, and Inclusive Education, with an emphasis on educational policy, social justice, and legal frameworks in education. He has participated in academic conferences and seminars on education and governance. Additionally, he is actively engaged in youth leadership and civic participation projects. He has gained research and project experience working with NGOs, contributing to policy-oriented educational initiatives.

**LETTER  
FROM THE  
EDITOR-  
IN-CHIEF**

**Dear Readers,**

As Cyprus confronts both constitutional questions and new regional and cultural challenges, *The Cyprus Review* remains committed to advancing critical, interdisciplinary scholarship rooted in the Cypriot experience. In January of 2025, the Journal issued its annual call for nominations for *The Cyprus Review Annual Book Awards*, which once again drew noteworthy new contributions to Cyprological scholarship. On 31<sup>st</sup> May 2025, the Journal also coorganised – together with the Research Office for Polity and Public Policy of the Cyprus Academy of Sciences, Letters, and Arts, the Department of History and Archaeology of the University of Cyprus, and the School of Law of the University of Nicosia – a symposium dedicated to the life and work of Rodis Roufos, diplomat, writer, and intellectual. Rodis Roufos-Kanakaris (1924–1972) was a distinguished Greek diplomat and author, who played an active role in the Resistance during World War II and later served in key diplomatic posts, including in Cyprus during the EOKA struggle. He was also a celebrated novelist and essayist, known for his literary translations and his principled stance on human rights and civil liberties.

This issue of *The Cyprus Review* brings together five diverse contributions that span constitutional law, EU diplomacy, financial crisis management, public health, and sociolinguistics, each engaging with Cyprus as a unique site of historical interest, cultural identity, and international significance. Alongside the island's long-standing political problem, come state-level developments and urgent societal concerns: from the lasting psychological toll of the COVID-19 pandemic on front-line professionals, to the evolving ways in which Cypriots express their linguistic and cultural identities in digital spaces. The Spring 2025 issue responds to this multifaceted agenda with scholarship that is both analytically rigorous and richly contextual.



We begin with Costas Stratilatis' (University of Nicosia) critical reassessment of the 1964 *Ibrahim* ruling by the Supreme Court of Cyprus, a foundational case in Cypriot constitutional jurisprudence. By engaging with the constitutional theory of Costantino Mortati, Stratilatis challenges the conceptual underpinnings of the doctrine of necessity. His critique sheds new light on the normative commitments implicit in constitutional interpretation.

In the second contribution, Giovanni Parente (Maynooth University) examines Cyprus' unexpected influence in shaping European Union maritime security policy. Through a detailed analysis of Cypriot participation in EU naval operations between 2008 and 2024, the article illustrates how a small island state has managed to assert diplomatic leadership, particularly during the 2012 EU Council Presidency and in the context of the *Amalthea* maritime corridor for Gaza. Parente's case study reinforces the view that strategic vision and normative alignment can yield real influence within supranational institutions, even for smaller member states.

Turning to economic policy, Themis Anthrakidis (University of Macedonia) and Nikos Astroulakis (Hellenic Open University) explore the political economy of the Cyprus bail-in, implemented during the 2013–2016 economic adjustment programme. Framed within both orthodox and heterodox economic theories, the article identifies a paradigmatic shift in EU crisis response, away from bailout models toward a neoclassical emphasis on moral hazard and individual responsibility. The authors situate Cyprus at a turning point in the evolution of European financial governance, raising important questions about policy consistency, solidarity, and distributive justice.

In the public health sphere, Christina Michailidou (University of Nicosia), Irene-Chrysovalanto Themistocleous (University of Nicosia), Stelios Hadjisavvas (University of Nicosia), and Anthi Kellari (University of Thessaly), offer an empirical assessment of burnout, fatigue, and job stress among healthcare professionals in Cyprus and Greece during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic. Using standardised measurement tools across a sizeable sample, the study reveals high levels of psychological strain and a direct negative correlation with quality of life. Their findings serve as a crucial reminder of the need for sustained governmental action to support and protect healthcare professionals, whose well-being is vital to institutional resilience.

Finally, Maria Kouvarou (University of Cyprus) delves into the intersection of language, digital culture, and identity with a study of how Cypriot Greek lyrics are

rendered in writing on YouTube. In a context where Cypriot Greek remains uncoded and unofficial, Kouvarou explores the stylistic and orthographic choices of lyricists who post their songs online. She asks whether these practices should be read as acts of cultural reappropriation and identity assertion, or simply as idiosyncratic visual transcriptions of oral performance. The article offers a fresh perspective on how language becomes a terrain for both aesthetic expression and socio-political meaning in the digital age.

Together, these contributions reflect the intellectual diversity and critical depth that define *The Cyprus Review*. Whether addressing legal doctrine, geopolitical strategy, economic paradigms, healthcare realities, or cultural representation, this issue affirms the enduring relevance of Cyprological scholarship to regional and global debates alike. As with every issue, this Spring edition is also enriched by our Book Review section, which features seven reviews of recent Cyprological scholarship.

As always, we extend our sincere thanks to our authors, peer reviewers, and readers. Your continued engagement makes this journal possible and sustains its mission to provide high-quality, interdisciplinary research focused on Cyprus and its place in the world.

**Christina Ioannou**  
**Editor-in-Chief**



# ARTICLES



# The Doctrine of Necessity in *Ibrahim*, the Material Constitution of Cyprus, and Costantino Mortati

COSTAS STRATILATIS<sup>1</sup>

## Abstract

*In Ibrahim (1964), the Supreme Court of Cyprus constructed a doctrine of necessity that allowed the Republic of Cyprus to survive without the participation of Turkish-Cypriots in State organs, even though the Constitution of 1960 was (and remains) based on such participation. The aim of this article is to critique the doctrine of necessity through the lens of the constitutional theory of Costantino Mortati, to whom Ibrahim refers. To do this, the essay first expounds Mortati's views on necessity as a source of law, on the material constitution, and on the constituent power, then offers an account of the material constitution of Cyprus as it evolved from the 1960s to the present day; finally, it offers a critique of Ibrahim. The main argument is that, not having paid close enough attention to Mortati's theory, the judges failed to make it clear that the fundamental objective of the Cyprus Constitution is the co-existence of the two communities on the island (Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots) through a power-sharing regime that provides ironclad guarantees for the rights of the Turkish-Cypriots. This consideration would have led the judges in Ibrahim to express, clearly and unambiguously, their commitment to bicomunalism. The same consideration, in combination with their commitment to the cause of democratic constitution-making, could have motivated the judges of the Supreme Court to condition the justifiability of the doctrine of necessity on a future exercise of constituent power by both Cypriot communities on an equal footing.*

**Keywords:** material constitution; doctrine of necessity; constituent power; Costantino Mortati; Cyprus Constitution

## The Doctrine of Necessity in Cyprus

The judgment of the Supreme Court of Cyprus in *Ibrahim* was delivered in November 1964.<sup>2</sup> This marked the end of the coexistence of the Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots in the constitutional institutions of the Republic of Cyprus, as the latter

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<sup>1</sup> Associate Professor at the University of Nicosia.

<sup>2</sup> *The Attorney-General of the Republic v. Mustafa Ibrahim & Ors* [1964] CLR 195.

was established in 1960. Such coexistence did not coincide with the original aspirations of either community. Greek-Cypriots had been fighting for *enosis*—the union of the island with Greece—since the 19th century, whereas in the years before independence, Turkish-Cypriots actively demanded *taksim*—the division of the island between the two motherlands.<sup>3</sup> The independent State of Cyprus was a precarious settlement based on a rather unstable equilibrium between the interests of external powers (including the UK, USA, Turkey, and Greece) in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East. The Treaty of Guarantee, one of the documents that established the Republic by putting it under the tutelage of external powers, prohibited ‘any activity likely to promote, directly or indirectly, either union with any other State or partition of the Island’.<sup>4</sup> However, this clause did little to suppress the original nationalist aspirations.

Under conditions of mutual suspicion, aggravated by the continuous armament of paramilitary groups, the leaders of the two communities adopted intransigent positions on the constitutional problems that continued to arise.<sup>5</sup> In January 1963, these

<sup>3</sup> For accounts of that period, see, *inter alia*, Robert Holland, *Britain and the Revolt in Cyprus 1954–1959* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); David French, *Fighting EOKA: The British Counter-Insurgency Campaign on Cyprus, 1955–1959* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015); Nancy Crawshaw, *The Cyprus Revolt: An Account of the Struggle for Union with Greece* (2nd edition, London: Routledge, 2022). For the long history of the *enosis* cause, see Robert Holland and Diana Markides, *The British and the Hellenes: Struggles for Mastery in the Eastern Mediterranean 1850–1960* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006); Andrew R. Novo, *The EOKA Cause: Nationalism and the Failure of Cypriot Enosis* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2021).

<sup>4</sup> Treaty of Guarantee, Signed in Nicosia on 16 August 1960, (1960) *United Nations – Treaty Series* 3, Registration No 5475, Article I. See also Constitution of Cyprus, 1960, Art. 181 (assigning constitutional force to the Treaty of Guarantee), Art. 185 (declaring that the territory of the Republic is indivisible, prohibiting the integral or partial union of Cyprus with any other state or separatist independence).

<sup>5</sup> ‘Each side was trying to interpret [the Constitution] in such a way as to suit its own ultimate objective: the Greeks so as to make of the republic a conventional unitary state, operating on traditional majority rule principles, the Turks so as to partition it and convert it into a federation or, preferably, a confederation’: Stella Soulioti, *Fettered Independence: Cyprus, 1878–1964, Volume One: The Narrative* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), 133. Soulioti was a Minister of Justice of the Republic of Cyprus in that period. Her account of the constitutional crisis of 1960–1963 remains a very useful source of information. Other accounts of the crisis include Robert Stevens, *Cyprus: A Place of Arms* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1966); Stanley Kyriakides, *Cyprus: Constitutionalism and Crisis Government* (Philadelphia Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1968); Richard A. Patrick, *Political Geography and the Cyprus Conflict: 1963–1971* (Waterloo: University of Waterloo, 1976); Brendan O’Malley & Ian Craig, *The Cyprus Conspiracy: America, Espionage and the Turkish Invasion* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1999); Diana Weston Markides, *Cyprus 1957–1963 from Colonial Conflict to Constitutional Crisis: The Key Role of the Municipal Issue* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001); Alan James, *Keeping the Peace in the Cyprus Crisis of 1963–64* (New York: Palgrave, 2002). For legal analysis of the events see Marios L.

problems brought the Republic of Cyprus to the brink of a financial and institutional collapse. In November 1963, President Makarios submitted to Vice-President Fazil Küçük his famous ‘Thirteen Points’,<sup>6</sup> a proposal for radical constitutional amendments which, if materialised, would have resolved the constitutional problems by depriving the Turkish-Cypriot community of their (unamendable) special veto powers under the Constitution of 1960. Turkey vehemently rejected these proposals. An armed conflict between the two communities soon broke out and led to the withdrawal of Turkish-Cypriot officials from State organs. UN Security Council Resolution 186 of 4 March 1964<sup>7</sup> called all States to refrain from action likely to worsen the situation; established the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP); recommended the appointment of a mediator towards an agreed settlement of the Cyprus problem; and, by asking the ‘Government of Cyprus’ to take all necessary measures to stop violence, indirectly recognised the legality of Makarios’ government as operating at the time without the participation of Turkish-Cypriot ministers. In the absence of Turkish-Cypriot MPs, the House of Representatives started voting for laws that contravened basic articles of the Constitution,<sup>8</sup> inclusive of the creation of a National Guard to which only Greek-Cypriots could be conscribed under the leadership of officers who came from mainland Greece.

The Administration of Justice (Miscellaneous Provisions) Law 33/1964 attempted to address the problem that arose after the resignation of the neutral presidents of the Supreme Constitutional Court and the High Court. In July 1964, the Greek-Cypriot legislators decided to merge those courts into a new unified Supreme Court composed of the remaining members of the two courts—three Greek-Cypriot and two Turkish-Cypriot judges. The preamble of Law 33/64 appealed to the imperative that ‘justice should continue to be administered’. It also vaguely mentioned a future exercise of popular constituent power: ‘it has become necessary to make legislative pro-

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Evriviades, ‘The Legal Dimension of the Cyprus Conflict’, (1975) 10(2) *Texas International Law Journal* 227; Thomas Ehrlich, *Cyprus, 1958–1967* (London: Oxford University Press, 1974); Zaim M. Necatigil, *The Cyprus Question and the Turkish Position in International Law* (2nd revised ed., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 33–75.

<sup>6</sup> ‘Proposals Entitled “Suggested Measures for Facilitating the Smooth Functioning of the State and for the Removal of Certain Causes of Intercommunal Friction”, Presented 30 November 1963’ in Stella Soulioti (ed.), *Fettered Independence: Cyprus, 1878–1964, Volume Two: The Documents* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006) 669–682.

<sup>7</sup> S/5575. For an account, see Oliver P. Richmond, *Mediating in Cyprus: The Cyprus Communities and the United Nations* (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 1998) 90–99.

<sup>8</sup> See Kyriakides (no 5) 113–115.



vision in this respect until such time as the people of Cyprus may determine such matters'. Law 33/64 was soon challenged before the new Supreme Court. In *Ibrahim*, a bench of the Court composed of the three Greek-Cypriots judges held that the law was constitutional, even though it was clearly repugnant of the constitutional rules that provided for the existence of the former two supreme courts (the law was also not published in the official Gazette in both languages, Greek and Turkish, as is required by the Cyprus Constitution).

*Ibrahim* was premised on the doctrine of necessity.<sup>9</sup> The three Greek-Cypriot judges (especially Triantafyllides) attempted to construct the doctrine not as an extra-constitutional source of legal authority, but as a legal principle that was inherent to the Cypriot constitutional order—specifically, as a principle that qualifies the supremacy clause of the Constitution (art 179). Triantafyllides argued that the survival of the State and the implicit constitutional obligation of State organs to fulfil their duties (in the case of Law 33/64, the duty of courts to deliver justice) have priority over strict compliance with specific constitutional rules—even those that determine the constitution of State organs—whenever exceptional circumstances, as the ones that the Republic was facing at the time, dictated so.<sup>10</sup> Interestingly, the Cypriot version of the doctrine of necessity empowered not the executive but the legislature (in its capacity as a representative of the people of Cyprus) to adopt necessary measures to meet the emergency. The deviations from the relevant constitutional provisions are

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<sup>9</sup> For accounts of *Ibrahim* and of the Cypriot doctrine of necessity, see Constantinos Kombos, *The Doctrine of Necessity in Constitutional Law* (Athens-Thessaloniki: Sakkoulas Publications, 2015); Christos Papastylianos, 'The Cypriot Doctrine of Necessity within the Context of Emergency Discourse: How a Unique Emergency Shaped a Peculiar Type of Emergency Law' (2018) 30(1) *Cyprus Review* 113; Polyvios G. Polyviou, *The Cyprus Experience: Constitutionalism, Fundamental Law and the Doctrine of Necessity* (Athens: Nomiki Vivliothiki, 2021); Achilles C. Emilianides, 'Cyprus' in André Alen & David Haljan (eds), *International Encyclopaedia of Laws: Constitutional Law* (Alphen aan den Rijn, NL: Kluwer Law International, 2024) 42–55. For critique of the Cypriot doctrine of necessity, reflecting the position of Turkish-Cypriots, see Kudret Özersay, 'The Excuse of State Necessity and Its Implications on the Cyprus Conflict' (2004) 9(4) *Perceptions: Journal of International Affairs* 31.

<sup>10</sup> See *Ibrahim*, 227 (Triantafyllides, J). For Triantafyllides, 'Article 179 [of the Constitution] is to be applied subject to the proposition that where it is not possible for a basic function of the State to be discharged properly, as provided for in the Constitution, or where a situation has arisen which cannot be adequately met under the provisions of the Constitution then the appropriate organ may take such steps within the nature of its competence as are required to meet the necessity. In such a case such steps, provided that they are what is reasonably required in the circumstances, cannot be deemed as being repugnant to or inconsistent with the Constitution, because to hold otherwise would amount to the absurd proposition that the Constitution itself ordains the destruction of the State which it has been destined to serve' (ibid 234).

considered justified, according to the doctrine, should they satisfy the following pre-requisites: (a) ‘an imperative and inevitable necessity or exceptional circumstances’ are present; (b) ‘no other remedy to apply’ exists; (c) the measure taken is ‘proportionate to the necessity’; and (d) the measure is ‘of a temporary character limited to the duration of the exceptional circumstances’.<sup>11</sup> The Supreme Court supervises the application of the doctrine and has the power to strike down legislation that does not meet these criteria.

Greek-Cypriot jurists, journalists, and the public at large are generally aware that the survival of the Republic of Cyprus as a State is owed to the doctrine of necessity, as combined with UN Security Council Resolution 186 (which figured prominently in the reasoning of *Ibrahim*). What Greek-Cypriots often underestimate is the grave price: the Republic of Cyprus survived only because it effectively lost its constitutional identity, its bicomunal character,<sup>12</sup> as permeating virtually all constitutional arrangements (which render the Republic of Cyprus an early instance of ‘consociational democracy’<sup>13</sup>). The doctrine of necessity permitted the functioning of State organs without the participation of the representatives of the Turkish-Cypriot community. Given its immense transformational effect, the doctrine of necessity has been read through the lens of the theory of juridical coups d’état.<sup>14</sup> Impressively, there are no traces of this fundamental transformation in the constitutional text. Indeed, when reading this text, one assumes that the Republic of Cyprus is unthinkable without the participation of Turkish-Cypriots across all aspects of public life. In reality, the doctrine of necessity permitted the functioning of the State without the participation of Turkish-Cypriots since 1963 (with the exception of Turkish-Cypriot judges, who abandoned their positions in 1965<sup>15</sup>). The gap that separates the constitutional text from constitutional reality is by definition a grave deficit in terms of the rule of law and functions as an enabling condition or as an alibi for the multiplication of several

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<sup>11</sup> *Ibrahim*, 265 (Josephides, J).

<sup>12</sup> See e.g., Catherine D. Papastathopoulos, ‘Constitutionalism and Communalism: The Case of Cyprus’ (1965) 16(1) *The University of Toronto Law Journal* 118; Nikolas Kyriakou & Nikos Skoutaris, ‘The Birth of a Republic, But Not of a Nation: The Case of State-Building in Cyprus’ (2016) 22(4) *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 456.

<sup>13</sup> See Christalla Yakinthou, *Political Settlements in Divided Societies: Consociationalism and Cyprus* (Basingstone, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

<sup>14</sup> Christos Papastylianos, ‘The Cypriot Doctrine of Necessity and the Amendment of the Cypriot Constitution: The Revision of the Unamendable Amendment Rules of the Cypriot Constitution Through a Juridical Coup D’État’ (2023) 17(3) *Vienna Journal on International Constitutional Law* 313.

<sup>15</sup> See Marilena Varnava, *Cyprus Before 1974: The Prelude to Crisis* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2020) 61–65.

states of exception on the island.<sup>16</sup> There is no such precedent for any other *democratic* regime.

The gap is so impressive, yet deeply entrenched in reality, that no one seems to be concerned about its perpetuation. This is so not least because the doctrine of necessity was good enough to save the existence of the Republic of Cyprus as a State but not good enough to exercise pressure on all actors for a gradual return to constitutional normality—either to the 1960 Constitution or to a new constitution that would be enacted through the exercise of democratic constituent power.<sup>17</sup> Judicial pressure towards constitutional normality could have taken the form of a strong recommendation, to be at some point inserted into the standard judicial formula of the doctrine of necessity, suggesting that, after so many years, the people or the peoples of Cyprus<sup>18</sup> should be afforded an opportunity to express their views on the continuation of the present state of affairs, the alternative being a new constitutional beginning, whatever it might be. Admittedly, this would be a bold move for a court and one that might have implications for Cyprus' international position. However, this exceptional situation warrants boldness. In addition, such a move would enhance the credibility of Cypriots in the eyes of international observers, given the stalemate of the negotiations for the resolution of the Cyprus problem. Finally, it would be only a recommendation, but one based on solid international practice and a complete understanding of the limitations of the doctrine of necessity.

Greek-Cypriot scholars emphasise that the Cypriot version of the doctrine of necessity is friendly to rule of law, bearing little resemblance to emergency doctrines

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<sup>16</sup> See Costas M. Constantinou, 'On the Cypriot states of exception' (2008) 2(2) *International Political Sociology* 145; Nicos Trimikliniotis, 'The Proliferation of Cypriot States of Exception: The Erosion of Fundamental Rights as Collateral Damage of the Cyprus Problem' (2018) 30(2) *Cyprus Review* 43; Nikos Moudouros, *State of Exception in the Mediterranean: Turkey and the Turkish Cypriot Community* (Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan/Springer Nature, 2021).

<sup>17</sup> See Costas Stratilatis, 'Stop Looking at the Moon: For a Democratic Constitution-making Process in Cyprus', Eastern Mediterranean Policy Note No 73, April 2022; cf. Costas Stratilatis, 'Avoidance of constitutional imposition and democratic constituent power in divided, conflict-ridden societies' (2018) 30(1) *Cyprus Review* 163.

<sup>18</sup> I shall not delve into the issue here other than to note that the Constitution of Cyprus makes no reference to a Cypriot people or to Cypriot peoples. The Turkish-Cypriot position has always been that there exist two peoples in Cyprus who may jointly or separately exercise their rights to self-determination. See Necatigil (no 5) 205–233. The Greek-Cypriot position, on the contrary, has always been that there exists one people of Cyprus, meaning that the right of self-determination may be exercised only collectively by all Cypriots. See e.g., Kypros Chrysostomides, *The Republic of Cyprus: A Study in International Law* (Athens/The Hague: Sakkoulas/Kluwer Law International, 2000) 50–51.

adopted in countries like Pakistan.<sup>19</sup> This is correct, to a certain extent. Still, by definition, the doctrine of necessity is an emergency doctrine, that is, a temporary measure. Thus, it should have been improved over time to become compatible with the democratic principle in order to pave the way for constitutional normalisation. In fact, this should be the purpose of all emergency doctrines that aspire to be legal and intra-constitutional.

The judges who served in the Supreme Court of Cyprus could have realised this if they had taken seriously an excerpt from an Italian textbook of public law that was cited in *Ibrahim* by Judge Josephides. The excerpt, translated into English at the very end of *Ibrahim*, is as follows:

While necessity, in a third meaning, which is that considered here, presents itself as a fact of autonomous juridical product, when it operates outside or even contrary to law, appearing by itself capable of legalising the act, otherwise illegal. Naturally for the production of that effect, necessity must have an *institutional* character, that is to say it must be deduced from the exigencies of life, from the purposes the political institution of the state is aiming at, that is to say of the juridical order to which appertains the organ operating on the basis of such source (*fonte*).

This function is justified by the fact that the existence of the institution is more important than the respect of the law, which is a mere instrument in the service of such institution (*fiat iustitia ne pereat mundus*).<sup>20</sup>

The author of this textbook is Costantino Mortati, an Italian constitutional theorist who was an influential member of the Italian Constituent Assembly after World War II.<sup>21</sup> Mortati's work, especially his theory of the material constitution, has recent-

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<sup>19</sup> Kombos (no 9); Polyviou (no 9).

<sup>20</sup> *Ibrahim*, 273, with the reference being to page 174 of the 6th edition of Mortati's *Diritto Pubblico* (1962). The authors of *Ibrahim* meant the 6th edition of Mortati's *Istituzioni di Diritto Pubblico*. I was able to locate the same excerpt in Costantino Mortati, *Institutions of Public Law I (Istituzioni di Diritto Pubblico I)* (10th edition, re-elaborated and updated, edited by Franco Modugno, Antonio Baldassare & Carlo Mezzanotte, Padova: CEDAM, 1991) 322–323. The other two notions of necessity to which Mortati refers in those pages are: (a) necessity in a generic sense, as 'motivating inspiration and as *raison d'être*' of every juridical act or fact, and (b) necessity as a requirement for the activation of a power that is provided by law (as e.g. in the case of legislative decrees that the government may enact in cases of urgent need). Mortati's analysis of necessity is part of a wider analysis of the sources of law.

<sup>21</sup> See Fulco Lanchester, 'Mortati and the "constituent Legislature"' ('Mortati e la "Legislatura costituente"') (2016) *Nomos: Le attualità nel diritto*, available at: <https://www.nomos-leattualitaneldiritto.it/nomos/fulco-lanchester-mortati-e-la-legislatura-costituente/> (last accessed 3.4.2025); Lucia Rubinelli,

ly attracted great interest in Anglophone constitutional theory.<sup>22</sup> In the remainder of this article, I shall first read the excerpt cited above in light of Mortati's theory of the material constitution. Then, I shall use this analysis as a point of reference for my critique of *Ibrahim*. Before doing this, I shall proceed to a brief analysis of the material constitution of Cyprus, as it evolved from the 1960s onwards.

## Overview of Mortati's Constitutional Theory

Mortati critically engaged with the thought of the great constitutional scholars of the Weimar Republic—Carl Schmitt, Rudolf Smend, Herman Heller, and (by way of constant antithesis) Hans Kelsen. The Italian scholar was also influenced by the work of Santi Romano, who is considered the main representative of legal institutionalism in Italy.<sup>23</sup> Accordingly, Mortati viewed the institutions that make up the legal order as 'taking shape internally to social development, and not outside of it'.<sup>24</sup>

This approach is central to his major work, *La costituzione in senso materiale*, which was published in 1940.<sup>25</sup> Although for some scholars the book indirectly favours fascism,<sup>26</sup> it is today commonly read as an anti-positivist, realist-institutionalist approach to constitutional law, bridging law and society and helping explain the normativity of constitutions in a non-formalistic way.

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'Costantino Mortati and the Idea of the Material Constitution' (2019) 40(3) *History of Political Ideas* 515, 541–545.

<sup>22</sup> See *inter alia* Marco Goldoni & Michael A. Wilkinson, 'The Material Constitution' (2018) 81(4) *The Modern Law Review* 567; Rubinelli (no 21); Mario Croce & Marco Goldoni, *The Legacy of Pluralism: The Continental Jurisprudence of Santi Romano, Carl Schmitt, and Costantino Mortati* (Stanford California: Stanford University Press, 2020); and many of the essays in Marco Goldoni & Michael A. Wilkinson (eds), *The Cambridge Handbook on the Material Constitution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023).

<sup>23</sup> See on this Croce & Goldoni (no 22) 141–154.

<sup>24</sup> *ibid* 142.

<sup>25</sup> Costantino Mortati, *The constitution in the material sense (La costituzione in senso materiale)* (Milano: A. Giuffrè Milano, 1998 [reprint of the original publication of 1940, with an introduction by Gustavo Zagrebelsky]). The translation of excerpts from Mortati's works is mine.

<sup>26</sup> See Massimo La Torre, 'The German Impact on Fascist Public Law Doctrine – Costantino Mortati's Material Constitution' in Christian Joerges & Navraj Singh Ghaleigh (eds), *Darker Legacies of Law in Europe: The Shadow of National Socialism and Fascism over Europe and its Legal Traditions* (Oxford: Hart Publishing, 2003) 305.

### *The Material Constitution*

The concept of the material constitution, as Mortati constructed it, points to the organisational elements, social and political forces, and original juridical sources (*fonte giuridica primigenia*) that sustain the order in which the State takes its form and from which the constitution derives its normativity.<sup>27</sup> In particular, the material constitution comprises (a) the political force that propels the rise (*sorgere*) of the State in a concrete—republican or monarchical—form;<sup>28</sup> (b) the political party as organisational means of the modern State and as supplier of the contents of the ‘fundamental constitution’;<sup>29</sup> and (c) the ‘political objective’ (*fine politico*), i.e., the co-essentiality of the State with ‘a relative orientation in the way to consider, within the State’s completeness, the ensemble of social relations and its capacity to reduce into unity the variable attitude of state organs’.<sup>30</sup>

Importantly, neither the political objective nor the material constitution forms a part of a pre-juridical state of affairs.<sup>31</sup> Theorising the grey area between politics and law,<sup>32</sup> Mortati assigns to the political objective and to the material constitution an institutionalising function and, moreover, a normative and even juridical character so that the constitution becomes ‘political law’ (*diritto politico*).<sup>33</sup> The political objective ‘forms the essence of the fundamental constitution, becoming the primary source of the law of the State’.<sup>34</sup>

Under regular circumstances, the material constitution guarantees the validity of the formal constitution, sets the unity of the legal order, and performs various juridical functions.<sup>35</sup> The formal constitution expresses a situation of equilibrium<sup>36</sup> that remains stabilised when a homogenous social force prevails. But when the equilibri-

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<sup>27</sup> Mortati (no 25) chap. II.

<sup>28</sup> *ibid* 61–67.

<sup>29</sup> *ibid* 70 et seq.

<sup>30</sup> *ibid* 92–93. In their updated version of Mortati’s theory, Goldoni & Wilkinson (no 22) identify the following four ‘ordering forces’ of the material constitution: (a) the production and reproduction of political unity; (b) the work of institutions and co-relevant societal practices and customs; (c) subjective social interaction as well as social conflicts (for them this is the most important material out of which constitutions are made); and (d) the fundamental political objectives which may hold the constitutional order together in spite of social conflict, political disunity, and/or institutional weakness.

<sup>31</sup> Mortati (no 25) 110.

<sup>32</sup> Rubinelli (no 21) 521.

<sup>33</sup> Mortati (no 25) 106.

<sup>34</sup> *ibid* 110.

<sup>35</sup> *ibid* 124ff.

<sup>36</sup> *ibid* 116.

um represents merely a compromise of conflicting forces (as was the case in Cyprus), discrepancy (*dissidio*) between the positive constitutional norms and those that are presupposed by them, i.e. the ones that are inscribed in the ‘real constitution’, cannot be precluded.<sup>37</sup>

Interestingly, Mortati employed the concept of material constitution to address constitutional change (*mutamento costituzionale*) and its material limits,<sup>38</sup> an issue that has become central to contemporary constitutional theory.<sup>39</sup> The Italian scholar dismisses the supposition that the material limits of constitutional change are those prescribed by the limitless will of the ‘supreme constituent organ’. Mortati rejects this view on the grounds that the ‘*personal element of the State*’ is incapable ‘as such, i.e. outside of one specific organisation, to express appropriately its own will, to proffer its will as the subject of constituent activity’.<sup>40</sup> The material limits of constitutional change are connected with State continuity and point to ‘an organisational principle, which persists and remains immutable even with the fluctuation of the single parts of its structure’.<sup>41</sup>

To identify that principle, we need to consider ‘the political forces, which epitomise the fullness of power, and set themselves as immediate expression of the sovereignty of the state, [to be taken] as subjected to the law at the same time in which they lay down the constitutional order’.<sup>42</sup> We also need to consider the ensemble of the values (*complesso dei valori*) that are expressed by the dominant political force, and which form the ‘essential nucleus’ of State activity, coordinate State institutions, and justify the distinction between the constant and the changeable part of the constitution.<sup>43</sup> In any event, the continuity of the State is not coincidental with its population and its

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<sup>37</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> *ibid* 182–187.

<sup>39</sup> See *inter alia* Yaniv Roznai, *Unconstitutional Constitutional Amendments: The Limits of Amendment Powers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017); Silvia Suteu, *Eternity Clauses in Democratic Constitutionalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021); Rehan Abeyratne & Ngoc Son Bui (eds), *The Law and Politics of Unconstitutional Constitutional Amendments in Asia* (New York: Routledge, 2022); Richard Albert, *Constitutional Amendments: Making, Breaking, and Changing Constitutions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019) 139–172; Richard Albert & Bertil Emrah Oder (eds), *An Unamendable Constitution? Unamendability in Constitutional Democracies* (Switzerland: Springer, 2018).

<sup>40</sup> Mortati (no 25) 187 (my emphasis).

<sup>41</sup> *ibid* 189.

<sup>42</sup> *ibid* 197.

<sup>43</sup> *ibid* 198–200.



territory, for these are ‘purely material’ entities, ‘primitive social data’, whereas the State does not have a physical subjectivity akin to that of natural persons.<sup>44</sup>

### *Rightful Necessity*

It is in these pages of *La costituzione in senso materiale* that Mortati refers to necessity as a source of law. In alignment with institutionalism, the Italian scholar makes clear that ‘necessity can be taken as source of law not in itself (*in se*), but with reference to other exigencies of a given order, as concretisation of an obligation that corresponds with the satisfaction of the proper interests (*interessi propri*) of the order itself’.<sup>45</sup>

Mortati’s views on necessity become even clearer in an article published in 1973, which is dedicated to Carl Schmitt’s constitutional and political thought.<sup>46</sup> Mortati first notices that derogations, suspensions, and temporary ruptures in the legal order are phenomena that we encounter in every State. When these phenomena make their appearance, it becomes ‘inevitable that the means gives way to the end, *the law to the values in which the law finds its appropriate reasoning (la legge ai valori nei quali essa trova la propria ragione)*’.<sup>47</sup> Schmitt refers to such an exigency when he ascribes ‘the essence of political power to the decision on the subsistence of the state of exception, of situations of necessity that justify the action *legibus solutus*’.<sup>48</sup> However, crucially, Mortati maintains that this:

cannot signify an absence of the law, but the subordination of that [law], which is written to another that inspires it, and thus conditions it. Respect for the latter certifies the intimate unity of the socio-statal structure and leads us to contest the thesis that links the attribution of power to the absence of limits. This opinion omits the consideration of the essential distinction that one must make between the derogation from the laws that is inspired by the intention to

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<sup>44</sup> *ibid* 188.

<sup>45</sup> *ibid* 193.

<sup>46</sup> Costantino Mortati, ‘Brief notes on the relationship between constitution and politics in the thought of Carl Schmitt’ (‘Brevi note sul rapporto fra costituzione e politica nel pensiero di Carl Schmitt’) (1973) 2(1) *Quaderni fiorentini per la storia del pensiero giuridico moderno* 511. For the points of convergence and of disagreement between Mortati and Schmitt, see Croce & Goldoni (no 22) 149, 167, 182; Rubinelli (no 21) 529–530; Alfonso Catania, ‘Mortati and Schmitt (Mortati e Schmitt)’ in Alessandro Catelani & Silvano Labriola (eds), *The material constitution: Cultural courses and actuality of an idea (La costituzione materiale: Percorsi culturali e attualità di un idea)* (Milano: Giuffrè, 2001) 109.

<sup>47</sup> Mortati (no 46) 516 (my emphasis).

<sup>48</sup> *ibid* 516–517.



preserve the legal order and derogation that seeks the subversion of the legal order to achieve a revolution.<sup>49</sup>

The crucial phrase is: ‘values in which the law finds its appropriate reasoning’. Which are those values? One may safely suppose that they coincide with the values to which Mortati refers in the last pages of *La costituzione in senso materiale*: the ensemble of values that are expressed by the dominant political forces, but which must serve the interests of the legal order as a whole, determining the fundamental political objective that animates the idiosyncratic—political, institutional, juridical, and factual—normativity of the material constitution. As Gustavo Zagrebelsky (an eminent judge, constitutional scholar, and reader of Mortati in Italy) wrote in his introduction to *La costituzione in senso materiale*:

According to Mortati’s doctrine, powers of exception are permitted insofar as they deviate from constitutional law, but not when they deviate from the material constitution. Thus, they result—differently from what Schmitt theorised—in being subordinated, if not to the laws (*legge*), then to the right (*diritto*).<sup>50</sup>

Hence, necessity becomes a source of objective law only insofar as it is oriented towards rightfulness. ‘Right’, in this sense, points to the values that express the fundamental political objective that sustains the normativity of a particular constitutional order. Only in this way is necessity capable of legitimising acts that would otherwise be illegitimate.

Contrary to one reading of Carl Schmitt’s analysis of the state of exception,<sup>51</sup> Mortati believes that necessity as a factor in constitutional law contains a predisposition towards normative values and towards institutionalisation in the strict sense. Therefore, necessity is oriented towards rightful, ultimately lawful, regulation of political and social affairs even as it excuses deviations from *positive* law. Under these conditions, necessity is adequate to justify deviations from positive constitutional law, but can never justify replacement of the formal constitution with a new one—unless there exists a grave and definite mutation of the material constitution such as to give rise to an exercise of original or primary constituent power. This observation brings us to another thematic area of Mortati’s constitutional theory.

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<sup>49</sup> *ibid* 517.

<sup>50</sup> Gustavo Zagrebelsky, ‘Prologue (Premessa)’ in Mortati (no 25) vi, xv (my translation).

<sup>51</sup> But see Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005) 33 (arguing that ‘it is essential for Schmitt that in every case some relation to the juridical order be ensured’).

### *The Constituent Power*

Lucia Rubinelli has correctly argued that, after World War II, Mortati did not abandon the basic tenet of his theory of the material constitution, but substituted the concepts of the constituent power (meaning the political and social forces that create and invigorate the constitutional order) and of (legal) sovereignty (meaning the ultimate sources of legal authority) for the concepts of the material and of the formal or legal constitution respectively.<sup>52</sup> Indeed, in 1945, Mortati published a work relevant to the constitution-making process in Italy and, as part of this work, a long text entitled ‘The theory of constituent power’, which has been recently republished.<sup>53</sup> In this text, Mortati elaborated, in an authentic way, on the concept of the *pouvoir constituant*, which was originally constructed by Sieyès on the eve of the French Revolution to indicate the power of the nation to remake its constitution without being limited by previous fundamental laws and forms.<sup>54</sup>

In contrast to other constitutional scholars of his time who had claimed that the constituent power belongs to the realm of facticity, i.e., that it is an extra-judicial phenomenon,<sup>55</sup> Mortati conceives the constituent power as a normative fact (*fatto normativo*), which ‘contains its own law and the guarantees of its persistence even in the future’.<sup>56</sup> For Mortati, if constituent power is to give life to a State, it ‘must become capable of objectivising its will, remove itself from arbitrariness, be submitted to a norm, become susceptible to gathering in unity the infinite series of social rela-

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<sup>52</sup> Rubinelli (no 21) 532–535.

<sup>53</sup> Costantino Mortati, *The theory of the constituent power (La teoria del potere costituyente)* (edited by Marco Goldoni, Macerata: Quodlibet, 2020). For an analysis of Mortati’s conception of the constituent power, see Rubinelli (no 21) 536–545; Lucia Rubinelli, *Constituent Power: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020) chap 4 (where the theory of Mortati on the constituent power is treated together with the corresponding theories of Georges Vedel and of Ernst-Wolfgang Böckenförde); Croce & Goldoni (no 22) 174–178; Giulia Maria Labriola, ‘Reflections on Constituent Power in Costantino Mortati’ (‘Una riflessione sul potere costituente in Costantino Mortati’) (2022) 22(1) *Diritto e questioni pubbliche* 73.

<sup>54</sup> Emmanuel Joseph Sieyès, ‘What is the Third Estate’ (1789) in Sieyès, *Political Writings* (edited, introduced, and translated by Michael Sonenscher, Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2003) 92, 136–138.

<sup>55</sup> The most prominent proponent of this view in interwar constitutional theory was Carré de Malberg. See Raymond Carré de Malberg, *Contribution to the General Theory of the State (Contribution à la Théorie générale de l’État)* Vol. 2 (Dalloz 2004[original 1920, 1922]) 489–497. Note that Malberg’s long analysis of the *pouvoir constituant*, inclusive of his long treatment of the role of the French National Assembly as a constituent organ, indicates at several points that the concept of the constituent power has juridical dimension.

<sup>56</sup> Mortati (no 53) 38 (my translation).

tionships, [and] determine the relevance [...] of the various interests of the consociation'.<sup>57</sup> The constituent power is a 'force' (*forza*) when

viewed in the moment in which it brings order; in the moment in which it makes a political will emerge from the fond of one consociation more or less homogenous, characterised by a certain tendency for common life; when it determines a differentiation of values and of positions between the members of the consociation, a superordination as well as a subordination of wishes; when it establishes relations of command and of obedience.<sup>58</sup>

In short, the constituent power is not purely factual but has a normative dimension that corresponds to the organisational principles, the evaluative horizon, and the political objective of the material constitution.<sup>59</sup>

For Mortati, the operation of the constituent power is not exhausted at the genesis of a constitutional order but continues to exist within that order by expressing the political vision of the social forces in which the order is ingrained. In this sense, the constituent power is the amalgamation of the social forces and organisational resources that stabilise the constitutional order by directing it towards realisation of the *fine politico*.<sup>60</sup> Therefore, as Mariano Croce and Marco Goldoni have aptly noticed, in Mortati's theory:

the passage from constituent into constituted power comes about without any real discontinuity. The key point is that a constituent force is necessarily already an organised force, hence it contains important elements of constituted (or ordered) power [...] Constituent power is a normative fact because its factual existence contains in itself a norm (or a principle, understood as a normative principle) that unfolds while the organised constituent force shapes a new order.<sup>61</sup>

The subject of the constituent power is neither a singular person nor an abstract entity (like the nation in the classic French theory of national sovereignty) but a leading force within a concrete people whose members are reassembled around a basic idea.<sup>62</sup> After the constituent phase, the people should continue playing an active role

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<sup>57</sup> *ibid* 37.

<sup>58</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>59</sup> Mortati (no 53) 37–38; Croce & Goldoni (no 22) 175; Labriola (no 53) 78.

<sup>60</sup> Rubinelli (no 21) 538–539.

<sup>61</sup> Croce & Goldoni (no 22), 176.

<sup>62</sup> Mortati (no 53) 94.

in politics—Mortati shares this belief with other important post-war European theorists who embraced the concept of constituent power, such as Georges Vedel and Ernst-Wolfgang Böckenförde.<sup>63</sup> To this end, the Italian scholar proposed to the Italian Constituent Assembly the adoption of a second legislative chamber that would offer representation to interests and groups, as opposed to individuals.<sup>64</sup> He called these groups intermediary communities and emphasised the role of the political party as their ‘loudspeaker’.<sup>65</sup> Mortati also favoured practices of direct democracy that would ‘guarantee the people’s direct influence upon the formation and realisation of the *fine politico* via the right of petition, the right to initiate lawmaking processes and the right to organise referenda’.<sup>66</sup>

It should be stressed that neither Mortati’s theory of material constitution nor his theory of constituent power implies the idea of a permanent revolution. On the contrary, once integrated into the constitution, the constituent power, being a factor that expresses the stabilising energies of the material constitution, protects the identity of the constitutional order (as connected with the *fine politico* of the dominant forces) vis-à-vis ephemeral changes in political attitudes. However, the constituent power remains a dynamic factor, at least as long as it is able to translate grave mutations in hegemonic dispositions into a new constitutional project. Mortati’s theory underlines the view that the initiation of such a project, if it is to be genuinely legitimate, is not a matter of a momentary decision of some sovereign agent within exceptional factual circumstances, nor of the progress of history abstractly conceived, but a complex issue that concerns the concrete sociological and ideological resources of political power in a given State—an issue that should interest constitutional lawyers because it is closely intertwined with the normativity of the formal constitution.

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<sup>63</sup> ‘To counter what they perceived as positivism’s anti-democratic implications, Mortati, Vedel and Böckenförde elaborated a series of institutional mechanisms aimed at guaranteeing the direct or semi-direct participation of the people in politics. These were inspired by three principles: the integration of the popular exercise of constituent power into ordinary politics, the downplaying of the distinction between constituent politics and constituted order, and the transformation of constituted citizenship into active constituent power. All three jurists claimed that these principles could be deduced from the very essence of the concept of constituent power’: Rubinelli (no 53) 163.

<sup>64</sup> *ibid* 165.

<sup>65</sup> *ibid* 166. For robust analysis of the meaning and role of the political party in Mortati’s theory, see Croce & Goldoni (no 22) 166–174.

<sup>66</sup> Rubinelli (no 53) 166.

## **The Evolution of the Material Constitution of Cyprus**

Did Cyprus have a material constitution, in Mortati's terms, in the period before and after the conflict of 1963–1964? As mentioned in Section 1, the political objective of Greek-Cypriots when Cyprus became an independent State was fundamentally different from that of Turkish-Cypriots, and both differed from the fundamental political objective that gave shape to the Republic of Cyprus, that is, the intention to build a bi-communal, consociational State in which the numerical majority would not be able to have a dominant position over the minority. The Greek-Cypriots pursued the unification of the island with Greece, whereas the Turkish-Cypriots wanted to partition the island. In addition, the political forces that gave birth to the Republic of Cyprus were exogenous to the constitutional order: they were the three guarantor powers, and one could safely add the US and NATO. The presence of external powers in the daily operation of the constitutional order was considerable. Political parties, if we may speak of such during that period, were aligned with the two rival nationalisms. This clearly had a catalytic impact on their approach to constitutional problems. For the Greek-Cypriots, these problems were the product of an unjustly imposed constitutional arrangement, which, if fully implemented, would put them under the tutelage of Turkey. For the Turkish-Cypriots, the constitutional text expressed a partnership agreement whose terms should have been meticulously implemented if the agreement was to survive. Turkish-Cypriot leaders viewed each deviation from the letter of the Constitution as an indication of bad faith and as a dangerous precedent that, if accepted, would place their community at the mercy of the numerical majority.

Under these conditions, one option would be to consider that Cyprus did not have a material constitution after independence. Following Mortati's theory, this would mean that the 1960 Constitution lacked real normativity. A second option would be to speak of not one but of two material constitutions, respectively corresponding to the nationalist aspirations of the Greek-Cypriot and the Turkish-Cypriot communities. This approach would deprive the 1960 Constitution of any meaning. In my view, both approaches, although plausible to a certain extent, fail to capture the dynamics within the fundamental political objective(s) of the Greek-Cypriots and the corresponding dynamics in Turkish-Cypriots' attitude. The notion that both communities were unreservedly committed to their original nationalist aspirations, *enosis* and *taksim*, is rather formalist. It underestimates the fact that, after independence, the (bi-communal) State of Cyprus started becoming an inescapable reality for Cypriots

as well as for external powers.<sup>67</sup> From this standpoint, the fundamental objective of bicommunal cooperation had anchors in political and social reality.

True, in 1964, the US promoted a solution to the Cyprus problem that was, in theory, based on *enosis*, but which would in effect have entailed the partition of the island between Greece and Turkey.<sup>68</sup> However, the so-called Acheson Plan was rejected by both Turkey and Makarios, the Greek-Cypriot leader. More importantly, in the summer of 1964, it became apparent—or it should have become apparent—that *enosis*, if possible at all, would presuppose significant territorial concessions to Turkey—the so-called ‘double *enosis*’. Despite this, Makarios and the Greek-Cypriot ministers kept paying lip service to the ideal of pure and unadulterated *enosis*. Many Greek-Cypriots did the same, but there are indications that support for *enosis* was neither unanimous nor unequivocal—and it became less so as time passed. In 1967, Sir Norman Costar, the British High Commissioner in Cyprus, estimated that ‘for a variety of reasons support for *Enosis* within the Greek-Cypriot community had been reduced from 40 per cent in 1965 to 20 per cent in 1967’.<sup>69</sup> An earlier opinion survey, conducted by Stanley Kyriakides in 1965, showed that, when asked about the most realistic solution under present circumstances, 40.6 percent of Greek-Cypriots responded independence ‘with no strings attached’ (where ‘strings’ point to the unfair provisions of the 1960 settlement); 31.2 percent expressed their preference for self-determination; 18 percent for *enosis*; and 10.2 percent indicated ‘other’.<sup>70</sup> Even when asked about the most justifiable solution, in an ideal world, only 53.4 percent opted for *enosis*, 30 percent preferred independence, 15.8 self-determination, and 8 percent ‘other’.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Cf. Alexis Heraclides, ‘The 55 Year Cyprus Debacle: A Bird’s Eye View’ (2003), in Hubert Faustmann & Emiliou Solomou (eds), *Independent Cyprus 1960–2010: Selected Readings* (Nicosia: University of Nicosia Press, 2011) 357, 363: ‘Historically, the most decisive mutual suspicion that has [led] to an almost paranoiac attitude was the view that *Enosis* and *Taksim*, respectively, remain the respective cherished aspirations. This misperception – for misperception it is from the later part of the 1960s onwards – is probably more than any other belief responsible for the disturbing self-fulfilling quality of the conflict, from 1963 onwards’.

<sup>68</sup> See O’Malley & Craig (no 5) 108–119; Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964–1968, Volume XVI, Cyprus; Greece; Turkey (James E. Miller editor, Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 2000), documents 78–155, available at: <https://history.state.gov/historical-documents/frus1964-68v16/ch2> (last accessed 3.4.2025).

<sup>69</sup> Varnava (no 15) 92.

<sup>70</sup> Kyriakides (no 5) 126–127.

<sup>71</sup> *ibid* 130.

Kyriakides believed that the declining appeal of *enosis* was owed to a decline in the appeal of the old Pan-Hellenic ideal.<sup>72</sup> Other explanations include a growing ‘sense of realism’, a lack of faith in Greek political leadership, and the political instability in Greece at the time.<sup>73</sup> One might add that unification of Cyprus with Greece would most probably have incurred significant economic cost for Cypriots—all the more so given the rapid, and rather unexpected, growth of the economy of the island after the crisis of 1964—and ‘other uncomfortable adjustments’.<sup>74</sup> At any rate, it seems certain that ‘[m]any Greek-Cypriots realized that achieving this national aim [i.e., *enosis*] and keeping Turkey off the island were two highly contrasting aims’.<sup>75</sup>

A split within the Greek-Cypriot community regarding their fundamental political objective emerged and gradually crystallised into a rift between the supporters of ‘immediate *enosis*’ (who were silencing or downgrading the grave concessions to Turkey that such a solution would presuppose) and those who, out of realism or genuine conviction, were willing to come to terms with an independent Cyprus, although they did not preclude that *enosis* might be sought in the future.<sup>76</sup> Said rift found its most vocal expression in the famous declaration of Makarios on 12 January 1968: ‘Courageous decisions and important initiatives are required if we are to break the present deadlock. A solution, by necessity, must be sought within the limits of what is feasible, which does not always coincide with the limits of what is desirable’.<sup>77</sup> Shortly thereafter, Greek-Cypriots re-elected Makarios with an astonishing 95.45 percent of the vote over an opponent who had the support of the ‘immediate *enosis*’ front.<sup>78</sup> The election of Makarios legitimised the decision of the Greek-Cypriot leaders to participate in the intercommunal talks of 1968–1971 on a constitutional solution of the Cyprus issue.<sup>79</sup>

Even before the 1968 turn, in the context of the UN mediation efforts that resulted in the report of mediator Galo Plaza of 26 March 1965, the Greek-Cypriot leaders did not insist so much on *enosis* itself as on self-determination. Although the latter could be understood as opening the way to *enosis*, the official position of the Greek-Cypri-

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<sup>72</sup> *ibid* 128.

<sup>73</sup> *ibid* 128–129.

<sup>74</sup> Varnava (no 15) 92.

<sup>75</sup> Varnava (no 15) 93.

<sup>76</sup> For an in-depth analysis, see Harry Anastasiou, *The Broken Olive Branch: Nationalism, Ethnic Conflict, and the Quest for Peace in Cyprus, volume one: The Impasse of Ethnonationalism* (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 2008) 109–113.

<sup>77</sup> As cited in Varnava (no 15) 140.

<sup>78</sup> Varnava (no 15) 141.

<sup>79</sup> *ibid* 144.



ot leaders concentrated on the notion of a fully independent Cyprus, relieved of the shackles of the Treaty of Guarantee, taking the form of a unitary State in which the majority would be able to govern while the minorities would enjoy far-reaching human rights, inclusive of complete autonomy in religious matters and certain aspects of personal status such as marriage and divorce.<sup>80</sup> In the same process, Turkish-Cypriot leaders expressed their wish for an improved version of the 1960 Constitution that would provide more effective guarantees for their security, inclusive of geographical separation of the two communities through compulsory exchange of populations, that is, a federal State that would serve as a substitute for the aspired *taksim*.<sup>81</sup>

In 1965, Makarios announced his intention to have the Cyprus parliament vote for serious amendments to electoral laws, which would unite the electoral rolls and abolish the separate representation of Turkish-Cypriots. The Turkish-Cypriot MPs expressed their wish to return and participate in the debate. However, the President of the House of Representatives responded that Turkish-Cypriot MPs would have to accept that the constitutional requirement for separate majorities when voting for important legislation—one of the special powers of the Turkish-Cypriot community under the agreements of 1960—would no longer be applicable.<sup>82</sup> As expected, the Turkish-Cypriots refused to accept these terms.<sup>83</sup> Later, after the crisis of November 1967, the Turkish-Cypriots established the Turkish-Cypriot Provisional Administration (TCPA),<sup>84</sup> and though they insisted that this was a measure that did not mean to violate the 1960 Constitution but only to make possible organisational accommoda-

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<sup>80</sup> See United Nations, S/6253, Report of the United Nations Mediator on Cyprus to the Secretary General, 26 March 1965 (henceforth, the 'Galo Plaza Report'), paras 62–69, 91–96, 133. At para. 142, Galo Plaza wished to 'make it clear that neither the President nor the Government of Cyprus, in their discussions with me as the Mediator, actually advocated *Enosis* as the final solution of the Cyprus problem. Archbishop Makarios and members of the Government acknowledged that *Enosis* had been the original aim of the uprising against British rule and that it remained a strong aspiration among the Greek-Cypriot community. They went so far as to express the opinion that if the choice between independence and *Enosis* were to be put to the people there would probably be a majority in favour of the latter. Some of the Ministers and other high officials of the Government have openly advocated it in public statements; but for the Government as a whole the formal objective is limited to unfettered independence, including the right of self-determination'. Only then Plaza acknowledged that this position of the Greek-Cypriot leaders did not 'preclude the possibility of *Enosis*, which would obviously be implied in the right of the people of Cyprus, once "fully independent", to choose whatever future course they wished'.

<sup>81</sup> Galo Plaza Report, paras 70–76, 97, 134, 149.

<sup>82</sup> See United Nations, S/6569, Report by the Secretary-General on Recent Development on Cyprus, 29 July 1965, para. 8.

<sup>83</sup> Varnava (no 15) 57.

<sup>84</sup> See Varnava (no 15) 135–140.



tions that were necessary for their survival, it is also true that this move ‘could have strengthened their *de facto* separation and, thus, purport to justify their later demands for a *de jure* recognition of this separatism through a federal structure of the state’.<sup>85</sup> In the intercommunal negotiations of 1968–1971,<sup>86</sup> the Turkish-Cypriots appeared willing to accept some of Makarios’ ‘Thirteen Points’ in exchange for constitutional recognition of local self-government formations for the Turkish-Cypriots with extensive (executive, legislative, and judicial) powers and separate security forces.

In the final part of his report, Galo Plaza analysed the positions of the parties to the Cyprus problem and concluded that, differing as these positions were, it was still possible ‘to read into’ them ‘an objective which, so long as it is stated in very broad terms, would seem acceptable to them both: namely, an independent Cyprus with adequate safeguards for the safety and the rights of all its people’.<sup>87</sup> Plaza suggested that the Cyprus government should regard self-determination as an issue concerning both the wellbeing of the people and international peace and security; therefore, it would be wiser to put to the people, at a referendum, not *enosis*, but the whole of any proposed settlement based on continued independence.<sup>88</sup> Having interpreted the norm of self-determination in a democratic way, and in accordance with the fundamental principle of international peace and security, Plaza stated a possible common objective of the two sides as follows: ‘a “fully independent” state which would undertake to remain independent and to refrain from any action leading to union with any other State’.<sup>89</sup>

On the other hand, Plaza was adamant that compulsory movement of populations so as to satisfy the Turkish-Cypriot proposal for geographical separation of the two communities would have been ‘a desperate step in the wrong direction’. He considered this not only because of the danger of opening the way to partitioning the island (which would endanger international peace and security by bringing Greece and Turkey into a state of permanent conflict) but also because such a step would not really provide a final solution to the problem, as any line of separation in the big

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<sup>85</sup> *ibid* 148.

<sup>86</sup> See Varnava (no 15) 155–202; Polyvios G. Polyviou, *Cyprus: Conflict and Negotiation 1960 – 1980* (London: Duckworth, 1980) 62–101; Şevki Kralp, ‘Cyprus between Enosis, Partition and Independence: Domestic Politics, Diplomacy and External Interventions (1967–74)’ (2017) 19(6) *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies* 561.

<sup>87</sup> Galo Plaza Report, para. 135.

<sup>88</sup> *ibid* para. 146.

<sup>89</sup> *ibid* para. 147.

towns would have been artificial and a constant cause of friction.<sup>90</sup> Instead of physical separation, Plaza suggested the adoption of exceptionally strong safeguards for the fundamental freedoms of Turkish-Cypriots, including international guarantees (such as a UN commissioner with his own staff to supervise the implementation of human rights safeguards, and a UN resolution obliging future complaints to be brought only before UN organs), autonomy in the fields of religion, personal status, and education, and a fair share of Turkish-Cypriot voice in the political life of the State (by securing proportional representation of the Turkish-Cypriot community across institutions).<sup>91</sup>

If Cyprus had a material constitution, in Mortati's terms, during the 1960s, then this could only have been based on the suggestions of Galo Plaza or suggestions similar to them. If both sides wished to live in one State, as was their official position in the context of UN mediation, then this should have been a State whose constitution provided ironclad guarantees for the rights of the Turkish-Cypriot community, a State that would further undertake not to seek its union with any other State in the future. This was the only fundamental objective that could help the survival of the Republic of Cyprus.

The events that followed, that is, the Turkish invasion of the island in 1974, as a result of the fateful coup against Makarios' government that was orchestrated by the Greek dictator, and then the unilateral declaration of independence on the part of the Turkish-Cypriot entity in 1983, made the materialisation of the said objective even more difficult. However, negotiations continued,<sup>92</sup> resulting in further shifts in Cyprus' material constitution. In 1977, Makarios and the Turkish-Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash agreed that the objective was an independent, non-aligned, bicommunal federal Republic; that the territory under the administration of each community would be determined on the basis of economic viability or productivity and land ownership; that the powers of the central federal government would be such as to safeguard the unity of the country having regard to the bicommunal character of the State; and that questions such as freedom of settlement and property rights would take into consideration the fundamental basis of a bicommunal federal system and certain practical difficulties that could arise for the Turkish-Cypriot community.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> *ibid* paras 151–156.

<sup>91</sup> *ibid* paras 158–168.

<sup>92</sup> See Polyviou (no 86) 154–217; Michalis S. Michael, 'The Road to Vienna: Intercommunal Talks 1974–1977' in Faustmann & Solomou (no 67) 161.

<sup>93</sup> High-Level Agreement of 12 February 1977, available at <https://www.pio.gov.cy/en/agreements-high-level-agreement-of-12-february-1977.html> (last accessed 13.6.2024).

This agreement was confirmed by Denktash and Spyros Kyprianou (Makarios' successor) in the Ten-Point Agreement of 19 May 1979.<sup>94</sup>

The negotiations under the auspices of the UN continued in the next decades<sup>95</sup> and in 2004, the two sides agreed to put to the respective electorates the Annan Plan, which sought to establish a United Cyprus Republic that consisted of two constituent States, namely the Greek-Cypriot State and the Turkish-Cypriot State, but the plan was rejected by the Greek-Cypriots.<sup>96</sup> In the same year, Cyprus became a Member State of the EU (another shift in the material constitution of Cyprus, which has the unambiguous support of most Cypriots on both sides). In 2006, President Tassos Papadopoulos and Mehmet Ali Talat, the president of the so-called 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus', expressed their 'commitment to the unification of Cyprus based on a bi-zonal, bicomunal federation and political equality, as set out in the relevant Security Council resolutions'.<sup>97</sup> The next most significant attempt to solve the Cyprus problem was the summit meeting at Crans-Montana in 2017, which failed.<sup>98</sup> Be that as it may, a bi-zonal, bicomunal federation based on the political equality of the two communities is the only political objective that could attract the agreement of both communities. This objective remains the only basis for Cyprus' material constitution, if Cyprus is ever to have one. The fulfilment of this fundamental objective remains elusive, since the Turkish-Cypriot leader, together with Turkey, demands recognition of the Turkish-Cypriot entity as a prerequisite for their participation in negotiations.

<sup>94</sup> Available at <https://www.pio.gov.cy/en/agreements-the-10-point-agreement-of-19-may-1979.html> (last accessed 13.6.2024).

<sup>95</sup> See Oliver Richmond, 'Peacekeeping and Peacemaking in Cyprus' in Faustmann & Solomou (no 67) 191. A significant moment in these decades was the 'Set of ideas on an overall framework agreement on Cyprus', submitted by UN Secretary General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali in August 1992. See United Nations, Security Council, S/24472, Report of the Secretary-General on his mission of good offices in Cyprus, 21 August 1992.

<sup>96</sup> See *inter alia* the essays in Andrekos Varnava & Hubert Faustmann (eds), *Reunifying Cyprus: The Annan Plan and Beyond* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2009). The plan is available at <https://web.archive.org/web/20120328062304/http://www.zypern.cc/extras/annan-plan-for-cyprus-2004.pdf> (last accessed 13.6.2024).

<sup>97</sup> See [https://www.pio.gov.cy/en/agreements-papadopoulos-talat-agreement-\(8-july-2006\).html](https://www.pio.gov.cy/en/agreements-papadopoulos-talat-agreement-(8-july-2006).html) (last accessed 13.6.2024).

<sup>98</sup> See United Nations, Security Council, S/2017/814, Report of the Secretary General on his mission of good offices in Cyprus, 27 September 2017. See also International Crisis Group, *An Island Divided: Next Steps for Troubled Cyprus*, 17 April 2023, available at <https://www.crisisgroup.org/europe-central-asia/western-europemediterranean/cyprus/268-island-divided-next-steps-troubled-cyprus> (last accessed 13.6.2024).

Let us now return to the 1960s. As I argued above, if Cyprus had a material constitution at the time, this could only be one providing ironclad guarantees for the rights of the Turkish-Cypriot community, prohibiting both *enosis* and *taksim*, and recognising that the Turkish-Cypriot community was a constituent agent of the Republic of Cyprus. If this was so, then the only way for the Supreme Court of Cyprus to legitimately invoke Mortati's theory to justify its emergency doctrine could have been by conditioning the legal force of the doctrine upon the need to preserve this fundamental objective.

This would have required a strong judicial recommendation for either a return to normality under the constitutional arrangements of 1960 or to bring into life a new constitution of a fully independent State that would have undertaken not to pursue its unification with any other State—a State that would have furthermore accorded to the Turkish-Cypriot community the status of a constituent agent, as well as exceptionally strong guarantees of their security, autonomy, and welfare. As explained in Section 1, it would not be excessive to ask this from a court in an unusual constitutional situation such as that of Cyprus. Other courts in the Global South have more recently made bolder moves under less exceptional circumstances.<sup>99</sup>

However, there is no indication of such recommendation in *Ibrahim*. Even worse, there is little in that judgment to suggest the unreserved commitment of the Cypriot justices to the cause of a bicomunal, consociational Republic, which was, after all, the fundamental objective of the 1960 Constitution.

## **A Critique of *Ibrahim* Through the Lens of Mortati's Theory**

It goes without saying that the three judges in the case of *Ibrahim* wanted to preserve the existence of the State that was named 'Republic of Cyprus'. To do this, they cited UN Security Council Resolution 186 of 4 March 1964.<sup>100</sup> They also maintained that

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<sup>99</sup> See e.g. Daniel Bonilla Maldonado (ed.), *Constitutionalism of the Global South: The Activist Tribunals of India, South Africa, and Colombia* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Sandra Botero, *Courts that Matter: Activists, Judges, and the Politics of Rights Enforcement* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2024).

<sup>100</sup> See e.g. *Ibrahim*, 226–227 (Triantafyllides, J) ('It cannot, of course, be argued that, because of such an emergency, constitutional deadlock or other internal difficulties, it is possible to question the existence of Cyprus as an independent State. The existence of a State cannot be deemed to be dependent on the fate or operation of its constitution; otherwise, every time that any constitution were upset in a country then such State would have ceased to exist, and this is not so. The existence of a State is a matter governed by accepted criteria of international law and in particular it is related to the application of the principle of recognition by other States. In the particular case of Cyprus there can be no question in this respect, because

the validity of the 1960 Constitution was not in question.<sup>101</sup> On the other hand, nowhere in the judgment can one find indication that the justices wanted to keep alive *this particular* Republic: the bicommunal, consociational Republic that the Constitution of 1960 had established. On the contrary, Judges Vassiliades and Triantafyllides undermined the normative bindingness of this Constitution by arguing that it suffered from serious flaws: it had been imposed on Cypriots by foreign powers, it was unworkable in practice and, on top of this, its basic articles were unamendable, depriving Cypriots of their fundamental right to determine the terms of their political co-existence. For instance, Vassiliades, wrote:

the present difficulties of the people of Cyprus, and of their Republic, originate to a considerable extent, in the sin of ignoring time and human nature in the making of our constitution. Time moves on continuously; man is, by nature, a creature of evolution and change, as time moves on. The Constitution was, basically, made fixed and immovable. Article 182 provides that the basic articles thereof ‘cannot, in any way, be amended, whether by way of variation, addition or repeal’. As time and man moved on, while the Constitution remained fixed, the inevitable crack came—(perhaps a good deal sooner than some people may have thought)—with grave and far reaching consequences.<sup>102</sup>

Triantafyllides emphasised the ‘original right’ of the people to frame their constitution (he read such right into the lines of Marshall in *Marbury v. Madison*)<sup>103</sup> with the view to highlight that the 1960 Constitution had not been the outcome of a democratic constitution-making process. For Triantafyllides, the 1960 Constitution was not the expression of the ‘sovereign will’ of ‘the people of Cyprus’, but had been imposed on them.<sup>104</sup> The Cypriot judge employed this evaluation, in combination with a negative appraisal of the unamendability of the basic articles of the Constitution,

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in spite of the current internal anomalous situation, the existence, not only of Cyprus as a State, but also of its Government, has been emphatically affirmed, for also purposes of international law, by the Security Council of the United Nations, of which Cyprus became a member after it had become independent’; 267 (Josephides, J) (‘The Republic of Cyprus is an independent and sovereign State and the Government of the Republic has, inter alia, the responsibility for the maintenance and restoration of law and order (cf. U.N. Security Council Resolution of 4th March, 1964), and the normal functioning of the courts’).

<sup>101</sup> See *Ibrahim*, 209 and 211 (Vassiliades, J), 223 and 242 (Triantafyllides, J).

<sup>102</sup> *Ibrahim*, 208 (Vassiliades, J). At another point, Vassiliades expressed his strong disagreement with the design of the judicial system on communal basis; *ibid* 212.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibrahim*, 219–221 (Triantafyllides, J).

<sup>104</sup> *Ibrahim*, 221–223, 233–235 (Triantafyllides, J).

as justification for the doctrine of necessity, on the understanding that '[t]he less a constitution represents in fact the exercise of the original right of the people [to frame their constitution] the more the Legislature ought to be treated as free to meet necessities'.<sup>105</sup> Triantafyllides had previously premised his argumentation on the opinion that 'the concept of the inviolability of a supreme law is by its very nature inseparably related to the premise that the constitution embodies the sovereign will of the people which can be exercised at any time, even though seldom, in order to amend it'.<sup>106</sup>

These were core arguments for Triantafyllides' attempt to read the doctrine of necessity into Article 179 of the Constitution and construct the doctrine as an *intra-constitutional* principle. The argument was in essence the following: When an unamendable and unworkable constitution is imposed, its clauses should not be treated as inviolable, but as permitting suspension in exceptional circumstances. The problem with this argument is that the same constitution had to remain valid, which was required if the State of Cyprus were to survive—survival of the State was the major point of the doctrine of necessity, after all. However, can a constitution endure when its normativity is doubted to such an extent as to be labelled 'imposed', when it ultimately permits deviations from very specific constitutional clauses that concern its basic structure?

At any rate, Triantafyllides' argument can hardly coexist with understanding the doctrine of necessity as an intra-constitutional principle. For one thing, the argument is premised on the view that the constitution suffers from serious flaws—flaws that do not deprive it of legal validity but corrode its normative bindingness. Hence, how can one insist on the supremacy of *this* constitution in order to then qualify supremacy on the basis of the doctrine of necessity? The only answer could be that what is supreme is not the 1960 Constitution but a new constitution. However, the judges of *Ibrahim* rejected this supposition.

The sincere belief of the Cypriot justices that constitutions must be the outcome of democratic constituent power goes a long way in explaining their ambivalence toward the 1960 Constitution. A pragmatic reason for this ambivalence could have been the stance of Greek-Cypriot leaders at the time, who kept disavowing the agreements of 1960, including the bicomunal constitution, in pursuit of a solution that did not include the consociational terms of the 1960 agreements. Such prospect ran contrary to the (equally sincere) belief of the Cypriot justices that the doctrine of necessity was

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<sup>105</sup> *Ibrahim*, 234 (Triantafyllides, J)

<sup>106</sup> *ibid* 221.

part of Cypriot constitutional law, under the 1960 Constitution. If this was so, then the Cypriot justices should have openly repudiated the possibility that a sound juridical solution to the constitutional impasses of 1964 could be sought outside the 1960 Constitution—or at least, outside the fundamental parameters of this Constitution.

They did not do so, not only because of their belief in the cause of democratic constitutions but also, in my view, because such statement would have sent a clear message that the 1960 Constitution would have been fully applicable, that the doctrine of necessity would have become obsolete, and that the changes that the Greek-Cypriot legislators had enacted would have been reversed, if Turkish-Cypriots returned to their positions (as they wished to do one year later). The Cypriot justices, adopting the stance of positivist lawyers in this respect, declined to express their views on this issue.<sup>107</sup> In my view, they would have done so if they wished to be convincing when claiming that the application of the doctrine of necessity was temporary.

To make things worse, Judges Triantafyllides and Josephides, in their attempt to provide support for the doctrine of necessity through juridical sources, cited highly problematic judgments of the Supreme Administrative Court of Greece, which had approved the *extra-constitutional* power of the *executive* to issue constitution-making acts and thereby *exercise primary constituent power*.<sup>108</sup> This approach to emergencies is completely different from Mortati's understanding of necessity as a source of law. It is also opposite to the wish of the Cypriot judges to construct the doctrine of necessity as an intra-constitutional principle. Josephides seemed to have been aware of this problem when he wrote the following:

it is true that some of the Continental cases refer to instances where the executive acted beyond the limits of administrative law, but there are many cases where legislative action was taken. And, needless to say, if the executive has the power in exceptional circumstances to take all measures necessary for the accomplishment of the aim entrusted to it, even outside the limits of administrative law, *a fortiori* the legislature has both the power and the duty to do likewise, especially in Cyprus where the executive power is divided between the President, Vice-President and the Council of Ministers, and the legislative pow-

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<sup>107</sup> As Judge Triantafyllides wrote: 'The exact fate of the constitutional structure, or any part thereof, has not been pronounced upon as it was not in issue in these cases' (*Ibrahim*, 242). The same Justice had previously refused to opine on the Turkish-Cypriots' 'right of return' (to their positions), on the grounds that 'there can be no claim to the right of return by an organ not participating, at the time, in the discharge of the functions to which such right of return relates' (*Ibrahim*, 240).

<sup>108</sup> See *Ibrahim*, 231, 235, 237–240 (Triantafyllides, J), 261–264 (Josephides, J)



er of the Republic is exercised by the House of Representatives in all matters except those reserved to the Communal Chambers (Article 61).<sup>109</sup>

Josephides' argument was in essence the following: If the law permits even constitution-making action on the part of the executive, then it should certainly be ready to permit simple deviations from the letter of the constitution on the part of the legislative body (which represents the people and acts in a legislative manner, that is, it lays down general norms, not decrees), especially when this body does not attempt to change the constitutional text.

The first serious problem with this argumentative line is that, from January 1964 onwards, the legislative body of the Republic of Cyprus did not actually represent the Turkish-Cypriots, and one of the aims of the doctrine of necessity was precisely to excuse such under-representation. Hence, the legislative body could not claim that it represented the real people of Cyprus. A second problem was that the deviations from the Constitution that the doctrine of necessity excused concerned structural provisions, indeed those that were directly relevant to the fundamental theme of the Constitution: the co-operation of the two communities. The doctrine of necessity aimed to justify a radical change in the fundamental constitutional structures of the Republic of Cyprus, as it had been established in 1960. From this standpoint, the doctrine of necessity did not substantially differ from an exercise of constituent power,<sup>110</sup> but the legitimate bearer of such power in a democratic regime should be the people, as the judges of *Ibrahim* acknowledged,<sup>111</sup> not courts—even less so, courts whose existence and legitimacy is owed to an emergency doctrine.

A third, more subtle but crucial problem with Josephides' argument is the following: One should not attempt to justify the doctrine of necessity as an intra-constitutional principle on the same grounds on which necessity as an extra-constitutional authority is justified. The logic of the *a fortiori* argument that Josephides employs (arguing that if extra-constitutional doctrines of necessity can be justified, so can intra-constitutional ones) is counterproductive because it evades an answer to the question of how an intra-constitutional doctrine of necessity is justified and why this

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<sup>109</sup> *Ibrahim*, 266 (Josephides, J).

<sup>110</sup> For a reading of the doctrine of necessity through the lens of the theory of constituent power, see Polyvios G. Polyviou, *The Case of Ibrahim, the Doctrine of Necessity and the Republic of Cyprus* (Nicosia: Chryssafinis & Polyviou, 2015) 187–192; Polyviou (no 9) 148–161.

<sup>111</sup> See especially *Ibrahim*, 209–211 (Triantafyllides, J).



justification equips it with superior legitimacy compared to that of extra-constitutional doctrines of necessity.

At another point in his judgment, Josephides stated four prerequisites reflecting the principle of proportionality that would have to be satisfied if the House of Representatives were to legitimately enact laws on the basis of the doctrine of necessity.<sup>112</sup> However, Josephides left the following crucial questions unanswered: *Why* should we understand the doctrine of necessity as being subject to these requirements? *Why* should State authorities remain committed to respecting these prerequisites in the future? Is it simply a matter of *stare decisis*? However, why should *stare decisis* matter under these exceptional circumstances? Josephides' appeal to Greek courts' justification of necessity as an extra-constitutional principle offers nothing to answer these questions; in fact, this reference undermines any possible answer. The same holds true for justifications of the doctrine of necessity based on the Latin maxim '*salus populi suprema lex*' (all three judges appealed to this maxim at some point).<sup>113</sup>

One way to construct the doctrine as an intra-constitutional principle would have been to take Mortati's theory seriously and stipulate that necessity, if it is to become a source of law, should be treated as *already* containing the seed of its normatisation and juridification. This would have prompted the Cypriot judges to identify the fundamental normative values that animate the institutionalisation of the Cyprus Republic—the value of intercommunal cooperation being paramount amongst them, complemented by the values of international peace and security, and respect for human rights.

It should be stressed that the judges in *Ibrahim* were perfectly aware that the foundational political objective underlying the 1960 Constitution was the participation of both communities across institutions and cooperation among them in all public affairs.<sup>114</sup> However, they said nothing to approve of the normative value of this fundamental principle, nor did they insist upon its implementation in the future; that is, they did not make any statement to the effect that this fundamental objective should remain in place in the future, when the emergency situation would be over.

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<sup>112</sup> See text accompanying no 11 *infra*.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibrahim*, 210 (Vassiliades, J), 231 (Triantafyllides, J), 257 (Josephides, J).

<sup>114</sup> *Ibrahim*, 226 (Triantafyllides, J) ('Even a cursory glance through the Constitution of Cyprus will show that its fundamental theme and an indispensable prerequisite for its operation is the participation and co-operation in Government of Greek and Turkish-Cypriots: this appears to have been assumed and taken for granted as a *sine qua non* premise'), 254 (Josephides, J) ('It is, I think, generally accepted that our Constitution is a very *sui generis* Constitution. It has a bicomunal basis and presupposes bona fide co-operation of the two communities and organs of State elected or appointed on a communal basis').

Cooperation was brought up only to emphasise its absence from reality and to stress that the circumstances in 1964 were so anomalous as to necessitate deviations from the Constitution.

The question now is: If the judges in *Ibrahim* were sincere in their belief that constitutions must be democratically drafted and enacted, and if they were equally sincere when stating that the doctrine of necessity was (by definition) a temporary measure, then why did they not condition their doctrine upon a future exercise of democratic constituent power? The answer to this question might be simple: The judges could not have known whether the exceptional circumstances would continue to be in place for long, whether the sides to the conflict would agree to return to the 1960 Constitution or draft a new constitution, and whether the people of Cyprus would be called to express their views on this matter. Alternatively, the answer might not be so simple: They did not wish to express their faith in the fundamental political objective that underpinned not only the normativity of the 1960 Constitution but also that of any future Constitution of a reunited Cyprus—that is, in short, the normativity of a bicommunal, consociational Constitution.

Be that as it may, pressing juridical questions remain. When does a regime under the doctrine of necessity cease to be justified? What is the ultimate purpose of this regime in Cyprus—the preservation of constitutional normality under the 1960 Constitution or the achievement of a solution through democratic means?

The preamble of the law that was examined in *Ibrahim* gave a hint to an answer: ‘until such time as the people of Cyprus determine such matters’. The answer was not as simple as it appears at first glance. By mentioning the people of Cyprus, the Greek-Cypriot legislators left open the possibility of a future exercise of democratic constituent power that would take place based on the majority principle implemented in the population of Cyprus as a whole. I leave aside the issue of whether this approach to democratic constituent powers in a deeply divided society is credible. The major problem with this approach is that it sustained, if not the dream of *enosis*, the prospect of a unitary State with no special guarantees for the security, autonomy, and welfare of the Turkish-Cypriot community. This approach was unrealistic, not only because it did not correspond with the material constitution of Cyprus, as explained in the previous part of this article, but also because, as now widely accepted, the decision for a future Cyprus will be made by two separate electorates.

In fact, the only realistic option for the justices of the Supreme Court (if not those in *Ibrahim*, then their successors) and the only option that would have been consist-

ent with Mortati's theory would be to express their commitment to bicomunalism and condition the justifiability of the doctrine of necessity on a future exercise of constituent power by both communities *on an equal footing*. The Supreme Court of Cyprus diachronically did everything but move in this direction.

An opportunity to reconsider the doctrine of necessity on a new basis was lost in the mid-1980s and early 1990s, when the Court considered whether the doctrine permitted the amendment of non-basic articles of the Constitution.<sup>115</sup> Evaluation of these judgments is beyond the scope of this study. Suffice it to state that, if considered from the standpoint of Mortati's theory, amendment of non-basic articles of the 1960 Constitution would be justifiable (on the condition that it does not alter the provisions that enshrine the basic features of the 1960 Constitution), but subject to a reminder that the normative justification and bindingness of the regime of necessity is inching towards its expiry date. If the Cypriot justices wished to claim a greater role in the constitutional evolution of the Republic of Cyprus, as they did in various other circumstances, then they should have reconsidered the justifiability of the doctrine of necessity in the long term, and by mentioning the expiry date of the doctrine, they should have exercised pressure upon the political actors to reconsider their own views regarding the procedural aspects of the Cyprus problem. Such a reconsideration remains elusive.

## Conclusion

If Mortati's theory teaches us anything in contemporary terms, it is that although necessity may justify extraordinary legal arrangements, these must have an anchor in social and normative values, must acquire institutional form, and serve an objective that is consistent with the foundation of the constitutional order. Such arrangements must also be temporary, as they offer no basis for life in a democratic society in the long term. If the lawfulness of the regime under the doctrine of necessity matters, then this regime must have an expiry date, after which the people(s) will assume the responsibility of enacting a new constitution, one that either corroborates their original fundamental political objectives or puts forward new objectives.

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<sup>115</sup> See *President of the Republic v. House of Representatives* (1986) 3 CLR 1439; *President of the Republic v. House of Representatives* (1985) 3 CLR 2224; *Nicolaou v. Nicolaou* (1992) 1 CLR 1338 (in Greek). For a presentation and analysis, see Constantinos Kombos & Athena Herodotou, '(Un-)Constitutional Amendments: The Cypriot Paradigm' (2019) 25(3) *European Public Law* 305; Papastylianos (no 14); Emilianides (no 9) 52–55; Polyviou (no 9) 103–110.

*Ibrahim* gave legal expression to a radical constitutional transformation, one that normally could be brought about legitimately only by the people(s) themselves, exercising their democratic constituent power. In Cyprus, no such power has ever been formed. Actually, no one has ever asked for it, or almost no one,<sup>116</sup> despite the fact that the major complaint of Greek-Cypriots for the 1960 Constitution was that it did not express the 'sovereign will' of the 'people of Cyprus'. It is highly doubtful whether democratic constituent power should be understood in terms of some 'sovereign will' of some homogenous entity called 'the people'.<sup>117</sup> Today, *democratic* constitution-making (which is not the same as constitution-making by 'the people') has become an international norm, frequently promoted by the UN.<sup>118</sup> However, when it comes to the Cyprus problem, everyone seems to be satisfied with the old recipe of assigning the re-constituent task to leaders, that is, letting them connect their views on the future of Cyprus with their interests, but also letting citizens blame the leaders without assuming any responsibility.

What is exceptional in the case of Cyprus is not the mode of enactment of its original constitution, nor the circumstances that threaten the survival of the State, but the way in which the drafting and enactment of its future constitution has been designed. Elite negotiations coupled with referendums do not suffice to create conditions for constitutional ownership.<sup>119</sup> Such ownership is required if an institutional solution to the Cyprus problem is to be workable. The supporters of legal institutionalism in

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<sup>116</sup> But see the discussion in Andreas Auer & Vicky Triga (eds), *A Constitutional Convention for Cyprus* (Berlin: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag, 2009).

<sup>117</sup> For the negative answer, see *inter alia* Andrew Arato, *The Adventures of the Constituent Power: Beyond Revolutions?* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017); Rubinelli (no 53); Joel Colón- Ríos, *Constituent Power and the Law* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020).

<sup>118</sup> See Vijayashri Sripathi, *Constitution-Making under UN Auspices: Fostering Dependency in Sovereign Lands* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020); United Nations, Guidance Note of the Secretary-General 'United Nations Assistance to Constitution-making Processes', April 2009.

<sup>119</sup> See on this, *inter alia*, Zachary Elkins, Tom Ginsburg & James Melton, 'Baghdad, Tokyo, Kabul ...: Constitution Making in Occupied States' (2008) 49(4) *Williams & Mary Law Review* 1139. For the effects of popular participation in constitution-making, see Devra C. Moehler, *Distusting Democrats: Outcomes of Participatory Constitution Making* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2008); Abrak Saati, *The Participation Myth: Outcomes of participatory constitution building processes on democracy* (Sweden: Umeå University, 2015); Todd A. Eisenstadt, A. Carl Levan & Tofigh Maboudi, *Constituents before Assembly: Participation, Deliberation, and Representation in the Crafting of New Constitutions* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017); Gabriel L. Negretto, 'Constitution-making and liberal democracy: The role of citizens and representative elites' (2020) 18(1) *International Journal of Constitutional Law* 206; Alexander Hudson, *The Veil of Participation: Citizens and Political Parties in Constitution-Making Processes* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2021).

the past, Mortati being one, taught us that what matters in law and what sustains its normativity is political hegemony (not imposition) that communicates with societal values and motivates political agonism. I am not sure whether the protagonists of the quest for a workable solution to the Cyprus problem have been aware of this basic constitutionalist truth. Rather, I am convinced that the doctrine of necessity, having lost any links with sociopolitical concerns, has become a formalist shell that permits political complacency and apraxia.

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# The Republic of Cyprus and the European Union's Maritime Security: A Case Study on Diplomatic Leadership and Strategic Influence in Maritime Affairs

GIOVANNI PARENTE<sup>1</sup>

## Abstract

*This article explores the Republic of Cyprus' multi-faceted contribution to European Union (EU) maritime policy, naval operations, and the humanitarian component of maritime security operations as of EU accession. The research questions focus on Cypriot participation in EU maritime security operations between 2008 and 2024, the rationale for these deployments, and the implications of its contributions. Methodologically, this study employs a qualitative analysis of primary and secondary sources to examine Cypriot engagement in maritime policy, diplomatic initiatives, and four naval operations. Despite the country's modest size and limited capabilities, this research has found evidence of proactive and influential actorness in EU maritime policy and affairs. Findings reveal Cyprus showing unexpected leadership during the 2012 Presidency of the European Council, marked by the landmark Limassol Declaration, which revitalised the EU's sustainable maritime agenda. Similarly, the country's strategic engagement in four missions underscores its commitment to collective defence. Finally, their most recent initiative, Amalthea, addressed the Gaza humanitarian crisis with a maritime corridor, highlighting Cypriot diplomatic potential beyond the EU. Overall, the research concludes that the Cypriot case study serves as a compelling example of how small island States can exert significant influence within supranational organisations like the EU, shaping maritime policies and driving diplomatic agendas.*

**Keywords:** Republic of Cyprus; European Union; maritime security; Common Security and Defence Policy; maritime strategy

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<sup>1</sup> Dr Giovanni Parente received his doctorate from Maynooth University, Republic of Ireland. 'Research Ireland' supported this work under Grant No. GOIPG/2022/1101. The author is grateful to his doctoral supervisor, Professor Ian Speller, for his feedback on the earlier draft of this research article. He also wishes to thank the anonymous reviewers for this journal's special issue for their comments.

## Introduction

On 1 May 2004, ten countries joined the European Union (EU) in the largest enlargement to date. On the 20th anniversary, President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, defined this historical moment as ‘the birth of a new era’ in her address to the European Parliament.<sup>2</sup> The majority of the new Member States were located in Central Europe and had been part of the Soviet sphere of influence during the Cold War.<sup>3</sup> Three other countries were the Baltic States—Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania—which were also former republics of the Soviet Union.<sup>4</sup> Finally, the two remaining States were Mediterranean island-States, Malta and the Republic of Cyprus (hereafter, Cyprus), located respectively in the Central and Eastern Mediterranean regions.

This research article explores Cyprus’ multi-faceted contribution to EU maritime policy, naval operations, and the humanitarian component of maritime security operations in the country’s first 20 years of membership. Two central research questions investigate the Cypriot—operational and policy-relevant—contribution to EU maritime security:

- What was the extent of Cyprus’ participation in EU maritime security operations between 2008 and 2024?
- How did Cyprus contribute to EU maritime policy since its accession as a Member State?

In answering these questions, this research article employs a qualitative methodological approach. Discussions with officials at the European External Action Service (EEAS), the EU’s diplomatic body, as well as with Cypriot and Greek military personnel were conducted anonymously between February and April 2024. These discussions can shed light on the role of Cyprus in EU maritime security as they were carried out with professionals who had expertise in operations, policy, and strategy. The article also reflects on the Cypriot National Guard’s participation in Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions within the first 20 years of joining the EU.

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<sup>2</sup> European Commission, *Speech by President von der Leyen at the European Parliament formal sitting on the 20th anniversary of the 2004 EU Enlargement* (24 April, 2024), available at [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/speech\\_24\\_2282](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/speech_24_2282)

<sup>3</sup> EUR-LEX, *The 2004 enlargement: the challenge of a 25-member EU*, available at <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/EN/legal-content/summary/the-2004-enlargement-the-challenge-of-a-25-member-eu.html>

<sup>4</sup> Baltic Defence College, *Restoration of Independence in the Baltics*, available at <https://www.baltdefcol.org/1243>

The role of small States in the EU has been widely explored within the broader field of international relations and European integration. Traditional realist perspectives argue that power in supranational organisations is predominantly exercised by larger States with greater economic and military resources. However, scholarship on small States has challenged this assumption, demonstrating that influence is not solely dependent on material power but also on factors like institutional positioning, diplomatic skill, and niche expertise.<sup>5</sup> Within the EU, small States can exert influence despite their structural disadvantages. As Grøn and Wivel argue, small States often rely on coalition-building, norm entrepreneurship, and institutional leadership to shape policy outcomes.<sup>6</sup> In this context, the 'smart state' theory, proposed by Panke, suggests that small States can maximise their impact by specialising in specific policy areas, leveraging their expertise, and engaging proactively in agenda-setting processes.<sup>7</sup> Cyprus' role in EU maritime security aligns with this framework, as the country has capitalised on its maritime knowledge and geopolitical position to contribute strategically to European policy debates.

On this matter, literature on small States in the EU further highlights the importance of the rotating Presidency of the European Council as an opportunity for influence. Various scholarly works suggest that holding the Presidency enables small States to shape policy discussions, provided they focus on well-defined priorities.<sup>8</sup> In this regard, Cyprus' 2012 Presidency exemplifies the ways a small State can exercise leadership by focusing on niche areas of expertise. Finally, recent studies on diplomatic agility suggest that small States can play a significant role in crisis management and policy coordination in a major crisis.<sup>9</sup> In this instance, the Cypriot diplomatic initiative in leading the Amalthea humanitarian corridor for Gaza further supports this argument.

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<sup>5</sup> Robert Steinmetz, *Small states in Europe: challenges and opportunities* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2016); Baldur Thorhallsson & Anders Wivel, 'Small states in the European Union: what do we know and what would we like to know?' (2006) 19(4) *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, [page number].

<sup>6</sup> Caroline Howard Grøn & Anders Wivel, 'Maximizing influence in the European Union after the Lisbon Treaty: From small state policy to smart state strategy' (2011) 33(5) *Journal of European Integration*, [page number].

<sup>7</sup> Diana Panke, 'Small states in the European Union: structural disadvantages in EU policy-making and counter-strategies' (2010) 17(6) *Journal of European Public Policy*, [page number].

<sup>8</sup> Simone Bunse, *Small States and EU Governance: Leadership through the Council Presidency* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

<sup>9</sup> Kristi Raik & Merili Arjakas, 'Grasping the opportunity for small state leadership: Estonia's response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine' (2024) [Volume number](issue number) *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, [page number].

Overall, recent scholarship on small-State influence in EU policymaking highlights the complexity of strategies employed by these States to shape European policies despite structural constraints. Högenauer and Mišík emphasise that small States are most effective when they engage in coalition-building, anticipate major economic and security developments, and develop specialised expertise in niche policy areas.<sup>10</sup> Their analysis suggests that small States must navigate institutional challenges with strategic adaptability to ensure that their voices are heard within the EU's decision-making structures.

The central hypothesis concerns the fact that, based on their limited capabilities and expertise in overseas missions, Cyprus has yet to participate operationally, meaning the practical deployment of naval or air assets in the area of operation, in any of the four naval missions launched in the EU's CSDP framework. This suggests limited diplomatic, political, and military contributions by the country to EU maritime security and strategy.

In contrast, this paper finds a complex and unexpected leadership role taken by Cyprus in advancing the EU's maritime policy. Specifically, during their first time holding the Presidency of the European Council in the second half of 2012, the small island State provided renewed impetus to the EU maritime agenda with the publication of the Limassol Declaration.<sup>11</sup> At the time, the advancement of a joint naval strategy had been in a stalemate for approximately two years; Cyprus managed to bring the topic back to the negotiating table in Brussels thanks to their maritime vocation. More recently, Cyprus has been proactive in providing humanitarian support to the civilians in the Gaza Strip following the Israeli bombings in their conflict with Hamas since 7 October 2023.<sup>12</sup> As of May 2024, the delivery of aid to the Gaza Strip through a maritime corridor in Larnaca has been made possible only thanks to the Cypriot

<sup>10</sup> Anna-Lena Hogenauer & Matúš Mišík (eds), *Small States in EU Policy-Making: Strategies, Challenges, Opportunities* (Routledge, London: 2024).

<sup>11</sup> Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the European Union, *Declaration of the European Ministers responsible for the Integrated Maritime Policy and the European Commission, on a Marine and Maritime Agenda for growth and jobs the "Limassol Declaration"* (2012), available at [https://maritime-forum.ec.europa.eu/document/download/96c0f40f-bcc7-409b-9307-03bda4881045\\_en?filename=The%20Limassol%20Declaration%20-%20A%20Marine%20and%20Maritime%20Agenda%20for%20Growth%20and%20Jobs.pdf](https://maritime-forum.ec.europa.eu/document/download/96c0f40f-bcc7-409b-9307-03bda4881045_en?filename=The%20Limassol%20Declaration%20-%20A%20Marine%20and%20Maritime%20Agenda%20for%20Growth%20and%20Jobs.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> European Commission, *Joint Statement from the EC, Cyprus, the UAE, the US, and the UK Endorsing the Activation of a Maritime Corridor to Deliver Humanitarian Assistance to Gaza* (8 March, 2024), available at [https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/news/joint-statement-ec-cyprus-uae-us-and-uk-endorsing-activation-maritime-corridor-deliver-humanitarian-2024-03-08\\_en](https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/news/joint-statement-ec-cyprus-uae-us-and-uk-endorsing-activation-maritime-corridor-deliver-humanitarian-2024-03-08_en)

proposal at the 2023 Paris Peace Forum.<sup>13</sup> In conclusion, both episodes explain the agenda-setting powers of small island States in the context of supranational organisations such as the EU in times of crises and stalemates. Overall, the potential of this research to explore the implications of small States' operational, policy, and strategic contribution to maritime security policy and governance is significant.

This paper will proceed as follows. The next section will discuss the role played by the first-ever Cypriot Presidency of the European Council in the second semester of 2012. The approval of the Limassol Declaration on 8 October 2012, which represented a turning point for the maritime policy agenda of the EU before the first Maritime Security Strategy, was eventually published in June 2014. The following section will explore the Cypriot participation in the EU's four maritime security operations—Atalanta, Sophia, Irini, and Aspides—between 2008, when the first was launched, and 2024, the time of writing. The deployments in the various operational headquarters will be discussed, and their rationale will be analysed through primary and secondary sources. Finally, the last section will discuss the current Cypriot diplomatic leadership in proposing, advocating, and eventually setting up a humanitarian corridor for Gaza as part of the Amalthea initiative.

## **Advancing the European Agenda on Maritime Policy: The 2012 Presidency of the European Council**

On 1 July 2012, Cyprus assumed the Presidency of the European Council for the second semester of the year. This was the first time the Republic had taken such a leadership role since joining the EU only eight years earlier. The occasion to plan, propose, and eventually approve policy was invaluable to bringing national interests into the broader European agenda but it was also a double-edged sword for the country. Holding the Presidency was regarded as a test for 'new' Member States that joined the EU in the 2004 enlargement.<sup>14</sup>

A limited cohort of scholars has investigated the impact of 'smallness' on the capacity to run the European Council presidency, focusing on various national case

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<sup>13</sup> European Commission, *Press statement by President von der Leyen with Cypriot President Christodoulides in Larnaca* (8 March 2024), available at [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/statement\\_24\\_1367](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/statement_24_1367)

<sup>14</sup> Ieva Grumbinaitė, 'Bringing the European Union closer to the member states? The impact of the rotating EU Council presidency on small member states' in Anna-Lena Högenauer & Matúš Mišík (eds), *Small States in EU Policy-Making* (London: Routledge, 2024) [page number].



studies. It has been argued that small States tend to work on their few areas of expertise during the rotating Presidency for pragmatic reasons, given that they likely lack comprehensive staff and competencies in every field of EU governance.<sup>15</sup>

As a small State and a newcomer to the EU, Cyprus had the arduous task of coordinating the work of the Council for half a year. Thus, the executive focused on their most immediate vocation, the sea. This was reflected in the maritime connotations of the Presidency's logo: A tricoloured ship featured yellow for the country's flag, green for the olives, and blue for the seas and skies of the Eastern Mediterranean.<sup>16</sup> The then-Deputy Minister for European Affairs, Andreas Mavroyiannis, commented: 'The ship's compass points to one direction only: the vision for a Better Europe, closer to the citizens, its neighbours and the world at large'.<sup>17</sup> The metaphor of the ship sailing towards the shining future of Europe foreshadowed Cyprus' focus: maritime policy.

The advancement of integrated maritime policy was also regarded as a priority by two previous temporary Presidencies: Denmark and Poland (2011–2012).<sup>18</sup> These two countries did not successfully deliver any remarkable improvement for maritime policy, preferring to invest their resources in other areas closer to their national interests.<sup>19</sup> Cypriot decisionmakers, in contrast, had a particular interest in developing maritime policy with a cross-sectoral approach to EU maritime security. Conversely, there was very little that Cyprus could have proposed in other areas of European integration. For example, the then-Minister of Defence argued that 'we do

<sup>15</sup> Marjan Svetličič & Kira Cerjak, 'Small Countries' EU Council Presidency and the Realisation of their National Interests: The Case of Slovenia', (2015) 21(74), *Croatian International Relations Review*, [page number]; Robert Steinmetz, *Small states in Europe: challenges and opportunities* (London: PUBLISHER, 2016); Michael Harwood, Stefano Moncada & Roderick Pace, *Malta's EU Presidency: a study in a small state presidency of the Council of the EU* (Msida, 2018).

<sup>16</sup> Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the European Union, The logo of the Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the EU, available at <http://www.cy2012.eu/en/menu/the-presidency-eu/cyprus-presidency/visual-identity-of-the-presidency>

<sup>17</sup> Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the European Union, *Presentation of the Logo of the Cyprus Presidency* (19 June, 2012), available at [http://www.cy2012.eu/en/page/videos/channels/the\\_cyprus\\_eu\\_presidency/video-53](http://www.cy2012.eu/en/page/videos/channels/the_cyprus_eu_presidency/video-53)

<sup>18</sup> Council of the European Union, *18 month programme of the Council (1 July 2011 - 31 December 2012)* (17 June, 2011), available at [http://www.cy2012.eu/index.php/en/file/ZvIy6XtZoD\\_GpdeP\\_+CepQ==/](http://www.cy2012.eu/index.php/en/file/ZvIy6XtZoD_GpdeP_+CepQ==/)

<sup>19</sup> CBOS, *EVALUATION OF POLISH PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION*, available at [https://www.cbos.pl/EN/publications/reports/2012/011\\_12.pdf](https://www.cbos.pl/EN/publications/reports/2012/011_12.pdf); EU Monitor, *Europe at work - The results of the Danish Presidency*, available at <http://eu2012.dk/en/NewsList/Juni/Uge-26/~media/66DF9F34D5AC4DBB98AB99538DE35F86.pdf>

not have a great number of experts, technocrats and specialists; neither do we have previous experience [regarding CSDP development]'.<sup>20</sup> With no other viable option for agenda-setting, the emphasis on maritime policy could be regarded as the sole opportunity for the country to make its voice heard. The publication of the Limassol Declaration was the turning point of EU maritime policy as we know it today and, even more importantly, provided the necessary optimism to advance maritime security and strategy at the time. As the then-President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, pointed out, the publication of the Limassol Declaration came at the right time for a Europe that had just experienced the 2008–2009 financial crisis.<sup>21</sup> Following an unprecedented crisis, the EU was ready to embark on a process of economic growth, which could have been realised also thanks to the development of a serious and comprehensive maritime policy.<sup>22</sup> Overall, Cyprus excelled at advancing the status of maritime policy, which was stuck in early 2012. By being assertive in this course of its first temporary Presidency of the Council, the country provided a valuable step forward for maritime strategy. This circumstance shows how a small State can be successful in advancing public policies if it focuses on its own speciality, in this case maritime policy, rather than a broad variety of policy areas, as a larger country would instead do. Finally, the Cypriot Presidency came at the right time between the 2008–2009 financial crisis and the EU's recovery process in the sense that it shed the light on the necessity to focus also on other previously neglected issues (such as maritime security).

On 8 October 2012, the Limassol Declaration was unveiled in the presence of the various Ministers of the Environment of EU Member States, the applicant Croatia, and the European Economic Area.<sup>23</sup> It presented a 20-point sustainable maritime agenda and focused on enhancing a dynamic programme for the coastal communi-

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<sup>20</sup> Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the European Union, *Address by the Minister of Defence of the Republic of Cyprus Mr. Demetris Eliades: Seminar "On the Road with CSDP"* (30 October, 2012), available at <http://www.cy2012.eu/index.php/tr/file/gFrCXkoekhP2nxXo9+AUZw==>

<sup>21</sup> European Commission, *Statement by President Barroso at the joint press conference with Cypriot President Christofias following the Informal Ministerial meeting on EU Integrated Maritime Policy* (8 October, 2012), available at [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/fr/SPEECH\\_12\\_697](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/fr/SPEECH_12_697)

<sup>22</sup> European Commission, *Speech by President Barroso: "A strong maritime pillar for the Europe 2020 strategy"*, *Informal Ministerial meeting on EU Integrated Maritime Policy/Limassol* (8 October 2012), available at [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH\\_12\\_696](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH_12_696)

<sup>23</sup> Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the European Union, *Informal Meeting on the IMP, October 8*, available at <http://www.cy2012.eu/index.php/en/gallery/gallery-161?fromSearch>

ties.<sup>24</sup> Shipping, renewable marine energy, fishing, and tourism were the sectors in which the EU would invest as part of the Limassol Declaration.<sup>25</sup> The document focused on the necessity of enhancing knowledge and expertise in the maritime domain with a view to supporting ‘sustainable and inclusive growth’.<sup>26</sup> In this regard, the Declaration envisioned a programmatic strategy for advancing the EU’s blue economy, which, according to the World Bank, is the ‘sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and jobs while preserving the health of ocean ecosystem’.<sup>27</sup>

Drafting this Declaration, which was also known as the ‘Maritime Agenda for Growth and Jobs’, sparked renewed interest and provided momentum for the EU’s understanding of the seas as a fundamental economic opportunity.<sup>28</sup> After several years of policy stalemate, the EU’s maritime policies were re-discussed to provide a maritime pillar for the broader 2020 strategy.<sup>29</sup> As rightly anticipated by the then-President of the European Commission, the Declaration remains a fundamental doctrine for the subsequent policies of the EU’s maritime security in its environmental component.<sup>30</sup> The EU began to understand the sea as an opportunity for growth, prosperity, and development of coastal communities from the northern to the southern flanks. The 2014 EU Maritime Security Strategy was the first for the community and was finalised by the Greek and Italian Presidencies of the European Council in

<sup>24</sup> Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the European Union, *Declaration of the European Ministers responsible for the Integrated Maritime Policy and the European Commission, on a Marine and Maritime Agenda for growth and jobs the “Limassol Declaration”* (2012).

<sup>25</sup> Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the European Union, *Declaration of the European Ministers responsible for the Integrated Maritime Policy and the European Commission, on a Marine and Maritime Agenda for growth and jobs the “Limassol Declaration”* (2012), 3–4.

<sup>26</sup> Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the European Union, *Declaration of the European Ministers responsible for the Integrated Maritime Policy and the European Commission, on a Marine and Maritime Agenda for growth and jobs the “Limassol Declaration”* (2012), 5.

<sup>27</sup> United Nations, *Blue Economy Definitions*, available at [https://www.un.org/regularprocess/sites/www.un.org.regularprocess/files/rok\\_part\\_2.pdf](https://www.un.org/regularprocess/sites/www.un.org.regularprocess/files/rok_part_2.pdf)

<sup>28</sup> European Commission, Maria Damanaki, *European Commissioner for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, The Integrated Maritime Policy gains momentum, Ministerial meeting on EU Integrated Maritime Policy/Limassol* (7 October 2012), available at [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH\\_12\\_699](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH_12_699)

<sup>29</sup> European Commission, *Speech by President Barroso: “A strong maritime pillar for the Europe 2020 strategy”*, *Informal Ministerial meeting on EU Integrated Maritime Policy/Limassol* (8 October 2012).

<sup>30</sup> Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the European Union, *Press Release - “The Declaration of Limassol will go down in history”* (8 October 12), available at <http://www.cy2012.eu/index.php/en/news-categories/areas/general-affairs/press-release-the-declaration-of-limassol-will-go-down-in-history>

2014.<sup>31</sup> These two other Mediterranean Member States continued the labour initiated by their Cypriot counterparts and completed the EU's reorientation towards an understanding of the seas as economically crucial for prosperity.<sup>32</sup>

This strategic reorientation of the EU benefitted from Cyprus' willingness to develop a newer maritime agenda after a period of inactivity.<sup>33</sup> Twelve years later, the Limassol Declaration represents the fully realised diplomatic, political, and policy potential of a small island State, a newcomer, in the complex institutional framework of the EU when their main area of expertise, the maritime domain, was brought to the intergovernmental bargaining tables.

### **The Cypriot Contribution to the European Union's Maritime Security Operations**

This section explores Cyprus' participation in the four EU maritime security operations between 2008 and 2024. It provides an overview of the Cypriot armed forces and their capabilities in the broader European context. Subsequently, it investigates the country's various levels of participation in the four naval missions launched in the CSDP framework.

#### ***The Cyprus National Guard***

Cyprus has only one division of its armed forces, the National Guard.<sup>34</sup> Personnel are usually conscripted for a compulsory period of 15 months and remain part of the reserve until their 50th birthday, in the case of officers, or until their 60th, in the case of military doctors.<sup>35</sup> Only Greek-Cypriots can be conscripted since 1964 following the dismantling of the National Guard's predecessor in 1963, in which both Turkish- and Greek-Cypriots had served. At the time of writing, in May 2024, the active personnel of the National Guard account for 12,000, while there are around 50,000 reserves.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Council of the European Union, *European Union Maritime Security Strategy* (24 June 2014), available at <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST%2011205%202014%20INIT/EN/pdf>

<sup>32</sup> Council of the European Union, *European Union Maritime Security Strategy* (24 June 2014), 14–15.

<sup>33</sup> Argyris G. Passas & Evangelia I. Katakalous, *The Cyprus EU Presidency: "Riders on the Storm"* (2012), available at [https://www.sieps.se/en/publications/2012/the-cyprus-eu-presidency-riders-on-the-storm-20123op/Sieps\\_2012\\_3op.pdf](https://www.sieps.se/en/publications/2012/the-cyprus-eu-presidency-riders-on-the-storm-20123op/Sieps_2012_3op.pdf) 48–50.

<sup>34</sup> Andreas Efthymiou, 'Militarism in post-war Cyprus: the development of the ideology of defence', (2016) 16(4) *Defence Studies* 410.

<sup>35</sup> International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance, 2024*. (London, 2024), 80.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid 80.

Over the last two decades, the number of military personnel increased to a maximum of around 15,000 in 2020; but since then, it decreased to the same level as in most other EU Member States. There is no separate data available for the country's sea-going agency. Like the other small Mediterranean island EU Member State, Malta, Cyprus possesses a small naval force, the Naval Command, serving as the maritime wing of the National Guard. The Naval Command is tasked with the traditional policing functions of any coastguard and primarily focuses on patrolling the Cypriot coastlines. Its assets include one coastal defence support and seven patrol and coastal combatants.<sup>37</sup> Capabilities include a mix of former Soviet assets and modern European systems, mostly provided by EU partners following operational usage.<sup>38</sup> Due to numerical and technical limitations, the Naval Command cannot protect the territorial integrity of Cyprus from its long-standing Turkish threat.

As a result, Cypriots relies on the Greek navy, army, and air force to protect their territorial waters and economic exclusive zones, and even to ensure territorial defence on land.<sup>39</sup> The country's decisionmakers have decided to keep their military personnel on the island to counter risks from their main regional competitor and to deepen ongoing cooperation with the Greek armed forces regarding training, capacity-building, and joint exercises. The sole exception of military deployment has been their participation in the United Nations Peacekeeping Forces in Cyprus (UNFICYP), in place since 1964 in the buffer zone between the two sides of the island, and the United Nations (UN) peacekeeping mission in Lebanon, in which they have been participating consistently since 1978.<sup>40</sup>

### *The National Guard in Operations Atalanta, Sophia, Irini, and Aspides*

In the first 20 years following EU accession, Cyprus did not participate operationally in the maritime security operations launched in the CSDP framework, of which there were four. The National Guard has been deploying its high-ranked military personnel in the operational headquarters of these four missions ever since 2008. This peculiar

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid 81.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid 80–81.

<sup>39</sup> Zenonas Tziarras, 'Israel-Cyprus-Greece: A "Comfortable" Quasi-Alliance', (2016) 21(3) *Mediterranean Politics*, [page number]; Informal conversation with serving and former Greek military personnel, February–April 2024.

<sup>40</sup> Republic of Cyprus Ministry of Defence, *Defence Policy: United Nations*, available at <https://mod.gov.cy/en/o.η.ε.html>

type of deployment could be regarded as strategic as it entails deploying personnel to the missions' headquarters without deploying any asset in the area of operation. In the first-ever EU naval operation, the EUNAVFOR Somalia Atalanta, Cyprus sent one naval officer every year to the then-operational headquarters in Northwood, UK. After the Brexit referendum and the Council's decision to relocate the mission to the naval base of Rota in Spain, Cyprus maintained its traditional strategic contribution to the anti-piracy mission. A cohort of around 17 personnel has been estimated to participate in Operation Atalanta.

The second and third EU maritime security operations, EUNAVFOR Med Sophia and EUNAVFOR Med Irini, were both assigned to the Italian navy in the operational headquarters of Centocelle in Rome. The prior mission was launched in the aftermath of the unilateral Italian mission Mare Nostrum, meant to provide search-and-rescue to migrants crossing the Mediterranean, but had different executive and non-executive tasks, primarily the disruption of human trafficking networks. Operation Sophia ceased in 2020, and shortly after, the EU formally approved and operationally launched a mission to enforce the UN Security Council's Resolution of the arms embargo towards Libya. Irini, meaning 'peace' in Greek, is still active under Italian leadership, but has not been able to comply with the third phase, the training of Libyan military forces, due to political disagreements.

In terms of Cypriot contributions, the Republic maintained the same numerical participation in Sophia as in the EU's first naval mission, Atalanta. Specifically, one naval officer was deployed in the operational headquarters in Rome yearly between May 2018 and March 2020. There was a reduction of serving personnel in the third mission, Irini, in which only one military officer of the National Guard was deployed every two years in Italy.

As of 1 May 2024, a military officer is deployed in the operational headquarters in Rome to contribute to Irini.<sup>41</sup> The reason might be in the simultaneous national participation in the EU's fourth naval mission, EUNAVFOR Aspides, to provide a defensive response to the growing Houthi naval warfare attacks in the Red Sea. Two National Guard officers are participating in the operational headquarters in Larissa, Greece, for the strategic work of the mission.<sup>42</sup> This commitment is the largest to date of the Cypriot armed forces in any maritime security operation launched in the

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<sup>41</sup> Informal conversations with serving and former Greek military personnel, February-April 2024.

<sup>42</sup> Presidency of the Republic of Cyprus, *Statements by the President of the Republic and the President of the European Commission* (8 March 2024), available at <https://www.presidency.gov.cy/cypresidency/cypresidency.nsf/All/18D98C29CDD6EBC2C2258ADD00342FCC?OpenDocument>

CSDP framework. There are two main rationales behind this strategic choice. For one, Cyprus wanted to demonstrate solidarity with their EU partners in upholding international maritime law. For another, the economic driver of securing one of the most trafficked trading routes in the world has undoubtedly played a crucial role in the decision to deploy two military officers to Larissa's operational headquarters. The Cypriot-flagged merchant fleet is the third largest in the EU, right after the Greek and Italian companies, and is ranked 11th globally in terms of hull numbers.<sup>43</sup> In 2023, the shipping industry accounted for approximately 7% of the country's GDP, the highest in relative percentage terms in the Eurozone, and has been the fastest growing in the last five years, with a substantial increase of 37%.<sup>44</sup> As of April 2024, slightly more than 1,000 Cypriot vessels were at sea, encompassing over 9,000 ship-related activities annually.<sup>45</sup> A notable reflection of importance of the maritime trade industry for the Cypriot economy has also been the creation in 2018 of an extraordinary Deputy Minister for Shipping, which was a first for the EU, as of May 2024.<sup>46</sup> The country's shipping and commerce companies have expressed their satisfaction and gratitude for the prompt political decision to deploy military personnel to ensure the required functioning of the Larissa headquarters.<sup>47</sup>

Similarly, the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, has praised the immediate national response to the crisis in the Red Sea with the de-

<sup>43</sup> Shipping Deputy Ministry of the Republic of Cyprus, *Marking the milestones at Cyprus Shipping Deputy Ministry's four-year anniversary* By Vassilios Demetriades Shipping Deputy Ministry to the President, available at <https://www.dms.gov.cy/dms/shipping.nsf/All/EFB8E90E6125DDBDC22587F80032B-06D?OpenDocument#:~:text=The%20flag%20represents%20a%20workforce,7%25%20of%20Cyprus%20GDP>

<sup>44</sup> Cyprus Profile, *Global Shipping Nation*, available at <https://www.cyprusprofile.com/sectors/maritime-and-shipping>; Shipping Deputy Ministry of the Republic of Cyprus, *Marking the milestones at Cyprus Shipping Deputy Ministry's four-year anniversary* By Vassilios Demetriades Shipping Deputy Ministry to the President.

<sup>45</sup> Shipping Deputy Ministry of the Republic of Cyprus, *Marking the milestones at Cyprus Shipping Deputy Ministry's four-year anniversary* By Vassilios Demetriades Shipping Deputy Ministry to the President.

<sup>46</sup> Shipping Deputy Ministry of the Republic of Cyprus, *Marking the milestones at Cyprus Shipping Deputy Ministry's four-year anniversary* By Vassilios Demetriades Shipping Deputy Ministry to the President.

<sup>47</sup> Cyprus Shipping Chamber, *CSC strongly welcomes EU's Operation ASPIDES* (21 February 2024), available at <https://cyprussippingnews.com/2024/02/21/csc-strongly-welcomes-eus-operation-aspides/>; KNews, *Cyprus plays key role in EU's operation ASPIDES: Republic of Cyprus takes active role in protecting Red Sea shipping routes* (23 February 2024), available at <https://knews.kathimerini.com.cy/en/business/cyprus-plays-key-role-in-eu-s-operation-aspides>



ployment of those two military officers.<sup>48</sup> The original mandate of Operation Aspides is set to last twelve months until February 2025 and will be reviewed by the military and strategic officials of the EEAS, in conjunction with the operational chain of command, at the beginning of the next year. The Cypriot participation in the Larissa headquarters will last until the end of this initial mandate, and the deployments are likely to be confirmed with Aspides being extended by one year.<sup>49</sup>

The extensive discussion about the participation of Cyprus' National Guard in EU maritime security operations raises some concerns regarding the reasons why the country never contributed operationally, in the sense that personnel were not deployed at sea. Instead, Cypriot military personnel were only sent to the four operational headquarters of the naval missions since 2008. They have mainly been tasked with daily strategic tasks in the behind-the-scenes of military operation.

On the one hand, in light of increasingly aggressive Turkish behaviour, Cypriot politicians were conscious that proper operational participation at sea would have strained the already limited capacity of the armed forces to defend their country's sovereignty, on both land and at sea. As noted in this section, the Naval Command possesses only eight assets, of which just one serves as a proper defence vessel, while the other seven are traditional patrol and coastal combatants. Even though the core of their operational activity relates to the defence of the Republic's territorial waters, they have relied on regional partners to protect their waters.

The Greeks remain the most significant contributor to patrolling Cyprus waters and its economic exclusive zone (EEZ) for cultural, political, and historical reasons. However, in the last three years, the Republic has expanded its defence agreements with other like-minded countries, ranging from France to Italy to Israel. Providing substantial operational capacity to the EU's naval missions was thus a quasi-impossible task for Cyprus, one which would have posed a risk to sovereignty. Therefore, the deployments in the operational headquarters of the above missions should be seen as primarily symbolic, demonstrating the country's solidarity with its EU partners.

By constantly maintaining a military contingent in those headquarters, Cyprus benefitted from closer cooperation at the highest military and strategic levels with those countries operating under the traditional NATO procedures and standards that otherwise it would not have been exposed to. In this light, deploying slightly more

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<sup>48</sup> European Commission, *Press statement by President von der Leyen with Cypriot President Christodoulides in Larnaca* (8 March 2024).

<sup>49</sup> Informal conversations with serving and former Cypriot military personnel, February–April 2024.



than 20 military officers to the four operational headquarters has served as an instance of small navy diplomacy, telegraphing to the broader European community that the Republic supported the CSDP framework as best it could. Besides this diplomatic implication, these deployments have benefitted the country's economy, particularly the first and last missions, given that they were meant to ensure the freedom of navigation, a crucial aspect for the EU's third largest merchant fleet. Finally, these strategic participations have deepened political cooperation with the leading European partners in terms of joint training and patrolling exercises.

### **The Republic of Cyprus and the Maritime Corridor for Gaza**

This section discusses Cyprus' unexpected leadership role in responding to the humanitarian crisis during the recent conflict in Gaza. On 7 October 2023, Hamas attacked the southern flank of Israel, killed a total of 1,139 people, and took more than 250 Israeli civilians as hostages in the Gaza Strip, making the armed incursion the first in the territory of Israel since 1948.<sup>50</sup> These attacks began the Israel–Hamas War, with Israel bombing the Gaza Strip several times.<sup>51</sup> As of 24 April 2024, the UN has estimated that over 34,000 Palestinian civilians, of which approximately 70% were women and minors, have been killed in attacks conducted by the Israeli Defence Forces.<sup>52</sup>

The seriousness of the humanitarian crisis following the Israeli attacks has urged rapid responses from the EU and its Member States. Cyprus was among the first early respondents to the crisis, proposing a maritime corridor for delivering goods to the Gaza Strip. The European Council's meetings in late October 2023 included early talks over the feasibility of such a humanitarian corridor at sea.<sup>53</sup> The Council Conclusions called for 'continued, rapid, safe and unhindered humanitarian access and

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<sup>50</sup> Sarah El Debb, *What is Hamas? The group that rules the Gaza Strip has fought several rounds of war with Israel* (15 October 2023), AP, available at <https://apnews.com/article/hamas-gaza-palestinian-authority-israel-war-ed7018dba09b81513daf3bda38109a>

<sup>51</sup> Bill Hutchinson, *Israel-Hamas War: Timeline and key developments* (22 November 2023), ABC News, available at <https://abcnews.go.com/International/timeline-surprise-rocket-attack-hamas-israel/story?id=103816006>

<sup>52</sup> United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel | Flash Update #157* (24 April 2024), available at <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/hostilities-gaza-strip-and-israel-flash-update-157>

<sup>53</sup> Informal conversations with European Union officials, January–April 2024.

aid to reach those in need through all necessary measures, including humanitarian corridors and pauses for humanitarian needs'.<sup>54</sup>

Two weeks later, at the Paris Peace Forum organised by French President Emmanuel Macron, the President of Cyprus, Nikos Christodoulides, presented a plan for a maritime corridor to deliver aid to the civilians in the Gaza Strip.<sup>55</sup> Facilitated by the Republic's geographical proximity, approximately 210 nautical miles, the proposal included using the port in Larnaca for collection, inspection, storage, and, eventually, shipping of goods to a neutral region on the coast of Gaza, escorted by warships.<sup>56</sup>

The initiative was named Amalthea after the foster mother of Zeus, the king of all gods, on Mount Olympus in Greek mythology.<sup>57</sup> This choice was highly symbolic since there was a parallelism between the fostering care provided to Zeus and Cyprus' willingness to provide aid to those civilians in danger in Gaza.

President Christodoulides visited the main national actors in the region to gain support on this maritime corridor proposal. In late November 2023, Cyprus and Israel held various high-level ministerial discussions.<sup>58</sup> Simultaneously, the Cypriot executive managed to secure support from German Chancellor Scholz while reinforcing the bilateral partnership with France on the necessity of humanitarian aid to Gaza.<sup>59</sup> In early December 2023, the President visited Egypt and Jordan to meet with

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<sup>54</sup> European Council, *European Council meeting (26 and 27 October 2023) – Conclusions* (27 October 2023), available at <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/67627/20241027-european-council-conclusions.pdf>, 5.

<sup>55</sup> Clea Calcutt, *Macron's peace forum adds to 'conference overkill,' critics say* (9 November 2023), Politico, available at <https://www.politico.eu/article/macrons-peace-forum-adds-to-conference-overkill-critics-say/>

<sup>56</sup> Nektaria Stamouli, *EU throws weight behind Cypriot plan to ship aid to Gaza* (9 November 2023), Politico, available at <https://www.politico.eu/article/cyprus-humanitarian-aid-gaza-european-union-israel-hamas-shipments/>

<sup>57</sup> Peter T. Struck, *Amalthea, Greek and Roman Mythology*, University of Pennsylvania, available at <https://www2.classics.upenn.edu/myth/php/tools/dictionary.php?method=did&regexp=1658&set-card=0&link=0&media=0>

<sup>58</sup> Annie Charalambous, *Cyprus, France launch diplomatic marathon for Gaza humanitarian corridor initiative* (17 November 2023), En.Philenews, available at <https://in-cyprus.philenews.com/local/cyprus-france-launch-diplomatic-marathon-for-gaza-humanitarian-corridor-initiative/>

<sup>59</sup> Financial Mirror, *Cyprus-Israel in 'final stage' of opening Gaza aid corridor* (18 November 2023), available at <https://www.pressreader.com/cyprus/financial-mirror-cyprus/20231118/281608130168781>

President al-Sisi and King Abdullah, respectively, to secure diplomatic and political support.<sup>60</sup> The talks continued in the first trimester of the 2024.

In providing a joint coordination centre for the maritime corridor, Cypriot leaders were praised in Europe, the Middle East, and the United States. Ursula von der Leyen acknowledged the ‘relentless work’ done by the Cypriot President to have a functioning humanitarian corridor ‘by serving as a mediator for all parties’,<sup>61</sup> while the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates praised the Cypriot leadership in addressing the unprecedented humanitarian crisis in Palestine.<sup>62</sup> More importantly, Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the Emirates, confirmed the allocation of \$15 million to strengthen the humanitarian corridor between Cyprus and Gaza.<sup>63</sup> Additionally, a White House press statement emphasised: ‘Cyprus’ leadership in establishing the Amalthea Initiative—which outlines a mechanism for securely shipping aid from Cyprus to Gaza via sea—was integral to enabling this joint effort to launch a maritime corridor’.<sup>64</sup> Finally, in his letter to President Christodoulides, US President Joe Biden commended the ‘leadership, determination, and vision’ demonstrated by Cyprus in providing a safe humanitarian corridor for delivering goods to the civilians in the Gaza Strip.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Reuters, *Cyprus pushes Gaza corridor idea; leader to visit Egypt, Jordan* (4 December 2023), available at <https://www.reuters.com/world/cyprus-pushes-gaza-corridor-idea-leader-visit-egypt-jordan-2023-12-04/>

<sup>61</sup> European Commission, *Press statement by President von der Leyen with Cypriot President Christodoulides in Larnaca* (8 March 2024).

<sup>62</sup> United Arab Emirates Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *UAE Strongly Condemns the Israeli attack of World Central Kitchen Team in the Gaza Strip* (2 April 2024), available at <https://www.mofa.gov.ae/en/mediahub/news/2024/4/2/2-4-2024-uae-ghaza>

<sup>63</sup> United Arab Emirates Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Under the directives of the UAE President, the UAE supports the “Amalthea Fund” for humanitarian response in Gaza with USD 15 million* (10 April 2024), available at <https://www.mofa.gov.ae/en/mediahub/news/2024/4/10/10-4-2024-uae-gaza>

<sup>64</sup> The White House, *Joint Statement from the European Commission, the Republic of Cyprus, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, and the United States Endorsing the Activation of a Maritime Corridor to Deliver Humanitarian Assistance to Gaza* (8 March 2024), available at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2024/03/08/joint-statement-from-the-european-commission-the-republic-of-cyprus-the-united-arab-emirates-the-united-kingdom-and-the-united-states-endorsing-the-activation-of-a-maritime-corridor-to-deliver-hum/>

<sup>65</sup> Iole Damaskinos, *Biden credits Christodoulides for ‘Amalthea’ initiative* (20 March 2024), available at: <https://cyprus-mail.com/2024/03/20/biden-credits-christodoulides-for-amalthea-initiative/>

## Conclusion

This research has explored Cyprus' contribution to maritime policy, naval operations, and humanitarian responses through maritime security cooperation in its first two decades of EU membership. Despite its relatively small size and limited military capabilities, Cyprus has asserted itself as a proactive and influential Member State within the EU in various fields of action. The country's maritime expertise and diplomatic finesse has contributed to unexpected success in strategically re-positioning EU maritime policy.

The pivotal moment in Cyprus' European trajectory came during their Presidency of the European Council in the second semester of 2012. Faced with the challenge of steering the broader EU agenda, the Republic seized the opportunity to champion maritime policy, culminating in the landmark Limassol Declaration published on 8 October 2012. This document represented a turning point in EU naval strategy, which had been in a stalemate due to the lack of interest of the previous Member States holding the Presidency. Conversely, Cyprus's maritime vocation helped the country promote cross-sectoral cooperation to enhance a sustainable approach to the blue economy. Overall, Cypriot leadership has underscored its commitment to the development of maritime policy and showcased its ability to drive EU policymaking despite being a relative newcomer in its complex institutional framework.

Similarly, the engagement of the National Guard in the four EU maritime security operations since 2008 has underscored the country's commitment to collective security and defence policies. Undoubtedly, the Cypriot military capabilities and overall deployments in the operational headquarters of Atalanta, Sophia, Irini, and Aspides have been modest compared to those of more significant EU partners. Nevertheless, the consistent deployments of their few military personnel have demonstrated support for the CSDP agenda. Moreover, these contributions have enhanced the strategic planning of the officers of the National Guard in the conduct of naval operations under NATO's standards that would have been otherwise missed, given that the country is not part of the alliance.

Finally, the last section has discussed the most recent Cypriot contribution to EU maritime security. Since the beginning of the Israel– Hamas conflict, Cyprus has emerged as a proactive actor in addressing the unprecedented humanitarian crisis happening in the Gaza Strip. The seminal proposal of a humanitarian maritime corridor—the Amalthea initiative—has demonstrated Cyprus' commitment to humanitarian principles, its strategic thinking in ameliorating the difficult conditions for ci-

vilians living in the Strip, and facilitating the complicated peace process in the region. The proposal of such a maritime corridor has showcased the country's diplomatic leadership and has received extensive support and praise from partners in Europe, the Middle East, and North America.

This study contributes to the ongoing discourse on the influence of small States in supranational organisations, particularly the EU. Traditional power-based theories have often emphasised the constraints faced by small States due to their limited economic and military resources. However, the Cypriot case challenges these assumptions and aligns with the 'smart state' framework, which posits that small States can exercise influence through strategic specialisation, diplomatic entrepreneurship, and institutional engagement.<sup>66</sup> The country's leadership in EU maritime policy, notably through the Limassol Declaration and the Amalthea initiative, supports the argument that small States can drive policy change by leveraging niche expertise and agenda-setting power.

Additionally, Cyprus' engagement in EU naval operations without direct military deployments exemplifies the concept of 'diplomatic actorness', demonstrating that influence is not necessarily contingent on hard power but can be achieved through sustained participation in decisionmaking structures.<sup>67</sup> The Cypriot experience underscores how small States can use institutional frameworks to amplify their international role, reinforcing existing literature that sees EU membership as a force multiplier for small-State diplomacy.<sup>68</sup>

Finally, this research article offers insights into the adaptability of small States in evolving security environments. The Cypriot response to the Israel–Gaza crisis through the Amalthea initiative illustrates how small States can act as regional mediators, extending their influence beyond EU borders. This suggests that small States can play a crucial role in crisis management and humanitarian diplomacy.

*Mutatis mutandis*, the Cypriot contribution has been significant within the broader context of small-State engagement in EU maritime security and policymaking. On the one hand, other small Member States, such as Malta, have similarly demonstrat-

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<sup>66</sup> Caroline Howard Grøn and Anders Wivel, 'Maximizing influence in the European Union after the Lisbon Treaty: From small state policy to smart state strategy' (2011) *Journal of European Integration*, Vol. 33.5.; Diana Panke, 'Small states in the European Union: structural disadvantages in EU policy-making and counter-strategies' (2010) *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 17.6.

<sup>67</sup> Baldur Thorhallsson and Anders Wivel, 'Small states in the European Union: what do we know and what would we like to know?' in *Cambridge review of international affairs*, 19/4 (2006), 651-668.

<sup>68</sup> Kristi Raik and Merili Arjakas, 'Grasping the opportunity for small state leadership: Estonia's response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine' (2024) *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*.

ed proactive maritime diplomacy, as in the case of the 12-man Vessel Protection Detachment deployed aboard the Dutch 'Johan de Wit' frigate in 2009–2010 and the initiatives MaltaMedFish4Ever Declaration, during its Presidency of the Council, and the Malta Declaration on Search & Rescue in 2019. On the other hand, the Cypriot approach possesses distinct features. Unlike Malta, whose engagement was mainly operational and migration-related, Cyprus has played a leading role in shaping EU maritime security policy at the strategic and diplomatic levels. The 2012 Limassol Declaration reinvigorated the EU's maritime agenda, while the Amalthea initiative positioned Cyprus as a humanitarian actor beyond European borders, exemplifying its unique diplomatic influence. By leveraging its maritime expertise, geopolitical positioning, and agenda-setting capabilities, the Republic has influenced high-level policy frameworks and, by doing so, demonstrated that small States can exert leadership in EU governance beyond their immediate operational capacities.

To summarise, Cyprus has proven itself to be a dynamic and influential actor within the EU and beyond by making meaningful contributions to EU maritime policy and naval operations. By focusing their energy on their established maritime expertise and diplomatic networks, Cypriots have shaped the EU's environmental approaches to maritime affairs and their humanitarian response to an ongoing conflict. This article has discussed the unexpected contribution provided by a small island State in its very first participation in the high-level political, military, and diplomatic venues of the EU. Cyprus could serve as a model for like-sized countries whose potential in the EU institutional framework might have been underestimated.

In the years to come, Cyprus will likely consolidate its role in EU maritime security and regional diplomacy, particularly in the Eastern Mediterranean. The country's strategic location and maritime expertise provide a strong foundation for enhancing its influence in energy security, regional stability, and crisis response. In this regard, Cyprus is likely to deepen its collaboration with like-minded European partners and regional allies, particularly through enhanced participation in the CSDP's missions and joint naval initiatives. In the long run, the country's maritime strategy is expected to align with the EU's broader security goals to emphasise sustainable economic growth in the blue economy.

Finally, Cyprus' evolving security posture has sparked discussions on its potential NATO membership, a topic gaining renewed relevance amid shifting regional security dynamics. While the country has not formally applied for NATO membership, its growing defence cooperation with NATO-aligned partners suggests a gradual in-

tegration into Euro-Atlantic security frameworks. A moderate increase in defence spending, including investment in naval capabilities, could further strengthen its position in regional security mechanisms, ensuring that the Republic remains an active contributor to both EU and broader transatlantic security efforts.

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# The Political Economy Aspects of the Cyprus Bail-in Plan: Challenges for EU Financial Crisis Management<sup>1</sup>

THEMIS ANTHRAKIDIS<sup>2</sup>, NIKOS ASTROULAKIS<sup>3</sup>

## Abstract

*The paper examines the political economy aspects of the bail-in plan during the Cyprus economic crisis and its implications for the EU financial crisis management framework. The analysis explores the interplay between macroeconomic conditions and political dynamics, focusing on the bail-in plan's implementation as part of the Economic Adjustment Programme of the years 2013–2016. Methodologically, the analysis draws on a political economy framework, combining insights from both orthodox and heterodox perspectives. The research findings show that the bail-in plan embodies a neoclassical rationale, emphasising individual responsibility and moral hazard concerns. In terms of applied policy, the Cyprus bail-in plan marks a paradigm shift in crisis resolution strategies, challenging conventional EU bailout policies.*

**Keywords:** Cyprus economic crisis; bail-in plan; economic adjustment programme, political economy; moral hazard

## Introduction

The 2004 accession of the Republic of Cyprus (Cyprus) to the European Union (EU) had a positive impact on the Cypriot economy and advanced its financial sector. However, the 2007 global financial crisis (GFC) and its international and European fallout, along with local political changes, shook the stability of the country's economic trajectory. In the period 2008–2016, the Cypriot economy faced a serious financial crisis. The Cyprus economic crisis (CEC) began in 2008, a year of significant policy changes due to Cyprus' entry into the Eurozone and the political shift with the rise of AKEL in government; 2008 was also the last year of fiscal surplus and public debt

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<sup>1</sup> The authors sincerely thank the editor and the anonymous reviewers for their insightful feedback, which greatly enhanced the quality and clarity of the research.

<sup>2</sup> PhD in Economics, Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Economics, University of Macedonia, Thessaloniki, Greece.

<sup>3</sup> PhD in Economics, Adjunct Professor at Hellenic Open University, and Senior Officer at Tax and Customs Academy of IAPR, Greece.

reduction. In 2009, the Cypriot economy experienced its first negative GDP growth in a period of 35 years.<sup>4</sup> The Cypriot Economic Adjustment Programme (EAP)<sup>5</sup> was implemented on Troika's conditionalities between 2013 and 2016.<sup>6</sup> In essence, the EAP was a bailout programme which, in the case of the Cypriot economy, could be much more accurately described as a bail-in plan. The Cypriot economy exited the EAP in March 2016.

Was the Cypriot bail-in plan an unbiased economic policy in European macroeconomic financial crisis management, implemented with the objective to stabilise the banking sector and restore financial confidence? Or, was it a politically and ideologically burdened decision with broader political economy implications? To respond to these research inquiries, this analysis explores the political economy aspects of the bail-in plan implemented in Cyprus. We examine the macroeconomic conditions and political dynamics surrounding the CEC, focusing on the implementation of the bail-in plan as part of the broader EAP.

The Cypriot bail-in plan challenged the conventional rescue policies of the Troika, bringing neoclassical rhetoric and policy into European macroeconomic financial crisis management. In this context, the bail-in plan is an example of financial crisis resolution based on an individualistic perspective, with the aim to financially punish individual depositors and shareholders by shifting macroeconomic and financial responsibilities to them. The plan reflects the principles of individual responsibility of creditor countries and private depositors and stakeholders, blaming them for their predicaments, and aiming to avoid moral hazard and further reckless behaviour.<sup>7</sup> Thus, it is important to assess the plan as a paradigm shift that transformed the European framework of macroeconomic financial crisis management.

Methodologically, the paper draws on a specific political economy framework, combining macroeconomics and politics, to provide a thorough analysis of the bail-in plan. In tackling this subject, we have striven to sidestep personal ideological preju-

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<sup>4</sup> Monica Iulia Oehler-Sincal, 'Financial Contagion Reloaded: The Case of Cyprus' (2013), available at <https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/48214/> (last accessed 13.03.2025) 48214 7.

<sup>5</sup> European Commission, *The Economic Adjustment Programme for Cyprus* (2013), available at [https://ec.europa.eu/economy\\_finance/publications/occasional\\_paper/2013/pdf/ocp149\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp149_en.pdf) (last accessed 13.03.2025).

<sup>6</sup> The term 'Troika' refers to a group consisting of three international organisations: the European Commission (EC), the European Central Bank (ECB), and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

<sup>7</sup> Paul De Grauwe, 'The New Bail-in Doctrine: A Recipe for Banking Crises and Depression in the Eurozone', *Centre for European Policy Studies* (2013), available at <http://aei.pitt.edu/41609/> (last accessed 10.03.2025) 1, 3.

dices and dogmatism. Our approach does not adhere strictly to the analytical framework of a single orthodox or heterodox school of thought. The research arguably follows an eclectic analytical framework in terms of the selected literature, which draws from both orthodox and heterodox schools of thought. Our research effort empowers the examination of the political economy aspects of the Cyprus bail-in plan, from which students and scholars from various academic fields such as politics, economics and finance could benefit. Finally, the political economy analysis presented here includes theoretical critique and policy recommendations.

The literature on the CEC and the bail-in plan explores theoretical underpinnings, systemic risks, policy responses, and socio-economic impacts. The introduction of the bail-in principle in Cyprus marked a pivotal shift in European financial governance, laying the groundwork for the EU's banking union framework. Proponents highlighted the bail-in's ability to reduce taxpayer burden by holding stakeholders accountable for bank solvency, but critics underscored its selective application and systemic risks, as well as its resulting erosion of trust in financial stability and European solidarity. Alexander<sup>8</sup> identified legal ambiguities and market risks in the bail-in framework, while Avgouleas and Goodhart<sup>9</sup> highlighted its limited effectiveness in regions like Cyprus that have a high number of non-performing loans (NPLs). Clerides<sup>10</sup> and Orphanides<sup>11</sup> traced the crisis to post-Euro regulatory failures and delayed reforms, and Pashourtidou and Savva<sup>12</sup> quantified its adverse macroeconomic effects. Christou,

<sup>8</sup> Kern Alexander, 'Bail-in: A Regulatory Critique', *Butterworths Journal of International Banking and Financial Law* (2017) 31(1), available at <https://doi.org/10.5167/uzh-149193> (last accessed 05.02.2025), 28–29.

<sup>9</sup> Emiliós Avgouleas and Charles Goodhart, 'An Anatomy of Bank Bail-Ins – Why the Eurozone Needs a Fiscal Backstop for the Banking Sector' (2016) 2 *European Economy – Banks, Regulation, and the Real Sector* 75 available at <https://european-economy.eu/leading-articles/an-anatomy-of-bank-bail-ins-why-the-eurozone-needs-a-fiscal-backstop-for-the-banking-sector/> (last accessed 10.03.2025).

<sup>10</sup> Sofronis Clerides, 'The Collapse of the Cypriot Banking System : A Bird's Eye View' (2014) 8 *Cyprus Economic Policy Review*, available at [https://www.econstor.eu/bitstream/10419/97787/1/IMFS\\_WP\\_79.pdf](https://www.econstor.eu/bitstream/10419/97787/1/IMFS_WP_79.pdf) (last accessed 10.03.2025) 3.

<sup>11</sup> Athanasios Orphanides, 'What Happened in Cyprus? The Economic Consequences of the Last Communist Government in Europe' (2014) 79 *IMFS Working Paper Series*, Institute for Monetary and Financial Stability, Goethe University, available at [https://www.econstor.eu/bitstream/10419/97787/1/IMFS\\_WP\\_79.pdf](https://www.econstor.eu/bitstream/10419/97787/1/IMFS_WP_79.pdf) (last accessed 10.03.2025).

<sup>12</sup> Nicoletta Pashourtidou & Christos S Savva, 'Effects of Bail-in on Macroeconomic Indicators : The Case of Cyprus' (2013), available at [https://www.ucy.ac.cy/erc2/wp-content/uploads/sites/125/2023/08/DOP\\_09\\_2013.pdf](https://www.ucy.ac.cy/erc2/wp-content/uploads/sites/125/2023/08/DOP_09_2013.pdf) (last accessed 10.03.2025).

Ioannou & Shekeris<sup>13</sup> noted the EAP's fiscal achievements, but emphasised persistent recession and unresolved banking risks, while Hardouvelis<sup>14</sup> and Theophanous<sup>15</sup> advocated for diversified growth models and structural reforms to ensure long-term recovery.

From a political economy perspective, Lütz, Hilgers & Schneider<sup>16</sup> explored how Cyprus leveraged Troika commitments to enforce domestic reforms, while Katsourides<sup>17</sup> and Karatsioli<sup>18</sup> examined shifts in political attitudes and identities during the crisis. Charalambous<sup>19</sup> investigated changes in political trust, participation, and party dynamics, linking them to broader societal transformations. In the international sphere, Aspriadis, Papaioannou, and Samaras<sup>20</sup> analysed how German political discourse shaped Cyprus' post-crisis image, reframing it from a victim of Turkish imperialism to an abuser of the Eurozone, using rhetoric, blame-shifting, and strategic communication. Comparative analyses provide additional insights. Papadimitriou and Pegasiou<sup>21</sup> contrasted Cyprus' adjustment programme with Ireland's, highlighting negotiation dynamics and policy learning, while Philippon and Salord<sup>22</sup> reviewed

<sup>13</sup> Odysseas Christou, Christina Ioannou & Anthos I Shekeris, 'Social Cohesion and the State in Times of Austerity, Cyprus' (2013), available at <https://opendata.uni-halle.de/bitstream/1981185920/109966/31/787602582.pdf> (last accessed 18.02.2025) 2.

<sup>14</sup> Gikas A Hardouvelis, 'Overcoming the Crisis in Cyprus', *Cyprus: Five years in the Eurozone* (Eurobank Research 2014) available at <https://www.eurobank.gr/Uploads/Reports/20January2014Q.pdf> (last accessed 05.03.2025).

<sup>15</sup> Andreas Theophanous, 'Cyprus in Search of a New Economic Paradigm' (2018) 30 *Cyprus Review* 213.

<sup>16</sup> Susanne Lütz, Sven Hilgers & Sebastian Schneider, 'Games Borrower Governments Play: The Implementation of Economic Adjustment Programmes in Cyprus and Portugal' (2019) 42 *West European Politics*, available at <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2019.1583482> (last accessed 13.03.2025) 1.

<sup>17</sup> Yiannos Katsourides, 'Circumstantial and Utilitarian Euroscepticism: Bailed-in Cyprus during and after the Eurozone Crisis' *South European Society and Politics* (2020) available at <https://doi.org/10.1080/013608746.2020.1776480> (last accessed 05.03.2025) 1.

<sup>18</sup> Barbara Karatsioli, 'Cyprus in Europe: (In)-Dependence and In-Debtedness' (2014) 26 *Cyprus Review* 15.

<sup>19</sup> Giorgos Charalambous, *Political Culture and Behaviour in the Republic of Cyprus during the Crisis*. (Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) 2014).

<sup>20</sup> Neofytos Aspriadis, Aristeidis Papaioannou & Athanassios N Samaras, 'Games of (de)Legitimization and Images of Collective Subjects at the Management of a Financial Crisis: The Cyprus Memorandum in the German Political Discourse' (2017) 29(1) *Cyprus Review* 19.

<sup>21</sup> Dimitris Papadimitriou & Adonis Pegasiou, 'From Bail-out to Bail-in: Explaining the Variegated Responses to the International Financial Aid Requests of Ireland and Cyprus' *New Political Economy* (2023) 28 available at <https://doi.org/10.1080/13563467.2023.2215706> (last accessed 12.03.2025), 971.

<sup>22</sup> Thomas Philippon & Aude Salord, 'Bail-Ins and Bank Resolution in Europe: A Progress Report' (2017) available at [https://cepr.org/system/files/publication-files/60176-geneva\\_special\\_4\\_bail\\_ins\\_and\\_](https://cepr.org/system/files/publication-files/60176-geneva_special_4_bail_ins_and_)



the implementation of the European banking resolution framework, citing Cyprus as a case of successful bail-in application despite lingering challenges like high NPLs. Floyd<sup>23</sup> integrated economic crises into securitisation theory, using Cyprus to explore the intersection of security and economic governance. The 2013 crisis also forced Cyprus to reassess its economic model. Theodore and Theodore<sup>24</sup>, as well as Apostolides, highlighted the socio-economic consequences of the crisis, while Sapir et al.<sup>25</sup> stressed the importance of structural reforms and financial stability for recovery. The analysis of this paper is further supported by the original documents of the Memorandum of Understanding (Law N. 4173: Financial Support Facility Agreement)<sup>26</sup>, the Economic Adjustment Programme for Cyprus<sup>27</sup>, and the Cyprus Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies and Technical Memorandum of Understanding.<sup>28</sup>

The structure of the paper is as follows: Section 2 presents the macroeconomic fundamentals and political developments in Cyprus from its entry to the Eurozone and the 2007 GFC to the formulation of the EAP in 2013. Section 3 analyses the EAP, focusing on the bailout programme's bail-in plan. Section 4 explores the political economy underpinnings of the bail-in plan. Section 5 concludes with the overall key remarks of the study.

## **The Macroeconomics and Politics of the Cyprus Economic Crisis**

Cyprus joined the Eurozone in 2008, which was the same year the Eurozone found itself at the centre of the GFC.<sup>29</sup> With the outbreak of the GFC in 2007, which was trig-

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bank\_resolution\_in\_europe.pdf (last accessed 10.03.2025).

<sup>23</sup> Rita Floyd, 'Evidence of Securitisation in the Economic Sector of Security in Europe? Russia's Economic Blackmail of Ukraine and the EU's Conditional Bailout of Cyprus' (2019) 28 *European Security*, available at <https://doi.org/10.1080/09662839.2019.1604509> (last accessed 10.03.2025) 173.

<sup>24</sup> John Theodore & Jonathan Theodore, *Cyprus and the Financial Crisis: The Controversial Bailout and What It Means for the Eurozone* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).

<sup>25</sup> André Sapir & al., 'The Troika and financial assistance in the euro area: successes and failures' (2014) *Directorate General for Internal Policies Economic Governance Support Unit (Egov)* available at [https://www.bruegel.org/sites/default/files/wp-content/uploads/imported/publications/20140219AT-T79633EN\\_01.pdf](https://www.bruegel.org/sites/default/files/wp-content/uploads/imported/publications/20140219AT-T79633EN_01.pdf) (last accessed 13.03.2025), 1.

<sup>26</sup> Official Gazette of the Cypriot Government, Law N. 4173 Financial Support Facility Agreement 2013 available at [https://www.cylaw.org/nomoi/arith/2013\\_3\\_001.pdf](https://www.cylaw.org/nomoi/arith/2013_3_001.pdf) (last accessed 10.03.2025), 1.

<sup>27</sup> European Commission (no 5).

<sup>28</sup> IMF, 'Cyprus' Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies and Technical Memorandum of Understanding' (2013), available at <https://www.imf.org/external/np/loi/2013/cyp/082913.pdf> (last accessed 10.12. 2024).

<sup>29</sup> Karatsioli (no 18) 15, 23.



gered by the subprime crisis of the United States and transmitted to Europe, the pace of economic growth and the direction of economic policy in Cyprus changed. Thus, the collapse of the Cypriot banking system and subsequent economic downturn must be seen in the light of the GFC and the macroeconomic and political environment in the Eurozone during this period.

In macroeconomic terms, since 2007, Cyprus' primary fiscal surplus started to decline and turned to primary deficit in the following years. This had a negative impact on general government debt as a percentage of GDP. The share of investment in GDP fell sharply, undermining future living standards by forcing resources to be diverted towards consumption instead of investment in construction, machinery, and equipment.<sup>30</sup>

Table 1 presents key macroeconomic figures for Cyprus, covering the period from the country's accession to the EU in 2004 to 2013, the year in which the Cypriot Parliament ratified the EAP. This timeframe is critical as it encompasses Cyprus' accession to the EU and a period of steady economic growth. However, this growth was marked by the accumulation of significant internal and external imbalances that ultimately led to financial turmoil.<sup>31</sup> Persistent fiscal deficits increased public debt from 45.1% of GDP in 2008 to 79.7% by the end of 2012. Tax revenue decreased from 44.8% of GDP in 2007 to 40% in 2012 and total government expenditure increased from 41.3% of GDP in 2007 to 46.3% of GDP in 2012. Coupled with key macroeconomic measures, the sum of public sector wages and total social transfers reached 30.9% of GDP in 2012, in contrast to 26.8% of GDP in 2008, exposing a loose fiscal policy.

*Table 1. Cyprus Macroeconomics 2004–2013*

Year	Real GDP Growth (%)	Fiscal Balance (% of GDP)	Public Debt (% of GDP)	Tax Revenue (% of GDP)	Total Government Expenditure (% of GDP)	Public Sector Wages (% of GDP)	Total Social Transfers (% of GDP)
2004	5	-3.7	64.7	38.3	42.4	15.0	12.2
2005	4.9	-2.2	62.8	40.7	43.1	14.9	12.9
2006	4.7	-1.0	58.7	41.4	42.6	14.9	12.4

<sup>30</sup> Hardouvelis (no 14) 4–5.

<sup>31</sup> Tasos Anastassatos, Ioannis Gkionis & Platon Monokrousos, 'Cyprus at a Turning Point' (2013) 8 *Eurobank Ergasias S.A.* 1 available at <https://www.eurobank.gr/Uploads/Reports/EconomyMarketsJuly13.pdf> (last accessed 10.03.2025), 2–3; Hardouvelis (no 14) 2.

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2007	5.1	3.2	53.5	44.8	41.3	14.6	11.7
2008	3.6	0.9	45.1	43.1	42.1	14.6	12.2
2009	-2	-5.4	53.8	40.1	46.2	16.2	13.5
2010	2.6	-4.7	56.3	40.9	46.2	15.8	14.4
2011	0.4	-5.7	65.7	39.7	46.0	16.0	14.6
2012	-3.4	-5.6	79.7	40.0	46.3	15.8	15.1
2013	-6.6	-5.1	102.6	38.3	42.4	15.0	12.2

Source: Table constructed by the authors with data from the IMF,  
The World Bank, and the Cypriot Statistical Service.

The years 2011 and 2012 were critical for the CEC mainly due to the turmoil in the international financial markets combined with the financial developments in the Greek economy. Let us explain it chronologically. In May 2011, market confidence in Cyprus declined and Fitch<sup>32</sup> issued its first downgrade of the country, signalling the deepening of the crisis.<sup>33</sup> The international financial markets became risk averse for the Cypriot economy. Up to September 2011, the Cypriot economy's access to the international bond market had been practically prohibited.<sup>34</sup> The Eurozone Summit held in Brussels in October 2011 resulted in a cut to the nominal value of Greek bonds by 50%, which entailed huge losses for the Cypriot banking sector as it was highly exposed to Greek debt. In fact, the Greek fiscal crisis was transmitted to Cyprus through the channel of Greek bonds. At the same time, the debate about the exit of the Greek economy from the Eurozone (Grexit) stretched the Member States in the European periphery. As a result, bank lending from the Eurozone, including emergency liquidity assistance (ELA) increased sharply. Essentially, the CEC was triggered by the Greek crisis as 45% of the total assets of Cypriot banks were linked to Greek banks. The impact of the Greek crisis on the Cypriot banking system was manifested in loans to the Greek private sector and investments in Greek government bonds.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Fitch Ratings is a global credit rating agency assessing the creditworthiness of entities such as corporations, sovereign nations, and financial products.

<sup>33</sup> Kate Phylaktis, 'The Cyprus Debacle: Implications for the European Banking Union' (2016) *European Banking Union: Prospects and Challenges* 1, 3.

<sup>34</sup> Oehler-Sincai (no 4) 4–5.

<sup>35</sup> Mathieu Pigasse, *In Praise of Abnormality (in Greek)* (Stereoma Publications, 2015) 36; Vassilis T Rapanos & Georgia Kaplanoglou, 'Governance, Growth and the Recent Economic Crisis: The Case of Greece and Cyprus' (2014) 8 *Cyprus Economic Policy Review* available at [https://www.ucy.ac.cy/erc2/wp-content/uploads/sites/125/2023/08/CyEPR\\_Vol8\\_No1\\_A1\\_06\\_2014.pdf](https://www.ucy.ac.cy/erc2/wp-content/uploads/sites/125/2023/08/CyEPR_Vol8_No1_A1_06_2014.pdf) (last accessed 10.02.2025) 3, 8.

In April 2012, the private sector involvement (PSI) mechanism for Greece implemented a 53.5% reduction in the nominal value of Greek government bonds held by private investors. These investors participated in the debt restructuring process at a rate of 96.9%, with bonds valued at €199 billion. The debt restructuring involved exchanging these bonds for new Greek government-issued bonds, PSI payment notes from the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF), detachable GDP-linked securities from the Greek government, and PSI accrued interest notes.<sup>36</sup> This turn of events proved catastrophic for both the banking sector and the broader economy, yet the Cypriot political system dismissed early warnings from credit agencies regarding a potential downgrade.<sup>37</sup> Indeed, the two major banks in Cyprus, Bank of Cyprus and Laiki Bank, had invested an amount equivalent to almost their entire capital, approximately one third of the country's GDP, in Greek government bonds. When the PSI agreement was signed, these banks incurred losses of around 80% on their bond holdings, or a loss of about €4.5 billion, which essentially wiped out their capital base.<sup>38</sup>

In this context, the spreads calculated from the yields of Cyprus' 10-year government bonds increased in comparison to those of Germany and hindered access to the international capital markets.<sup>39</sup> In response, fiscal authorities in Cyprus sought alternative sources of funding, for example, a €2.5 billion loan from the Russian Federation.<sup>40</sup> In May 2012, the Cypriot Parliament approved the allocation of €1.8 billion for the recapitalisation of Laiki Bank, compelled by the bank's failure to secure sufficient capital from the market, to prevent its bankruptcy and the subsequent State obligation to cover over €7 billion in insured deposits. The eventual resolution of Laiki Bank highlighted its insolvency, a situation that was ostensibly recognised by the authorities despite the bank continuing to receive ELA funding.<sup>41</sup> During that

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<sup>36</sup> Bank of Greece, *Report on the Recapitalisation and Restructuring on the Greek Banking Sector* (2012), available at [https://www.bankofgreece.gr/Publications/Report\\_on\\_the\\_recapitalisation\\_and\\_restructuring.pdf](https://www.bankofgreece.gr/Publications/Report_on_the_recapitalisation_and_restructuring.pdf) (last accessed 12.02.2025), 12.

<sup>37</sup> Panicos Demetriades, *A Diary of the Euro Crisis in Cyprus* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017) 3.

<sup>38</sup> Theophanous (no 15) 219.

<sup>39</sup> Germany's 10-year government bonds serve as a benchmark for Eurozone sovereign debt due to their low-risk status and strong credit rating. As a result, the spread between Cyprus' bond yields and Germany's reflects investor confidence and the perceived credit risk of Cyprus in comparison to a stable reference point.

<sup>40</sup> Hardouvelis (no 14) 6.

<sup>41</sup> Stavros Zenios, 'Self-Fulfilling Prophecies in the Cyprus Crisis: ELA, PIMKO and Delays', in Alexander Michaelides and Athanasios Orphanides (eds), *The Cyprus Bail-in, Policy Lessons from the Cyprus Eco-*

time, worries about a potential Grexit reached their zenith, casting Cyprus as another frontrunner for a possible exit from the Eurozone. From July to December 2012, during its EU Presidency, Cyprus encountered severe obstacles in accessing international borrowing markets, highlighting the urgent need for substantial steps to stabilise its economy.<sup>42</sup>

By the end of 2012, total bank assets reached 640% of GDP, twice the Eurozone average, and had previously peaked at over 800% of GDP in 2010. Despite similar fiscal and competitiveness deficits and like other crisis-hit economies, Cyprus' predicament was primarily a banking crisis. The country saw a remarkable expansion of the real estate bubble, especially between 2006 and 2008. However, the onset of the GFC burst this bubble, adversely affecting the economic landscape and triggering a serious banking crisis.<sup>43</sup> This susceptibility in the financial sector escalated into a systemic risk with the dual impact of the GFC and the Greek PSI.<sup>44</sup> The Cypriot banking sector's downturn not only caused significant losses to bank balance sheets but also precipitated a rapid deterioration in public finances. In response to these financial challenges, Cyprus applied for financial assistance from the Troika in June 2012—the same day Fitch announced its downgrade.<sup>45</sup>

Turning to politics, the presidential elections held in February 2008 were the first after the country's accession to the EU and the rejection of the Annan Plan.<sup>46</sup> For the first time in its history, AKEL, the communist party, chose to present its own presidential candidate. This decision eventually led to the election of Demetris Christofias—the first communist President in an EU Member State. In line with his campaign promises, the new President and his government consistently increased social transfers, wasting public funds and relying excessively on short-term borrowing. Additionally, the country demonstrated excessive financial solidarity towards Greece by acquiring a disproportionate amount of Greek government bonds, a move that was not aligned with its national financial interests. This action, coupled with a notable

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*nomie Crisis* (London: Imperial College Press, 2016) 11–13.

<sup>42</sup> Hardouvelis (no 14) 6–7.

<sup>43</sup> Clerides (no 10) 4–5.

<sup>44</sup> Gikas A Hardouvelis and Ioannis Gkionis, 'A Decade Long Economic Crisis: Cyprus versus Greece' (2016) 10 *Cyprus Economic Policy Review* 3, 12–13.

<sup>45</sup> Pashourtidou and Savva (no 12) 9.

<sup>46</sup> The Annan Plan was a 2004 UN proposal to reunite Cyprus that was put to referendum in both communities. It secured Turkish Cypriot approval but failed due to Greek Cypriot rejection.

delay in seeking international financial assistance, further complicated its financial situation.<sup>47</sup>

When the country asked for a bailout agreement in June 2012, the Troika harboured doubts about the Cypriot political system's ability to effectively manage an adjustment programme. The Cypriot government was criticised for its lack of recognition of the severity of the economic downturn, engaging in rampant public expenditure, relying heavily on short-term borrowing, and experiencing significant delays in negotiating a bailout deal.<sup>48</sup> Additionally, the politico-economic image of Cyprus across the EU, particularly in terms of German public opinion, was marred by perceptions of a fundamentally flawed political system that mishandled the crisis and facilitated money-laundering activities.<sup>49</sup> The Troika designed a Cypriot EAP aimed at 'frontloaded banking sector restructuring', 'a frontloaded and expenditure-based fiscal adjustment', and 'front-loaded fiscal consolidation measures',<sup>50</sup> to guarantee the swift and effective implementation of the reforms. This strategy, characterised by immediate fiscal consolidation and structural reforms, was deemed a fitting neoclassical remedy for the enduring economic imbalances plaguing Cyprus. Consequently, the possibility of adopting an alternative strategy focused on growth, driven by an interventionist state fiscal policy, was deemed untenable.<sup>51</sup>

The then Eurogroup President, Jeroen Dijsselbloem, said of Christofias: '[W]e had no intention to conclude an agreement with a President which would be replaced in a while'.<sup>52</sup> In the 2013 presidential elections, the Troika pressed for a bailout agreement, previously requested by the Cypriot government, but the Eurogroup strategically delayed action until the presidential elections of February of that year that would usher in a new administration. By dismissing the possibility of further negotiations with the AKEL government, the Eurogroup exacerbated the situation.<sup>53</sup>

The 2013 presidential elections marked the first time in history where the economic crisis overshadowed the longstanding discussions on the Cyprus problem.

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<sup>47</sup> A Apostolides, 'Beware of German Gifts near Elections: How Cyprus Got Here and Why It Is Currently More out than in the Eurozone' (2013) 8(3) *Capital Markets Law Journal* 300–318, 314.

<sup>48</sup> *ibid*; Sapir & al. (no 25) 50.

<sup>49</sup> Aspriadis, Papaioannou & Samaras (no 20) 19, 36; Sofia Iordanidou & Athanassios N Samaras, 'Financial Crisis in the Cyprus Republic' (2014) 21 *Javnost* 63, 71.

<sup>50</sup> European Commission (no 5).

<sup>51</sup> Andreas Charalambous, 'The Cyprus Adjustment Programme – Necessity or Wrong Medicine' (2015) 9 *Cyprus Economic Policy Review* 21, 32.

<sup>52</sup> Jeroen Dijsselbloem, *The Euro Crisis* (Kerkyra-Economia Publishing, 2018) 104.

<sup>53</sup> Pigasse (no 35) 42.

Each presidential candidate focused on their strategies to address and resolve the financial crisis.<sup>54</sup> Eventually, Nicos Anastasiades, representing the centre-right (DISY) party, secured victory in the presidential elections' second round. Shortly after, in March 2013, his government secured a bailout agreement during the Eurogroup meeting, which notably introduced the controversial bail-in plan. In imposing this bail-in plan, the ECB starkly warned that the ELA facility for Laiki Bank would cease on 25 March 2013, precipitating the bank's collapse, which would force Cyprus to compensate all insured depositors, risking State default. However, on 13 March, the Cypriot House of Representatives dismissed the initial bailout plan, facing the inevitable withdrawal of ELA for Laiki Bank. Following this parliamentary rejection of all proposed versions of the levy on 19 March, the escalating financial pressures on Laiki Bank, alongside the anticipated withdrawal of ELA funds, Cyprus was forced to prioritise the adoption of bank resolution procedures and inevitable capital controls. Subsequently, on 25 March 2013, an agreement was reached on a rescue programme aimed at averting the imminent threat of sovereign default.<sup>55</sup>

Even after the presidential change in 2013 and the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), this scepticism towards the Cypriot government's ability to foster confidence among its creditors and broader society resulted in only a moderate level of programme implementation success.<sup>56</sup> The handling of the Cypriot crisis was considerably hampered by fervent political debates that centred on the political system's inability to effectively tackle the crisis and the Central Bank of Cyprus failure to adequately supervise financial institutions. This pronounced political discord brought to light divergent perspectives regarding the origin of the crisis, oscillating between interpretations of it as a banking versus a fiscal crisis. In contrast to Greece, Ireland, and Portugal, who all managed to secure rescue packages within 50 days of requesting assistance, Cyprus required 271 days to reach a final agreement, a delay that underscores the significant complications brought about by these political disagreements.<sup>57</sup>

On 25 March 2013, the Troika announced an agreement to provide financial assistance of €10 billion to Cyprus until the first quarter of 2016. Initially, the Troika estimated Cyprus' needs at around €17 billion, with the basic condition that these

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<sup>54</sup> Iordanidou & Samaras (no 49) 63, 68.

<sup>55</sup> Theodore & Theodore (no 24) 76.

<sup>56</sup> Lütz, Hilgers & Schneider (no 16) 1, 3.

<sup>57</sup> Stavros A Zenios, 'The Cyprus Debt: Perfect Crisis and a Way Forward' (2013) 7(1) *Cyprus Economic Policy Review* 3–4.

funds would not be used to recapitalise Laiki Bank or Bank of Cyprus. Ultimately, Cyprus utilised €6.3 billion from the European Stability Mechanism (ESM)<sup>58</sup> and €1 billion from the IMF,<sup>59</sup> and the bail-in amounted to €9.4 billion—as a percentage of the total bailout, it was more than half of the total funds disbursed.

## **The Economic Adjustment Programme**

On 30 April 2013, the Cyprus House of Representatives approved the Troika proposal ratifying the MoU and the EAP, which was based on the belief that the crisis was caused by poor fiscal governance and a lack of competitiveness. The country was obliged to implement short- and medium-term financial, fiscal, and structural measures. The EAP aimed:

to restore the soundness of the Cypriot banking sector and rebuild depositors' and market confidence by thoroughly restructuring and downsizing financial institutions [...]; to continue the on-going process of fiscal consolidation [...] and to implement structural reforms to support competitiveness and sustainable and balanced growth.<sup>60</sup>

The EAP strove to rectify the financial, fiscal, and structural disparities, incorporating a comprehensive financial package totalling €11 billion.<sup>61</sup> The EAP incorporated extensive reforms across the above domains through an overhaul of the banking sector, which included the merger of Laiki Bank with the Bank of Cyprus, and the transfer of Cypriot bank branches in Greece to Piraeus Bank. The EAP also included liquidity support from the Eurozone, reopening of banks, enhanced anti-money-laundering measures, and fiscal consolidation efforts targeting 7.25% of GDP from 2013 to 2015. Other integral components of the initiative included structural reforms such as wage and pension adjustments, budgetary frameworks, debt management legislation, and privatisation.<sup>62</sup> Overall, the securitisation of Cyprus' crisis through the EU's conditional bailout highlighted critical macroeconomic adjustments, governance re-

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<sup>58</sup> The European Stability Mechanism (ESM) was established in 2012. It was created as a permanent crisis resolution mechanism for Eurozone countries, replacing temporary structures like the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF).

<sup>59</sup> Stella Schaefer-Brown, 'Cyprus: Laiki Bank and Bank of Cyprus Restructuring, 2013' (2024) 6 *Journal of Financial Crises* 123, 126.

<sup>60</sup> European Commission (no 5) 39.

<sup>61</sup> Christou, Ioannou & Shekeris (no 13) 2.

<sup>62</sup> Anastassatos, Gkionis & Monokrousos (no 31) 7–8.

forms, structural measures, and capital controls, reshaping financial institutions and redefining policy frameworks amid Eurozone instability.<sup>63</sup>

Pursuant to the MoU,<sup>64</sup> the nation committed to enacting a series of short- and medium-term measures relating to revenue and expenditure:

- a) **Revenue measures:** Ensuring additional revenue from property taxation, increasing the statutory corporate income tax rate to 12.5%, increasing the tax rate on interest income to 30%, increasing the bank levy on deposits raised by Cyprus banks and credit institutions, reforming the tax system by June 2013, with a view to raising additional revenue, and increasing fees for public services by at least 17% of the current values.<sup>65</sup>
- b) **Expenditure measures:** Controlling healthcare expenditure, reducing the expenditure on various housing schemes, further streamlining the Easter allowance to pensioners by limiting benefits, implementing a scaled reduction in emoluments of public and broader public sector pensioners and employees, and structurally reforming as of the budget year 2014 the educational system.<sup>66</sup>

According to the MoU:

[E]nhancing the efficiency of public spending and the budgetary process, implementing further reforms in the pension system to mitigate the anticipated surge in pension spending, implementing measures to curb the growth of healthcare expenditure, boosting tax revenues by enhancing tax compliance and collection, revamping the public administration to enhance its functionality and cost-effectiveness, revising the overall benefit structure to ensure an efficient allocation of resources and strike a balance between welfare assistance and encouraging employment, as well as formulating a program to enhance the efficiency of state-owned and semi-public enterprises, along with commencing a privatization initiative.<sup>67</sup>

Additionally, the MoU stipulated a broader set of responsibilities for Cyprus to address. These obligations encompassed a variety of areas, aimed at further stabilising and reforming the country's economic infrastructure. Key mandates included:

<sup>63</sup> Floyd (no 23) 173.

<sup>64</sup> Law N. 4173 Financial Support Facility Agreement 2013 1.

<sup>65</sup> *ibid* 254.

<sup>66</sup> *ibid* 255.

<sup>67</sup> *ibid* 257.



[R]eforming the wage indexation system to ensure a sustainable enhancement in economic competitiveness, aligning wage formation more closely with productivity changes. Moreover, Cyprus was directed to orchestrate a comprehensive overhaul of public assistance aimed at striking a suitable equilibrium between public support and incentives for employment, directing income assistance towards the most vulnerable, reinforcing activation policies, and mitigating the fiscal implications of escalating unemployment. Additionally, the mandate encompassed measures to alleviate adverse effects on competitiveness and employment by tethering alterations in the minimum wage to economic conditions.<sup>68</sup>

The MoU also entailed measures concerning goods and services. These market initiatives encompassed:

[R]emoving unjustified obstacles, improving the quality and reducing the cost related to regulated professional services, reinvigoration of the competitiveness of tourism sector, improving administrative regulations pertaining to the real estate sector, and capitalizing on the exploitation of domestic offshore natural gas resources.<sup>69</sup>

In financial terms, Cyprus needed a €17 billion financial package for its fiscal and monetary system support. However, the Troika limited their financing to €10 billion, concerned about the large debt relative to Cyprus' economy, as this amount was more than half the country's GDP. Specifically, IMF rules on sustainable debt levels meant that a programme over 50% of Cyprus's GDP could violate debt sustainability criteria.<sup>70</sup> The Eurogroup's decision on bailout terms for Cyprus was heavily influenced by a PIMCO study.<sup>71</sup> Using an adverse scenario, PIMCO estimated a requirement of €8.867 billion for bank recapitalisation. Combined with Cyprus' existing public debt, this led to a total debt level of 130% of GDP.

A resolution aligned with IMF principles was reached at the Eurogroup meeting, involving the closure of Laiki Bank and the recapitalisation of the Bank of Cyprus. The plan introduced a comprehensive bail-in extending beyond stakeholders to include deposits exceeding €100,000, aimed at rescuing Cyprus' financial sector.<sup>72</sup> The

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<sup>68</sup> *ibid* 267.

<sup>69</sup> *ibid* 270.

<sup>70</sup> Apostolides (no 47) 300–301.

<sup>71</sup> Michalis Sarris, 'Cyprus in the Eurozone' in Alexander Michaelides and Athanasios Orphanides (eds), *The Cyprus Bail-in, Policy Lessons from the Cyprus Economic Crisis* (Imperial College Press 2016) 21–22.

<sup>72</sup> Dijsselbloem (no 52) 112.

bail-in plan was a precondition for an MoU to facilitate the bailout of the Cypriot economy and reached the amount of €9.4 billion. The plan recapitalised the two major banks of the country ‘through the full dilution of equity and bond holdings and conversion of 37.5 percent of uninsured deposits into preferred shares’.<sup>73</sup> The initial proposal, which included a levy on deposits up to €100,000, ignited widespread protests and strong parliamentary opposition in Cyprus, leading even the ruling DISY party to withhold support. Following intense backlash and bank closures, negotiations revised the bail-in to affect accounts over €100,000.

Summing up, the bail-in plan in Cyprus was part of a policy strategy to stabilise the country’s banking sector. The bail-in was stipulated by the Troika in the MoU with Cyprus, ‘establishing a comprehensive framework for the recovery and resolution of credit institutions, drawing, inter alia, on the relevant proposal of the European Commission’<sup>74</sup> exerting considerable influence on European regulatory proposals for future bank recapitalisation strategies.

### **The Political Economy Aspects of the Bail-in Plan**

The EAP for Cyprus introduced an unprecedented bail-in plan to reconstruct the banking system—a move that not only aimed to secure resilience in the Cyprus economy but also boldly redefined the contours of European banking regulation. In characterising the bail-in’s principles, Dijsselbloem suggested that if a bank faced difficulties, the resolution should begin with shareholders and bondholders, and if necessary, extend to uninsured deposit holders to partake in the bank’s recapitalisation.<sup>75</sup> As mentioned, the EAP was accompanied by a banking sector restructuring plan and a bail-in plan in order to recapitalise the banks. The aim was ‘to build the foundation for sustainable growth over the long run’.<sup>76</sup> Markedly, the bail-in plan dominated the EAP, setting its contribution to disbursed capital at over 50% and had a significant impact in shaping European regulations for future strategies in bank recapitalisation, thereby serving as a pioneering model for crisis resolution techniques.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> IMF (no 28)19.

<sup>74</sup> *ibid* 30.

<sup>75</sup> Business Insider, ‘DIJSSELBOOM: Eurogroup President Spooks Markets By Saying Cyprus Deal Is A New Template’ (2013), available at <https://www.businessinsider.com/dijsselbloem-cyprus-deal-is-a-template-2013-3> (last accessed 13.01.2025), 1.

<sup>76</sup> European Commission (no 5) 114.

<sup>77</sup> CAE Goodhart, ‘Lessons for Monetary Policy from the Euro-Area Crisis’ *Journal of Macroeconomics* (2014) 39 available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jmacro.2013.08.014> (last accessed 23.02.2025), 378,

The European response to the CEC took a neoclassical approach, distinctly based on the perceived fiscal imprudence and competitiveness issues of each nation. This approach led northern EU countries to provide financial aid under stringent conditions aimed at addressing moral hazard concerns.<sup>78</sup> Furthermore, it underscored the belief that debtor nations should bear the primary responsibility for their predicaments, without imposing additional burden on the taxpayers of other countries.<sup>79</sup> In this framework, the Troika fully adopted the idea of financially punishing Cyprus due to the ‘corrupting influence of “oligarch” money’ and the reckless banking and depositor behaviour.<sup>80</sup>

The implementation of this neoclassical bail-in plan—placing the financial weight of the crisis on the depositors and small businesses with working capital in their bank deposits—raised questions about its alignment with social solidarity principles. The imposition of the bail-in, following Parliament’s initial resistance and the Troika’s subsequent threats, led to an agreement that placed significant burden on uninsured depositors, putting the country in a position of dealing with uncontrolled bankruptcy.<sup>81</sup> The restructuring drastically reduced deposits, eroding a significant portion of the populace’s wealth and disadvantaging small local enterprises. Favouring individual responsibility, the plan compromised the Cypriot welfare regime, undermining people’s trust in a social safety net.<sup>82</sup> In this framework, the bail-in plan implicated shareholders, creditors, and depositors in bearing the financial repercussions of banking failures, thereby redistributing the economic impact of such downturns across a broader spectrum of stakeholders.<sup>83</sup> It signalled to depositors that in instances of bank failure requiring recapitalisation, they might need to assume a part of the financial load. This policy aimed to diminish government liability associated with bank rescues and mitigate the fiscal risks emanating from banking sector distress, thereby sharing the losses more equitably among individuals and reducing potential costs to the public finance system.<sup>84</sup>

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382.

<sup>78</sup> Kathleen Lynch & Manolis Kalaitzake, ‘Affective and Calculative Solidarity: The Impact of Individualism and Neoliberal Capitalism’ (2018) 23 *European Journal of Social Theory* 1, 4.

<sup>79</sup> De Grauwe (no 7) 3.

<sup>80</sup> Theodore & Theodore (no 24) 99, 131; Papadimitriou and Pegasiou (no 21) 971, 981.

<sup>81</sup> Lütz, Hilgers & Schneider (no 16) 11; Sapir & al. (no 25) 51.

<sup>82</sup> Lynch and Kalaitzake (no 78) 2.

<sup>83</sup> Avgouleas and Goodhart (no 9).

<sup>84</sup> Jessica Cariboni & al, ‘Reducing and Sharing the Burden of Bank Failures’ (2016) 2015 *OECD Journal: Financial Market Trends* 29, 47.

At the core of the bail-in plan is the strategic intent to circumvent the moral hazard associated with ‘too-big-to-fail’ financial institutions.<sup>85</sup> This is a response to traditional bank bailouts that have been critiqued for fostering moral hazard issues, undermining market discipline, and placing undue stress on public finances.<sup>86</sup> Originating from neoclassical economic theory and the insurance sector, the term ‘moral hazard’ refers to the increased risk-taking behaviour that insured parties might exhibit when shielded from the full consequences of their actions, thereby engendering adverse incentives.<sup>87</sup> By adopting the neoclassical approach of the bail-in plan, the objective was to alleviate moral hazard concerns and prevent additional burden on taxpayers, optimising the country’s financial and institutional structure towards greater efficiency and accountability. The implementation of bail-in mechanisms serves as a fundamental tool for governments to bolster bank capital reserves without resorting to taxpayer funds, thus directly addressing the moral hazard dilemma.<sup>88</sup> Specifically, the ECB’s interpretation of moral hazard aligns with the neoclassical view, emphasising economic rationality and advocating for risk-sharing practices that serve the broader public interest.<sup>89</sup> Accordingly, the bail-in narrative mandates that shareholders, creditors, and depositors bear the financial repercussions of bank failures, aligning their interests with the overall health of the financial system.<sup>90</sup> This rationale underpins the bail-in’s objective to mitigate moral hazard and ensure that the financial burden of risky investment behaviours does not fall upon taxpayers.<sup>91</sup> The Cypriot EAP facilitated the recapitalisation of the two largest banks through the comprehensive dilution of existing equity and bond holdings, alongside the conversion of a portion of uninsured deposits into preferred shares.<sup>92</sup> Within the neoclassical paradigm, the bail-in plan is lauded for its equity and efficiency, significantly shrinking Cyprus’

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<sup>85</sup> Alexander, (no 8).

<sup>86</sup> Avgouleas and Goodhart (no 9) 76.

<sup>87</sup> Martha T McCluskey, ‘Efficiency and Social Citizenship: Challenging the Neoliberal Attack on the Welfare State’ (2003) 78 *Indiana Law Journal* 783, 807.

<sup>88</sup> Lorenzo Pandolfi, *Bail-in vs. Bailout: A False Dilemma?* (2018) 499 WORKING PAPER, CSEF-Centre for Studies in Economics and Finance DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS – UNIVERSITY OF NAPLES 31.

<sup>89</sup> Laura Pierret, ‘The Political Use of the Term “Moral Hazard”: Evidence from Policymakers of the Eurozone’ (2019) 78/2019 *Political Research Papers*, DEPARTMENT OF EUROPEAN POLITICAL AND GOVERNANCE STUDIES, College d’ Europe available at [https://aei.pitt.edu/102477/1/wp78\\_pierret.pdf](https://aei.pitt.edu/102477/1/wp78_pierret.pdf) (last accessed 10.03.2025) 27.

<sup>90</sup> Avgouleas and Goodhart (no 9) 81.

<sup>91</sup> Alexander (no 8) 29.

<sup>92</sup> IMF (no 28) 152.

oversized banking sector and reinstating market discipline within the industry.<sup>93</sup> This intervention was designed to safeguard market integrity and fiscal stability.

The decision to employ a bail-in plan for Cyprus' financial predicament was primarily political. European lenders, particularly under the influence of Germany within the Troika, criticised Cyprus' governance, accusing it of corruption and inefficiency. These allegations suggested Cyprus was unworthy of financial aid, especially given concerns over policies that seemingly facilitated money-laundering through the banking sector and foreign direct investment.<sup>94</sup> The presence of substantial deposits from Russian oligarchs in Cypriot banks further politicised the bail-in plan, with claims that rescuing these banks would also benefit Russia's elite.<sup>95</sup> Ironically, while ostensibly designed to reduce moral hazard, the plan effectively heightened systemic risk across the Eurozone. This policy raised concerns about the potential for future bail-ins to trigger bank runs in other financially distressed Eurozone countries, exacerbated by a lack of shared responsibility among EU Member States.<sup>96</sup>

Steered by a European mandate, the plan effectively marginalised the Cypriot government and its citizenry, rendering them virtually voiceless in the formulation and enactment of critical financial policies. This imposition of decisions from external actors inflicted profound harm on the foundational trust between the Cypriot people and both their own governmental institutions and broader European authorities, with the painstaking process of rebuilding confidence only commencing in the protracted aftermath of the financial upheaval.<sup>97</sup> Additionally, the Troika's calculated manipulation of the ECB's ELA mechanism to apply coercive leverage not only exhibited a severe insensitivity to democratic norms but also actively circumvented established legislative protocols and the essential practice of engaging public opinion, thereby eroding the core tenets of democracy within Cyprus.<sup>98</sup> Charalambous

<sup>93</sup> Yiannis Kitromilides, 'The Cyprus "bail-in" Blunder: A Template for Europe?' (2013) available at <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/can-europe-make-it/cyprus-bail-in-blunder-template-for-europe/> (last accessed 01.05.2023).

<sup>94</sup> Frederic Florian Hans-jochim Fiedler, 'Saving Cyprus from Its "Financial Crisis" in 2013 by the Troika: A Necessary Action Under the Right Terms and Conditions?' (2019) 7 *Journal of Global Economics* 1, 3; Kitromilides (no 93) 2; Markos Vogiatzoglou, 'Cyprus' Explosion: Financial Crisis and Anti-Austerity Mobilization' in D della Porta & al (eds), *Late Neoliberalism and its Discontents in the Economic Crisis* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016) 2.

<sup>95</sup> Katsourides (no 17) 1, 8; Kitromilides (no 93) 1; Orphanides (no 11) 20.

<sup>96</sup> De Grauwe (no 7) 3.

<sup>97</sup> Theodore & Theodore (no 24) 142; Katsourides (no 17) 9.

<sup>98</sup> Nicole Scicluna & Stefan Auer, 'From the Rule of Law to the Rule of Rules: Technocracy and the Crisis of EU Governance' (2019) 42 *West European Politics* 1420, 1432.

underscores how the Cypriot economic crisis triggered profound shifts in political culture and public behaviour.<sup>99</sup> Specifically, it led to a notable decline in trust toward political institutions, particularly political parties, which were seen as complicit in the financial turmoil. Concurrently, citizens increasingly turned to alternative forms of civic engagement, bypassing traditional party structures to participate in grass-roots movements and civil society organisations. This transformation highlights a dual dynamic—while established political channels suffered, new participatory forms of democracy emerged, reflecting public frustration with traditional governance and a search for alternative solutions to the economic and social challenges brought by the crisis. To build on this analysis, Efthyvoulou and Yildirim highlight how public opinion and trust play a critical role in shaping political and economic outcomes during crises, noting that declining trust in political institutions can deepen economic instability.<sup>100</sup> In Cyprus, this erosion of trust heightened public discontent, with citizens blaming political elites for the financial turmoil, further complicating efforts to implement necessary reforms. Overall, the bail-in plan not only questioned the integrity of the EU's financial governance frameworks but also sparked a broader dialogue on sovereignty and democratic accountability within Member States, casting a long shadow on the collective European project and its commitment to upholding democratic values and processes.

The pattern set by the bail-in plan is expected to influence future bailout strategies internationally, with an anticipatory clause that depositors in banks requiring rescue may incur losses, particularly for deposits surpassing the €100,000 mark.<sup>101</sup> This approach has been enshrined in the Basel III framework, aiming to instil a more cautious investment ethos among financial and credit institutions to avert the risk of widespread financial turmoil.<sup>102</sup> The evolution of this strategy into a structured policy led to the establishment of the EU Bank Recovery and Resolution Directive (BRRD) in 2015, embedding the bail-in mechanism within a formalised legal structure. This directive outlines procedures for bank recapitalisation through the conversion of

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<sup>99</sup> Charalambous (no 19).

<sup>100</sup> Georgios Efthyvoulou & Canan Yildirim, 'Market Power in CEE Banking Sectors and the Impact of the Global Financial Crisis' (2014) 40 *Journal of Banking and Finance* 11.

<sup>101</sup> De Grauwe (no 7) 1.

<sup>102</sup> Fiedler (no 94) 16.

debt into equity in the event of potential failures, marking a significant shift in handling financial crises.<sup>103</sup>

The bail-in narrative, connected to the earlier discussion of its neoclassical foundations, underscores the multifaceted impact of such financial interventions, blending economic principles with political realities and highlighting the profound effects on the societal fabric of Cyprus. Indeed, the execution of the bail-in plan in Cyprus was marked by disarray, serving as a cautionary tale on the pitfalls of crisis management. This tumultuous implementation inflicted considerable harm on market confidence and investor sentiment, highlighting the challenges in navigating such fiscal interventions.<sup>104</sup>

The CEC was fundamentally driven not by the actions of individual depositors but by broader systemic issues, notably the exploitative profit motives targeting the most vulnerable sectors of society.<sup>105</sup> While designed as a remedy, the bail-in plan profoundly shocked the banking sector, challenging the foundational trust and confidence of depositors in the stability of their banks—a sentiment critical to the functioning of the financial system. The stability of deposits and the broader banking system hinge on the confidence of the depositing public, a principle that underscores the importance of robust mechanisms, such as the European Central Bank's role as the lender of last resort and the necessity of a strong deposit guarantee scheme to ensure the security of depositors' savings in Cyprus.<sup>106</sup>

## **Instead of a Conclusion**

By researching the political economy aspects of the Cypriot bail-in plan, which was a part of the bailout programme implemented by the Troika, we conclude with four key remarks. First, the Cypriot bail-in plan represented a fundamental shift in the approach to financial crises within the EU crisis management framework. Shifting the responsibility for financial stabilisation to private depositors and stakeholders, the plan exemplified a neoclassical economic logic that emphasised individual responsibility, the avoidance of moral hazard, and risk sharing, bringing with it implications of financial 'punishment'. This marked a significant departure from previous bailout

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<sup>103</sup> Jannic Alexander Cutura, 'Debt Holder Monitoring and Implicit Guarantees: Did the BRRD Improve Market Discipline?' (2018) 232, SAFE Working Paper, Center for Financial Studies and Goethe University 1.

<sup>104</sup> Philippon and Salord (no 22) 36.

<sup>105</sup> Karatsioli (no 18) 18.

<sup>106</sup> Kitromilides (no 93) 3.



programmes, positioning the Cypriot EAP as a precedent for future crisis resolution frameworks within the EU. Second, the implementation of the bail-in plan underscored the complex interplay between financial policies and political sovereignty. The coercive nature of the Troika's intervention, juxtaposed initially against the vehement opposition from the Cypriot Parliament and populace, highlighted the contentious nature of supranational oversight. This tension between national sovereignty and EU-level governance illuminated the challenges inherent in reconciling domestic political imperatives with broader economic stability objectives within the Eurozone. Third, the bail-in plan had socio-economic implications, exacerbating inequalities and eroding public trust in financial institutions. The redistribution of financial crisis costs to private stakeholders and depositors not only challenged social solidarity principles but also raised concerns about the long-term viability and fairness of such crisis resolution strategies. As a fourth and final remark, this study proposes the need for enhanced democratic accountability and transparency in decision-making processes related to financial crisis management. Cyprus' experience brought to the fore the imperative for legitimising EU governance structures to ensure that policy interventions, instead of punitive, are both effective and reflective of the collective interests of EU Member States and citizens.

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# Greek and Cypriot Healthcare Professionals: Burned Out from the First Year of the COVID-19 Pandemic?

CHRISTINA MICHAILIDOU,<sup>1</sup> IRENE-CHRYSOVALANTO THEMISTOCLEOUS,<sup>2</sup>  
STELIOS HADJISAVVAS,<sup>3</sup> ANTHI KELLARI<sup>4</sup>

## Abstract

*The COVID-19 pandemic lasted for more than three years, significantly impacting the working conditions of healthcare professionals. This study investigates the job stress, fatigue, burnout, and quality of life of these professionals in Greece and Cyprus, using the Chalder Fatigue questionnaire, the Copenhagen Burnout Inventory, the Job Stress Measure and the EQ-5D-5L questionnaire. A total of 467 participants reported a mean job stress of 49.15, and moderate fatigue with a 17.26 mean score. A moderate level of burnout was also reported by 57.9% of participants. There were positive correlations between job stress and fatigue, job stress and burnout, and fatigue and burnout. All three variables negatively correlated with quality of life. Signs of increased job stress, fatigue, burnout, and reduced quality of life were evident as of the first year of the pandemic. The study concludes that both Greek and Cypriot governments must take measures to restore and protect the wellbeing of healthcare professionals.*

**Keywords:** COVID-19 pandemic; burnout; healthcare professionals; Cyprus; Greece

## Introduction

First reported as a syndrome in the 1970s, burnout (BO) is caused by occupational factors that create stress.<sup>5</sup> <sup>6</sup> It contains three dimensions: 1) emotional exhaustion

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Michailidou is the programme coordinator of Physiotherapy at the University of Nicosia, Cyprus.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Themistocleous works at the Physiotherapy programme of the University of Nicosia (UNIC), Cyprus.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Stelios Hadjisavvas is an adjunct faculty member at the University of Nicosia (UNIC), Cyprus.

<sup>4</sup> Anthi Kellari is a PhD candidate and laboratory collaborator at the Department of Physiotherapy, University of Thessaly, Greece.

<sup>5</sup> Alexandros-Stamatios Antoniou, 'Personal Traits and Professional Burnout in Health Professionals', (1999) 16(1) *Archives of Hellenic Medicine* 20.

<sup>6</sup> Christina Maslach, Susan Jackson & Michael Leiter, 'Maslach Burnout Inventory' in Carlos Zalaquett & Richard Wood (eds), *Evaluating Stress: A Book of Resources* (US: Scarecrow Education, 1997) 191.

(EE), 2) depersonalisation, and 3) a low feeling of personal accomplishment.<sup>7</sup> Healthcare professionals (HCPs) are particularly prone to developing BO, perhaps because of the emotional toll of the contact they have with their patients,<sup>8</sup> including prioritising the latter's needs, which can result in long working hours.<sup>9</sup> This puts HCPs at risk of anxiety, depression, and stress,<sup>10 11</sup> leading to a high prevalence of BO.<sup>12 13</sup>

HCPs experienced BO<sup>5</sup> even prior to the COVID-19 pandemic: BO was generally reported as high, around 65% for physicians<sup>14</sup> and between 28–36% for nurses.<sup>15</sup> The COVID-19 pandemic increased HCPs' workload;<sup>16</sup> they felt considerable, if not excessive, pressure due to job demands, fatigue and frustration, accompanied by isolation and lack of contact with their families.<sup>17</sup> Work-related difficulties, including lack of personal protective equipment, increased stress and anxiety, may have added to their work-related stress.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Isabelle Roy, 'Burnout Syndrome: Definition, Typology and Management', (2018) 39(318) *Soins. Psychiatrie* 12.

<sup>8</sup> Christina Maslach & Michael P. Leiter, 'Understanding the Burnout Experience: Recent Research and its Implications for Psychiatry', (2016) 15(2) *World Psychiatry* 103.

<sup>9</sup> Elizabeth H. Stephens, Joseph A. Dearani & Kristine J. Guleserian, 'Courage, Fortitude, and Effective Leadership of Surgical Teams during COVID-19', (2020) 11(5) *World Journal for Pediatric & Congenital Heart Surgery* 675.

<sup>10</sup> Xiu-Jie Zhang & al., 'Interventions to Reduce Burnout of Physicians and Nurses: An Overview of Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses', (2020) 99(26) *Medicine (Baltimore)* e20992.

<sup>11</sup> Panagiota Koutsimani, Anthony Montgomery & Katerina Georganta, 'The Relationship between Burnout, Depression, and Anxiety: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis', (2019) 10 *Frontiers in Psychology* 284.

<sup>12</sup> Nathalie Embriaco & al., 'High Level of Burnout in Intensivists: Prevalence and Associated Factors', (2007) 175(7) *American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine* 686.

<sup>13</sup> Zhi Xuan Low & al., 'Prevalence of Burnout in Medical and Surgical Residents: A Meta-Analysis', (2019) 16(9) *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 1479.

<sup>14</sup> Lisa S. Rotenstein & al., 'Prevalence of Burnout among Physicians: A Systematic Review', (2018) 320(11) *JAMA: The Journal of the American Medical Association* 1131.

<sup>15</sup> Linda H. Aiken & al., 'Patient Safety, Satisfaction, and Quality of Hospital Care: Cross Sectional Surveys of Nurses and Patients in 12 Countries in Europe and the United States', (2012) 344(7851) *Bmj* 17.

<sup>16</sup> Arnaud Bruyneel & al., 'Impact of COVID-19 on Nursing Time in Intensive Care Units in Belgium', (2021) 62 *Intensive & Critical Care Nursing* 102967.

<sup>17</sup> Mohammad Jalili & al., 'Burnout among Healthcare Professionals during COVID-19 Pandemic: A Cross-Sectional Study', (2021) 94(6) *International Archives of Occupational and Environmental Health* 1345.

<sup>18</sup> Judith Arnetz & al., 'Personal Protective Equipment and Mental Health Symptoms among Nurses during the COVID-19 Pandemic', (2020) 62(11) *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine* 892.

The high rates of BO reported by HCPs can impact both their physical and mental health, resulting in poor quality of care provided to patients, even jeopardising patient safety.<sup>19</sup> <sup>20</sup> Only one month into the COVID-19 pandemic, HCPs reported needing psychological treatment<sup>21</sup> for depressive symptoms and anxiety<sup>22</sup> and one in two was found to have BO.<sup>23</sup>

During the first wave of the pandemic, both the Greek and the Cypriot governments reacted fast and adapted effective strategies that kept the total number of deaths at a low rate.<sup>24</sup> But the pressure and the limited resources overwhelmed the HCPs.<sup>25</sup> Early in the pandemic, in both countries, HCPs experienced considerable effects, which included anxiety, depression, stress, distress, emotional instability,<sup>26</sup> <sup>27</sup> BO,<sup>28</sup> and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).<sup>29</sup> BO prevalence was associated with life changes during the pandemic, including longer working hours, being separated from family, and spending time in isolation.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Carolyn S. Dewa & al., 'The Relationship between Physician Burnout and Quality of Healthcare in Terms of Safety and Acceptability: A Systematic Review', (2017) 7(6) *BMJ Open* e015141.

<sup>20</sup> Louise H. Hall & al., 'Healthcare Staff Wellbeing, Burnout, and Patient Safety: A Systematic Review', (2016) 11(7) *PLoS ONE* e0159015.

<sup>21</sup> José Ángel Martínez-López & al., 'Psychological Impact of COVID-19 Emergency on Health Professionals: Burnout Incidence at the most Critical Period in Spain', (2020) 9(9) *Journal of Clinical Medicine* 3029.

<sup>22</sup> Deni Kurniadi Sunjaya, Dewi Marhaeni Diah Herawati & Adiatma Y. M. Siregar, 'Depressive, Anxiety, and Burnout Symptoms on Health Care Personnel at a Month After COVID-19 Outbreak in Indonesia', (2021) 21(1) *BMC Public Health* 227.

<sup>23</sup> Jalili & al., (n 17).

<sup>24</sup> Annalisa Quattrocchi & al., 'Extensive Testing and Public Health Interventions for the Control of COVID-19 in the Republic of Cyprus between March and May 2020', (2020) 9(11) *Journal of Clinical Medicine* 3598.

<sup>25</sup> Konstantinos Tsamakis & al., 'COVID-19 Pandemic and its Impact on Mental Health of Healthcare Professionals', (2020) 19(6) *Experimental and Therapeutic Medicine* 3451.

<sup>26</sup> Theodora Fteropoulou & al., 'Beyond the Physical Risk: Psychosocial Impact and Coping in Healthcare Professionals during the COVID-19 Pandemic', (2021) *Journal of Clinical Nursing* 1.

<sup>27</sup> Konstantinos Kapetanios & al., 'Exploring the Factors Associated with the Mental Health of Frontline Healthcare Workers during the COVID-19 Pandemic in Cyprus', (2021) 16(10) *PloS One* e0258475.

<sup>28</sup> Sofia Pappa & al., 'From Recession to Depression? Prevalence and Correlates of Depression, Anxiety, Traumatic Stress and Burnout in Healthcare Workers during the COVID-19 Pandemic in Greece: A Multi-Center, Cross-Sectional Study', (2021) 18(5) *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 2390.

<sup>29</sup> Apostolos Blekas & al., 'COVID-19: PTSD Symptoms in Greek Health Care Professionals', (2020) 12(7) *Psychological Trauma* 812.

<sup>30</sup> Kapetanios & al., (n 27).



The aim of the current study is to examine the job stress, fatigue, and BO reported by Greek-Cypriot and Greek HCPs during the second and third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic and how these associate with quality of life (QoL) for this population.

## Method

Using a snowball method, a cross-sectional online survey was posted on Greek and Cypriot social media accounts and circulated via university newsletters and email lists. Data collection took place in December 2020 and then between February and March 2021. The periods reflect the end of the second and start of the third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. The study included questions divided into: 1) demographics and work-related characteristics, 2) job-related stress, 3) fatigue, 4) burnout, and 5) quality of life. All questionnaires were in the Greek language.

The study obtained the approval of the National Bioethics Committee of Cyprus (EEBK EPI 2020.01.10). Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and their rights under the General Data Protection Regulation. Informed consent was inferred through participants' completion and submission of the electronic questionnaire.

## Measures Used

The Chalder Fatigue Scale (CFS) measures fatigue severity.<sup>31</sup> It has been used in multiple studies,<sup>32 33 34 35</sup> and shows good internal consistency<sup>36</sup> and convergent validity.<sup>37</sup> The CFS was translated into Greek by the authors of the present study, with the method and results of this translation shown in a different publication.

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<sup>31</sup> Trudie Chalder & al., 'Development of a Fatigue Scale', (1993) 37(2) *Journal of Psychosomatic Research* 147.

<sup>32</sup> Alicia Deale & al., 'Cognitive Behavior Therapy for Chronic Fatigue Syndrome: A Randomized Controlled Trial', (1997) 154(3) *The American Journal of Psychiatry* 408.

<sup>33</sup> Pauline Powell & al., 'Randomised Controlled Trial of Patient Education to Encourage Graded Exercise in Chronic Fatigue Syndrome', (2001) 322(7283) *Bmj* 387.

<sup>34</sup> Alison J. Wearden & al., 'Nurse Led, Home Based Self Help Treatment for Patients in Primary Care with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome: Randomised Controlled Trial', (2010) 340(7753) *Bmj* 19.

<sup>35</sup> Peter D White & al., 'Comparison of Adaptive Pacing Therapy, Cognitive Behaviour Therapy, Graded Exercise Therapy, and Specialist Medical Care for Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (PACE): A Randomised Trial', (2011) 377(9768) *The Lancet (British Edition)* 823.

<sup>36</sup> Matteo Cella & Trudie Chalder, 'Measuring Fatigue in Clinical and Community Settings', (2010) 69(1) *Journal of Psychosomatic Research* 17.

<sup>37</sup> Jolanda De Vries, Helen Michielsen & Guus Van Heck, 'Assessment of Fatigue among Working People: A Comparison of Six Questionnaires', (2003) 60(1) *Occupational and Environmental Medicine* i10.

The Job Stress Measure (JSM) is a questionnaire that consists of 16 items assessing stress.<sup>38</sup> It is a reliable measure<sup>39</sup> with a Cronbach's alpha  $\alpha=0.868$  for the Greek version of the questionnaire.<sup>40</sup>

The Copenhagen Burnout Inventory (CBI) uses 19 questions to assess personal, work-related, and client-related BO.<sup>41</sup> It has been translated into several languages.<sup>42</sup> <sup>43</sup> The Greek version has shown a face validity above 0.8 and Cronbach's alpha  $\alpha=0.84$ .<sup>44</sup>

The EQ-5D-5L questionnaire is widely used to assess general health status and QoL<sup>45</sup> in different conditions,<sup>46</sup> and has also been translated into many languages.<sup>47</sup> It assesses mobility, self-care, usual activities, pain/discomfort, and anxiety/depression to create a health state profile of a possible 3,125 combinations. It also calculates an EQ-score (health state index score) using a value set, which however was not available for Greek/Cypriot samples; as a workaround, the set values for England were used in the current study. The minimum possible value (worst possible health state, 55555) is equal to -0.285, while the maximum (best possible health state, 11111) is

<sup>38</sup> Angeliki Sakketou & al., 'Validation of the Greek Version of the "Job Stress Measure', (2014) 5(13) *Psychology* 1527.

<sup>39</sup> Ioannis Nikolaou & Ioannis Tsaousis, 'Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace: Exploring its Effects on Occupational Stress and Organizational Commitment', (2002) 10(4) *International Journal of Organizational Analysis* 327.

<sup>40</sup> Sakketou & al., (n 38)

<sup>41</sup> Tage S. Kristensen & al., 'The Conceptualization and Measurement of Burnout: The Copenhagen Burnout Inventory: A New Tool for the Assessment of Burnout. Commentary', (2005) 19(3) *Work and Stress* 256.

<sup>42</sup> Emilia Molinero Ruiz, Helena Basart Gómez-Quintero & Salvador Moncada Lluís, 'Validation of the Copenhagen Burnout Inventory to Assess Professional Burnout in Spain', (2013) 87(2) *Revista Espanola De Salud Publica* 165.

<sup>43</sup> Marko Živanović, Emina Borjanić Bolić & Maša Vukčević Marković, 'Psychometric Properties and Structural Validity of the Serbian Version of the Copenhagen Burnout Inventory (CBIsr)', (2021) 11(4) *SAGE Open* 215824402110488.

<sup>44</sup> Efsthios Papaefstathiou & al., 'Translation and Validation of the Copenhagen Burnout Inventory Amongst Greek Doctors', (2019) 7(1) *Health Psychology Research* 7678.

<sup>45</sup> Michael Herdman et al., 'Development and Preliminary Testing of the New Five-Level Version of EQ-5D (EQ-5D-5L)', (2011) 20(10) *Quality of Life Research* 1727.

<sup>46</sup> Gimena Hernandez & al., 'EuroQol (EQ-5D-5L) Validity in Assessing the Quality of Life in Adults with Asthma: Cross-Sectional Study', (2019) 21(1) *Journal of Medical Internet Research* e10178.

<sup>47</sup> Dominik Golicki & al., 'Interim EQ-5D-5L Value Set for Poland: First Crosswalk Value Set in Central and Eastern Europe', (2014) 4 *Value in Health Regional Issues* 19.

equal to 1.<sup>48</sup> The second part of the scale assesses perceived health from 0 (the worst imaginable health) to 100 (the best imaginable health).

### ***Statistical Analysis***

Data analysis was performed using SPSS 25.0. Descriptive statistics were initially obtained. The Shapiro-Wilk (sample  $\leq 50$ ) or Kolmogorov-Smirnov (sample  $> 50$ ) were used to test normality. Comparisons between categorical variables were performed using the Chi-square test. To compare means, the independent t-test was used for two samples and the F-Test (Anova) for more than two, whereas when normality was not met, the Mann-Whitney for two samples and the Kruskal-Wallis for more than two were used. Pearson's  $r$  was used to test correlations of interest and the Spearman's rho coefficient for cases of non-normality or ordinal data. Internal consistency using Cronbach's alpha was examined for all scales used. The level of significance was set at 0.05.

### **Results**

A total of 467 questionnaires were completed online. The sample contained significantly more women (67% versus 33%,  $p < 0.001$ ). Most respondents (73.9%) were aged between 30–59 ( $p < 0.001$ ). Most were married ( $p < 0.001$ ). There were almost equal numbers of doctors and physiotherapists, followed by nurses ( $p < 0.001$ ). There were significantly more people working in Greece than in Cyprus ( $p < 0.001$ ) (see Table 1).

Nearly half of the participants worked in public hospitals (48.4%), with a median work experience of 15 years (interquartile range 7 to 23) and the median years of working at the current workplace was 10 (interquartile range 3 to 19). The vast majority of the participants worked full time (94%), with most on a permanent contract (65.5%); 36.5% had an income of €500–800. Of those working in a hospital, almost half (49.6%) worked in a COVID-19 reference hospital. At the time of the survey, nearly one in four HCPs had already been in quarantine once and most of them (37.3%) were in quarantine for one or two weeks (31.8%) (see Table 1).

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<sup>48</sup> Nancy J. Devlin & al., 'Valuing Health-related Quality of Life: An EQ-5D-5L Value Set for England', (2018) 27(1) *Health Economics* 7.

*Table 1: Sample demographics*

Variable	Category	Valid Percent (%)
<b>N = 467</b>		
<b>Gender</b>	Male	33
	Female	67
<b>Age</b>	< 30	21.6
	30 – 44	41.1
	45 – 59	32.8
	60 - 74	4.5
<b>Marital status</b>	Single	25.5
	Divorced	7.5
	Married	52.9
	Relationship	13.7
	Widowed	0.4
<b>Health profession</b>	Doctor	33.8
	Nurse	20.6
	Nursing Assistant	3.2
	Physiotherapist	34
	Physiotherapist Assistant	0.9
	Other	7.5
<b>Education</b>	High School	2.8
	Post High School	3.2
	Undergraduate Degree	47.5
	Postgraduate Degree	37.7
	Doctorate Degree	8.8
<b>Country of employment</b>	Greece	79.9
	Cyprus	19.5
	Other	0.6
<b>Monthly income</b> N=441	Up to €500	3.6
	€501 - €800	9.1
	€801 - €1200	36.5
	€1201 - €1600	17.7
	€1601 - €2000	14.1
	€2001 - €2750	9.8
	More than €2750	9.3
<b>Working at a Covid-19 reference hospital</b> N=272	Yes	49.6

N=467		
Patients with Covid-19 at workplace	Yes	73.7
Have worked with patients with Covid-19	Yes	53.7
Working conditions changed during the pandemic	Yes	94.9
Way working conditions changed	Working more hours	37
	Working less hours	10.7
	Not often breaks	32.5
	Have often breaks	3.4
	Job requires more physical activity	28.9
	Increased work obligations	61.7
	Must very careful not to get infected by any disease	79.7
Have been in contact with a possible positive case	No	72.4
Have been in quarantine once	Yes	23.5
Colleague(s) have tested positive for Covid-19	Within workplace	63.6
	Outside workplace	67.2

### ***Job Stress***

On the JSM, job stress can range between 16 and 80. Participants reported a mean score of 49.15 (SD13.8). Among the conditions that tended to be quite stressful were the number of tasks HCPs had to do, time spent at work, volume of work to be done in the time specified, lack of job security, degree of responsibility, and scope of responsibilities. There was a high correlation for each item with the total of the JSM (with Pearson's ranging from 0.609 to 0.778 across items), except for the item 'The amount of travelling I must do'. Internal consistency with Cronbach's  $\alpha$  was high for all items, indicating a high reliability for this scale,  $\alpha=0.92$  (see Table 2)

*Table 2: Job Stress Measure and item correlations*

N=467	Min. – Max.	Mean	SD	Vari- ance	Pearson Correlation
Number of tasks to do	1-5	3.39	1.143	1.306	0.715**
Time spent at work	1-5	3.24	1.228	1.508	0.695**
Duration of work meetings	1-5	2.79	1.139	1.298	0.654**
Number of telephone calls and visits throughout day	1-5	3.16	1.297	1.682	0.616**
Politics rather than performance affecting the organizational decisions	1-5	3.08	1.318	1.738	0.634**
Inability to clearly understand what is expected at work	1-5	2.40	1.302	1.695	0.643**
Volume of work to be done in time specified	1-5	3.44	1.280	1.638	0.778**
Degree to which the job presents conflicting requirements	1-5	3.08	1.289	1.660	0.770**
Degree of bureaucratic procedures required to carry out work tasks	1-5	3.13	1.333	1.776	0.674**
Time pressure experienced	1-5	3.52	1.254	1.572	0.751**
Lack of job security	1-5	3.31	1.439	2.070	0.715**
Percentage of responsibility	1-5	3.75	1.272	1.617	0.733**
Application of duties implied in job position	1-5	3.26	1.274	1.623	0.767**
Degree at which career seems to be stabilized	1-5	3.00	1.413	1.996	0.644**
Opportunities for career development	1-5	2.88	1.381	1.907	0.609**
Number of business trips to be done	1-5	1.73	1.112	1.236	0.373**
Job Stress Measure Total	16 - 80	49.15	13.81	190.94	
Job Stress Measure Total (for Pearson's correlation)					1
Cronbach's $\alpha$					
Total Scale	0.92				
If item "Number of business trips to be done" is deleted	0.923				

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

## *Fatigue*

For the CFS, internal consistency was very high,  $\alpha = 0.903$ , indicating a very high reliability for this scale. From the corresponding item analysis, it appeared that there was no possibility for further improvement of Cronbach's  $\alpha$  index (see Table 3). HCPs generally felt more tired than usual, as during the previous month they felt physical fatigue more than usual, while mental fatigue was no worse than usual. The total fatigue mean score was 17.26 (SD 6.58). The total CFS has a possible range of 0–33. The Physical Fatigue subcategory (scale range 0–21) had a mean of 11.85 (SD 4.54) and the Mental Fatigue (scale range 0–12) a mean of 5.41 (SD 2.76).

*Table 3. Cronbach's alpha for the Chalder Fatigue Scale*

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Have problems with tiredness	15.36	36.745	0.654	0.894
Need to rest more	15.22	37.008	0.629	0.895
Feel sleepy or drowsy	15.63	36.546	0.596	0.897
Have problems starting things	15.85	36.507	0.614	0.896
Lack energy	15.49	34.868	0.762	0.887
Have less strength in muscles	15.78	35.662	0.629	0.895
Feel weak	15.72	34.740	0.734	0.889H
Have difficulty in concentrating	15.79	35.315	0.677	0.892
Make slips of the tongue when speaking	16.01	36.120	0.606	0.896
Find it difficult to find the correct word	15.96	36.279	0.591	0.897
Have memory problems	15.91	38.194	0.569	0.898

There was a high correlation (Pearson's ranging from 0.636 to 0.814 across items) for each item with the total sum for this scale. The items of the Physical Fatigue subcategory had a higher correlation with the total sum compared to the Mental Fatigue subcategory (see Table 4).

Table 4: Chalder Fatigue Scale and item correlations

	Min. – Max.	Mean (SD)	Variance	CFS Total	Physical Fatigue	Mental Fatigue
				Pearson Correlation		
Have problems with tiredness	0 - 3	1.92 (0.76)	0.57	0.718**	0.786**	0.419**
Need to rest more	0 - 3	2.05 (0.75)	0.57	0.696**	0.767**	0.398**
Feel sleepy or drowsy	0 - 3	1.64 (0.84)	0.71	0.676**	0.740**	0.393**
Have problems starting things	0 - 3	1.42 (0.83)	0.69	0.689**	0.664**	0.552**
Lack energy	0 - 3	1.78 (0.86)	0.74	0.814**	0.868**	0.512**
Have less strength in muscles	0 - 3	1.49 (0.91)	0.83	0.709**	0.747**	0.462**
Feel weak	0 - 3	1.55 (0.90)	0.81	0.794**	0.839**	0.512**
Have difficulty in concentrating	0 - 3	1.49 (0.89)	0.80	0.748**	0.592**	0.809**
Make slips of the tongue when speaking	0 - 3	1.26 (0.88)	0.78	0.688**	0.468**	0.869**
Find it difficult to find the correct word	0 - 3	1.31 (0.88)	0.78	0.675**	0.439**	0.887**
Have memory problems	0 - 3	1.36 (0.67)	0.44	0.636**	0.488**	0.714**
Physical Fatigue	0 - 21	11.85 (4.54)	20.63			
Mental Fatigue	0 - 12	5.41 (2.76)	7.62			
Chalder Fatigue Scale Total	0 - 33	17.27 (6.58)	43.35			

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level,  
The Chalder Fatigue Scale (11 items) was used.

### ***Burnout***

Using the CBI, people are considered to have BO if they score  $\geq 50$ . The results showed that 57.9% of the participants reported having BO, with 12% reporting high and severe scores. More people reported personal and work-related BO and it is notable that 2.8% reported severe personal BO. The mean overall BO score was at a moderate level, 52.6 (SD18.8). Personal BO was the subcategory with the highest mean score (61, SD20.3) (see Table 5).



*Table 5: Percentage of people reporting Burnout*

	Personal Burnout		Work-related Burnout		Client-related Burnout		Total Burnout	
	N		N		N		N	
No/low Burnout: 0-49	113	24.2%	145	31.0%	300	64.2%	196	42.1%
Moderate BO: 50-74	192	41.1%	202	43.3%	129	27.6%	214	45.9%
High BO: 75-99	149	31.9%	118	25.3%	32	6.9%	55	11.8%
Severe BO: 100	13	2.8%	2	0.4%	6	1.3%	1	0.2%
Mean	467	61	467	57.1	467	38.9	467	52.6
		(SD20.3)		(SD21.6)		(SD23.8)		(SD18.8)

Regarding personal BO, HCPs felt physically and emotionally tired; they ‘could not take it anymore’ and frequently felt exhausted or worn out. Regarding work-related and client-related BO, HCPs reported being emotionally exhausted, particularly at the end of the day and from the idea that they had to work which they were finding difficult to do. They also reported frustration with their work and to a small degree with working with patients, often wondering how much longer they would be able to do so (see Table 6).

*Table 6. Copenhagen Burnout Inventory and item correlations*

Variable	Always/ very high degree	Often/ high degree	Sometimes/ Somewhat	Seldom/ low degree	(Almost) Never/ very low degree	Mean (SD)	Burnout Pearson Correlation
<b>Personal burnout (N = 467)</b>							
How often do you feel tired?	12.2	58.5	24.8	4.1	0.4	69.5 (18.1)	0.655**
How often are you physically exhausted?	9.4	46.7	29.8	12.8	1.3	62.5 (21.9)	0.696**
How often are you emotionally exhausted?	16.3	47.3	21.6	12	2.8	65.5 (24.6)	0.732**
How often do you think: “I can’t take it anymore”?	13.7	33	25.9	18.6	8.8	56 (29.1)	0.777**
How often do you feel worn out?	12.6	40.3	29.3	15.4	2.4	61.3 (24.3)	0.795**
How often do you feel weak and susceptible to illness?	9.4	27.2	31.7	22.7	9	51.3 (27.7)	0.656**
Average Total Score (Personal burnout)						61 (20.3)	

BURNED OUT FROM THE FIRST YEAR OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC?

<b>Work-related burnout (N = 467)</b>							
<b>Is your work emotionally exhausting?</b>							
27.8	39.6	20.6	8.4	3.6	69.9 (26.2)	0.664**	
<b>Do you feel burnt out because of your work?</b>							
22.9	33.8	25.3	12	6	63.9 (28.5)	0.824**	
<b>Does your work frustrate you?</b>							
17.1	16.1	25.1	18.4	23.3	46.3 (34.8)	0.722**	
<b>Do you feel worn out at the end of the working day?</b>							
17.1	46.5	25.3	9.6	1.5	67 (22.9)	0.771**	
<b>Are you exhausted in the morning at the thought of another day at work?</b>							
13.5	25.1	33.6	18.8	9	53.8 (28.7)	0.742**	
<b>Do you feel that every working hour is tiring for you?</b>							
9.2	21	35.1	26.6	8.1	49.1 (27)	0.787**	
<b>Do you have enough energy for family and friends during leisure time?</b>							
1.9	25.7	46.5	21	4.9	49.6 (21.5)	0.557**	
<b>Average Total Score (Work-related burnout)</b>					57.1 (21.6)		
<b>Client-related burnout (N = 467)</b>							
<b>Do you find it hard to work with clients?</b>							
4.9	18.8	28.5	25.7	22.1	39.7 (29.1)	0.646**	
<b>Do you find it frustrating to work with clients?</b>							
2.6	5.8	22.5	29.3	39.8	25.4 (26)	0.635**	
<b>Does it drain your energy to work with clients?</b>							
9	26.6	28.9	19.7	15.8	48.2 (30.1)	0.646**	
<b>Do you feel that you give more than you get back when you work with clients?</b>							
19.5	24.8	22.1	15.8	17.8	53.1 (34.3)	0.601**	
<b>Are you tired of working with clients?</b>							
3.9	8.4	25.3	28.1	34.5	29.7(27.8)	0.647**	
<b>Do you sometimes wonder how long you will be able to continue working with clients?</b>							
7.1	15.4	26.3	22.9	28.3	37.5 (31.1)	0.684**	
<b>Average Total Score (Client-related burnout)</b>					38.9 (23.8)		
<b>Average Total Score</b>					52.6 (18.8)	1	

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

There was a high reliability for the CBI scale, with a Cronbach's  $\alpha=0.939$  and high reliability scores for all three subscales. Item analysis showed no possibility for further improvement of Cronbach's  $\alpha$  (see Table 7).

*Table 7: Cronbach's  $\alpha$  for the CBI*

N=467	Cronbach's $\alpha$	Range among items
Personal Burnout	$\alpha=0.909$	$\alpha=0.875 - 0.910$
Work-related burnout	$\alpha=0.898$	$\alpha=0.868 - 0.902$
Client-related burnout	$\alpha=0.886$	$\alpha=0.857 - 0.887$
Total CBI	$\alpha=0.939$	

### *Quality of Life*

Using the EQ-5D-5L, there were 134 different health states reported. Health profiles were calculated from the UK value set. The EQ-score had a mean of 0.70 (SD 0.20), a median of 0.73, and a range from -0.169 to 1.00. Most participants stated that they had no problem walking ( $p < 0.001$ ), no problem washing or dressing themselves ( $p < 0.001$ ), no problem / little problems in doing their usual activities ( $p < 0.001$ ), no / little pain or discomfort ( $p < 0.001$ ), and low / moderate anxiety or depression ( $p < 0.001$ ) (see Table 8)

*Table 8: EQ-5D-5L reported percentages*

	Mobility	Self-care	Usual activities	Pain/ Discomfort	Anxiety/ Depression
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
No problem	322 (69)	435 (93.1)	243 (52)	127 (27.2)	93 (19.9)
Slight problems	90 (19.3)	25 (5.4)	134 (28.7)	206 (44.1)	177 (37.9)
Moderate problems	36 (7.7)	7 (1.5)	67 (14.3)	103 (22.1)	129 (27.6)
Severe problems	19 (4.1)	0 (0)	18 (3.9)	28 (6)	53 (11.3)
Extreme problems/ unable to do	0 (0)	0 (0)	5 (1.1)	3 (0.6)	15 (3.2)
Total	467 (100)	467 (100)	467 (100)	467 (100)	467 (100)

### *Correlations*

Job stress positively correlated with total fatigue and its subscales, as well as with BO and all its subscales individually. It negatively correlated with QoL (see Tables 9, 10, and 11). Fatigue positively related with total BO and with its subscales. Total fatigue and its physical and mental components also negatively correlated with quality of life (see Tables 10 and 11).

*Table 9: Correlations between job stress, total fatigue, and quality of life*

	Job Stress Measure	Fatigue (total)1	Burnout2	EQ-5D-5L
<b>Job Stress Measure</b>				
<b>Fatigue (total)†</b>	0.543 **			
<b>Burnout‡</b>	0.620 **	0.630 **		
<b>EQ-5D-5L</b>	-0.327 **	-0.514 **	-0.483 **	

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level, †Measured with the CFS, ‡Measured with the CBI

*Table 10: Correlations between fatigue subscales, job stress, burnout and quality of life*

	Physical Fatigue†	Mental Fatigue†
<b>Mental Fatigue</b>	0.602**	
<b>CFS (total)</b>	0.942**	0.835**
<b>Job Stress Measure</b>	0.550**	0.390**
<b>CBI (total)</b>	0.644**	0.443**
<b>Personal Burnout‡</b>	0.677**	0.462**
<b>Work Related Burnout‡</b>	0.656**	0.435**
<b>Client Related Burnout‡</b>	0.342**	0.257**
<b>EQ-5D-5L</b>	-0.470**	-0.453**

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level, CFS=Chalder Fatigue Scale, CBI= Copenhagen Burnout Inventory, †Measured with the CFS, ‡Measured with the CBI

*Table 11: Correlations between Burnout subscales, job stress, fatigue, and quality of life*

	Personal Burnout	Work Related Burnout	Client Related Burnout
<b>Work Related Burnout†</b>	0.782**		
<b>Client Related Burnout†</b>	0.480**	0.569**	
<b>Job Stress Measure</b>	0.566**	0.640**	0.394**
<b>Fatigue (total) ‡</b>	0.661**	0.635**	0.343**
<b>Physical Fatigue‡</b>	0.677**	0.656**	0.342**
<b>Mental Fatigue‡</b>	0.462**	0.435**	0.257**
<b>EQ-5D-5L</b>	-0.534**	-0.470**	-0.259**

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level, †Measured with the CBI, ‡Measured by the CFS

BO positively correlated with physical and mental fatigue and negatively with QoL. Personal BO showed a fairly high correlation with work-related BO, but moderate with client-related BO. It also positively correlated with physical and mental fatigue. Work-related BO correlated with client-related BO, physical fatigue, and mental fatigue. Finally, client-related BO associated with physical fatigue and mental fatigue. All BO subscales negatively correlated with QoL, personal BO, work-related BO, and client-related BO (see Table 11).

## Discussion

The study examined job stress, fatigue, BO, and QoL reported by HCPs during the second and third waves of the COVID-19 pandemic in two European countries. All scales showed high reliability in the study. As expected, a large proportion of HCPs worked with patients with COVID-19. Participants reported work changes including increased hours, fewer breaks, and more obligations. Tasks like time spent at work, number of tasks assigned, and lack of job security correlated with job stress, which is in line with relevant literature.<sup>49 50</sup>

HCPs reported a total of 17.2 (SD 6.5, Std. Error .305) of fatigue on the CFS, which is higher than that reported by HCPs (nurses) (13.5, SD 4.5),<sup>51</sup> or the general population (14.2, SD 4.6)<sup>52</sup> prior to the pandemic period, and higher than people who previously had COVID-19 (15.1, SD 5,<sup>53</sup> (13.4, SD 4.5),<sup>54</sup> including teenagers (13.5, SD 5.2),<sup>55</sup> in the early days of the pandemic. The consequences of fatigue have been well documented in the literature. Longer working hours, especially if they are mandatory, and highly demanding jobs with low reward and autonomy relate with fa-

<sup>49</sup> Zhang & al., (n10).

<sup>50</sup> Janet Alexis A. de Los Santos & Leodoro J. Labrague, 'The Impact of Fear of COVID-19 on Job Stress, and Turnover Intentions of Frontline Nurses in the Community: A Cross-Sectional Study in the Philippines', (2021) 27(1) *Traumatology* 52.

<sup>51</sup> Corné A. M. Roelen & al., 'Physical and Mental Fatigue as Predictors of Sickness Absence among Norwegian Nurses', (2013) 36(5) *Research in Nursing & Health* 453.

<sup>52</sup> Cella & Chalder, (n 36).

<sup>53</sup> Knut Stavem & al., 'Prevalence and Determinants of Fatigue After COVID-19 in Non-Hospitalized Subjects: A Population-Based Study', (2021) 18(4) *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 2030.

<sup>54</sup> Liam Townsend & al., 'Persistent Fatigue Following SARS-CoV-2 Infection is Common and Independent of Severity of Initial Infection', (2020) 15(11) *PloS One* e0240784.

<sup>55</sup> Benjamin Caesar & al., 'Evaluation of Physician Burnout at a Major Trauma Centre using the Copenhagen Burnout Inventory: Cross-Sectional Observational Study', (2020) 189(4) *Irish Journal of Medical Science* 1451

tigue; these often only require modest levels to correlate with complex cognitive functions, like decision making ability and communication skills, tasks essential when dealing with emergency situations, which could lead to human error.<sup>56</sup>

Nearly 58% of respondents reported having BO, which is lower than the 78% reported by doctors and nurses of Greece's largest hospital in Athens.<sup>57</sup> This could be because in our study not all participants worked in a hospital. Our sample reported moderate levels of BO (52.63, SD 18.8, Std. Error .886), which is slightly higher than that reported by surgeons working in trauma units (50, SD 12.79)<sup>58</sup> and nurses (46.71)<sup>59</sup> prior to the pandemic. It is also higher than that reported by a Greek sample of nurses during the pandemic (46.95, SD 18.75).<sup>60</sup> Personal BO was higher than work-related BO and client-related BO. This is similar to other results among nurses<sup>61 62</sup> and slightly different to another study on Greek nurses where higher work-related BO was found.<sup>63</sup>

The mean QoL reported by HCPs in our study was 0.70 (SD 0.20) on the EQ-5D-5L. This result is very similar to that reported by the Greek general population prior the pandemic (0.72, SD 0.3; mean VAS 74.71, SD 18.89),<sup>64</sup> but lower than during the

<sup>56</sup> Ulises Techera & al., 'Causes and Consequences of Occupational Fatigue', (2016) 58(10) *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine* 961.

<sup>57</sup> Dimitra Latsou & al., 'Professional Quality of Life and Occupational Stress in Healthcare Professionals during the COVID-19 Pandemic in Greece', (2022) 15 *Health Services Insights* 11786329221096042.

<sup>58</sup> Caesar et al., (n 55).

<sup>59</sup> Michael Clinton & Roulla Shehadeh, 'Rasch Analysis of Lebanese Nurses' Responses to the Copenhagen Burnout Inventory Alternative to the Maslach Burnout Inventory', (2021) 7 *SAGE Open Nursing* 237796082110209.

<sup>60</sup> Christos Sikaras & al., 'Nursing Staff Fatigue and Burnout during the COVID-19 Pandemic in Greece', (2022) 9(1) *AIMS Public Health* 94.

<sup>61</sup> Aoyjai P. Montgomery, Andres Azuero & Patricia A. Patrician, 'Psychometric Properties of Copenhagen Burnout Inventory among Nurses', (2021) 44(2) *Research in Nursing & Health* 308.

<sup>62</sup> Duaa Aljabri & al., 'Sociodemographic and Occupational Factors Associated with Burnout: A Study among Frontline Healthcare Workers during the COVID-19 Pandemic', (2022) 10 *Frontiers in Public Health* 854687.

<sup>63</sup> Sikaras & al., (n 60).

<sup>64</sup> John N. Yfantopoulos & Athanasios E. Chantzaras, 'Validation and Comparison of the Psychometric Properties of the EQ-5D-3L and EQ-5D-5L Instruments in Greece', (2017) 18(4) *The European Journal of Health Economics* 519.

pandemic (mean 0.813, SD 0.18)<sup>65</sup> and higher than that of people who previously had COVID-19 (0.61, SD 0.006).<sup>66</sup>

The second wave of the pandemic hit Greece harder, and the preceding cuts to healthcare staff<sup>67</sup> meant that COVID-19 management grew as a challenge. During the fourth pandemic wave, 13.5% of HCPs at a COVID-19 reference hospital in Greece reported severe PTSD.<sup>68</sup> This highlights the importance of studying the needs of these professionals, but also of creating safety nets, including preventative measures for the ongoing fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic and other pandemics or epidemics that may follow in the future.

Though COVID-19 is now much better managed around the world and the WHO has declared the end of the pandemic, the consequences remain. With a prevalence of more than 0.3%, Long COVID affects many, and fatigue is its most prevalent symptom.<sup>69</sup> With 11% of HCPs globally infected with COVID-19,<sup>70</sup> a significant number are expected to have their own health problems that could, in turn, increase BO. It is essential for governments to look at factors that can reduce the risk of developing BO, which include adequate training, a reduction in working hours, and safer working environments.<sup>71</sup> Our findings show that the pandemic impacted the wellbeing of the HCPs as of its early days, so the healthcare systems need to enforce a strategic approach to reduce or, better, eliminate these negative circumstances, and more widely protect public health.

<sup>65</sup> Sara Olofsson & al., 'Quality of Life in the Swedish General Population during COVID-19 - Based on Pre- and Post-Pandemic Outbreak Measurement', (2021) *Nordic Journal of Health Economics* 56.

<sup>66</sup> Morteza Arab-Zozani & al., 'Health-Related Quality of Life and its Associated Factors in COVID-19 Patients', (2020) 11(5) *Osong Public Health and Research Perspectives* 296.

<sup>67</sup> Constantinos Siettos & al., 'A Bulletin from Greece: A Health System Under the Pressure of the Second COVID-19 Wave', (2021) 115(3) *Pathogens and Global Health* 133.

<sup>68</sup> Dimitra Lekka & al., 'Health Professionals in a COVID-19 Reference Hospital: Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Levels and their Associations with Psychological Resilience and Quality of Life', (2022) 14(2) *Curēus* e22473.

<sup>69</sup> Chen Chen & al., 'Global Prevalence of Post-Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Condition or Long COVID: A Meta-Analysis and Systematic Review', (2022) *The Journal of Infectious Diseases* 1593.

<sup>70</sup> Tafadzwa Dzinamarira & al., 'COVID-19 Prevalence among Healthcare Workers. A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis', (2021) 19(1) *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 146.

<sup>71</sup> Caesar et al., (n 55).

### ***Study limitations***

The current study is limited by the fact that it used a cross-sectional design to collect data; however, self-report is a common research design that helps reveal associations without drawing conclusions about causality. Another limitation is the online design that was followed, as it can be argued that it attracted the participation of those who had a prior interest in the topic, which undermines the potential for generalisability. But, particularly during pandemic-related social distancing regulations, this mode of data collection is widely used and accepted in research. The fact that our study agrees with other reports in the literature strengthens the findings regardless of the collection method used. Finally, all evaluation tools used were self-reports; those who reported as being at risk of developing mental health problems need an official evaluation by a health professional to confirm a diagnosis.

### ***Conclusion***

In conclusion, the current study shows that the job stress, BO, and fatigue reported by HCPs in Greece and Cyprus as early as the first year of the pandemic significantly associate with lower QoL. Those who worked to help the population during the COVID-19 pandemic remain at risk of having a mental health crisis. As a job should not define the personal wellbeing of any human, the maintenance of a good QoL of HCPs is essential. The results of the current study highlight the necessity to have created support programmes not after the end of the last pandemic, but as soon it had started. As pandemics of different types are likely imminent, part of pandemic preparedness and planning should be the protection of HCPs from the negative work-related consequences they may face. Greek and Cypriot governments must be proactive to protect HCPs as a matter of urgency.

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# Read the Words I Sing: How Cypriot Greek Lyrics Are Rendered in Writing on YouTube

MARIA KOUVAROU<sup>1</sup>

## Abstract

*This paper presents a case study of the ways in which Greek Cypriot songwriters render their Cypriot Greek lyrics in writing when they post them on their YouTube channels. Considering that Cypriot Greek has not been codified, and is not taught in schools, the research discusses various online lyric codification devices implemented by the lyricists/songwriters and poses one main question: Are these lyric codification devices to be interpreted socio-politically, as a reappropriation of the cultural heritage that is Cypriot Greek, or are they simply to be seen as a visual presentation of what is meant to be heard in performance, rendered in the idiosyncratic ways in which individuals choose to express themselves?*

**Keywords:** Cypriot Greek; lyrics; language codification; YouTube; popular music

## Introduction<sup>2</sup>

In the past two decades, there has been a notable increase in the number of songs released in the Republic of Cyprus (RoC) that have lyrics in Cypriot Greek (CG). This is a significant turn that emphasises local creation, one that comes bottom-up and is in contrast to the norms of songwriting in a country that perennially want(ed) local popular music creations (if acknowledged at all) to be either in Standard Modern Greek (SMG) or in English. Considering that lyrics in SMG also provide an opportunity for musicians to compete in the broader Greek music market and the fact that the English language, often considered as the standard language for popular music, is also the first language for diasporic Greek Cypriots, the choice of CG for lyric-writing creates ample space for discussion.

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<sup>1</sup> Adjunct Lecturer at the Department of Social and Political Sciences, University of Cyprus. This paper is part of the research project 'Music, dialect, and the re-inventions of folk traditions in Cypriot modernity' (MU.DI.RE) funded by the A.G. Leventis Foundation.

<sup>2</sup> A version of this paper was presented at the Heritage Languages and Variation (HELV) conference that took place at the Cyprus University of Technology on 23–25 September 2022. The author is grateful to the organisers and participants for their valuable comments.

This paper presents a case study of Cypriot Greek lyrics as published by the musicians in the description sections of their YouTube music videos. It identifies and discusses four major tendencies in their rendering of Cypriot Greek lyrics in writing: a) implementation of Greeklish (or, Latin-alphabet Greek); b) the use of Greek script for writing Cypriot Greek; c) the use of diacritics; and d) script mixing, including transliterations of Greeklish into the Greek script and the treatment of English words that occasionally appear in Greek Cypriot songs. The paper uses as its primary research material the songs themselves and the lyrics that accompany the YouTube videos. It also refers, where applicable, to various lyricists'/songwriters' codification practices as these were raised during interviews with 10 musicians (nine male, one female, aged 24–45, and active in various music genres) that took place in the larger context of the research programme.

The island's language ideologies, tightly knit as they are with its historico-political context, provide the backdrop against which the creative practices presented and discussed take on significant dimensions.<sup>3</sup> Discussions are centred on the language ideologies extant in the RoC and the different positions ascribed to the official language of the State (SMG) and the everyday language of communication, CG, which has been historically given the status of a dialect of the Greek language. With the proclamation of the RoC as an independent State in 1960, its Constitution set the official languages as Greek and Turkish. Following the division of the island, a result of the Turkish invasion in 1974, and the geographical separation of the two major populations, Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot, the only active official language in the RoC in the past decades has been Greek—specifically, SMG. SMG is used in

<sup>3</sup> On language and relevant ideologies in the Republic of Cyprus, see Vasiliki Georgiou, 'Circularity in the Reproduction of Language Ideology: The case of Greek Cypriot TV Series' in Sally A. Johnson and Tommaso M. Milani (eds), *Language Ideologies and Media Discourse: Texts, Practices, Politics* (London: Continuum, 2010) 101; Vasiliki Georgiou, 'Intended and Unintended Effects of Language Planning: Insights from an Orthography Debate in Cyprus' (2011) 10(2) *Language Policy* 159; Xenia Hadjioannou, Stavroula Tsiplakou, & Matthias Kappler, 'Language Policy and Language Planning in Cyprus' (2011) 12(4) *Current Issues in Language Planning* 1; Yiannis Papadakis, 'Linguistic Varieties and Social Practices in Cyprus' ('Γλωσσικά Ιδιώματα και Κοινωνικές Πρακτικές στην Κύπρο') in Dimitra Gefou-Madianou (ed.) *Self and 'Other': Conceptualizations, Identities and Practices in Greece and Cyprus* (Εαυτός και Άλλος: Εννοιολογήσεις Ταυτότητας και Πρακτικές στην Ελλάδα και την Κύπρο) (Athens: Gutenberg, 2003), 535 (in Greek); Yiannis Papadakis, 'On Linguistic Bea(u)tification and Embarrassment: Linguistic Boundaries in Cyprus' (2003) 18(19) *Modern Greek Studies Yearbook* 181; Pavlos Pavlou, 'Greek Dialect Use in the Mass Media in Cyprus' (2006) 2004(168) *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 101; and Marina Terkourafi, 'Perceptions of Difference in the Greek Sphere: The Case of Cyprus' (2007) 8(1) *Journal of Greek Linguistics* 60.



all kinds of formal communication, including press and media, official services and courts, places from which CG, with very few exceptions, is excluded. SMG is also the language that is used by default in education, a context in which the use of CG is largely ‘policed’.<sup>4</sup> However, CG, which differs from SMG on many levels,<sup>5</sup> has been for centuries the language variety used daily for any kind of informal communication.<sup>6</sup> Despite its near omnipresence in the everyday —verbal—context of the RoC, the use of CG in ‘non-appropriate’ contexts (that is, contexts that require the usage of SMG) is often downplayed, linked to lower social and educational strata, and becomes associated with the absence of refinement. Nonetheless, in recent decades, the use of CG has transcended the boundaries of oral conversation and solidified its presence in the written form as well. For this, as Themistocleous<sup>7</sup> and Armosti & al.<sup>8</sup> also support, we can look at the rise of the internet, the central role that computer-mediated communication has acquired in daily life, and the proximity of these developments to informal communication and, by extension, to oral speech.

In this linguistic environment, CG is growing in every local creative domain, including literature, theatre, spoken poetry and, most importantly for our purposes, music. Starting from the Greek Cypriot hip-hop scene of the 1990s, CG lyrics have featured in countless songs of various popular music genres, especially ones that represent young people, like rap, rock, metal, and fusion.<sup>9</sup> This is, of course, a process

<sup>4</sup> For a discussion of the treatment of Cypriot Greek in the Greek Cypriot education see Pavlos Pavlou & Andreas Papapavlou, ‘Issues of dialect use in education from the Greek Cypriot perspective’ (2004) 14(2) *Journal of Applied Linguistics* 243.

<sup>5</sup> Xenia Hadjioannou, Stavroula Tsiplakou & Matthias Kappler, ‘Language policy and language planning in Cyprus’ (2011) 12(4) *Current Issues in Language Planning* 8.

<sup>6</sup> As a result of various factors, there has been a levelling of the regional variations of Cypriot Greek, and the emergence of a Cypriot Greek variety that is used throughout the RoC, described as Standard Cypriot Greek: see Amalia Arvaniti, ‘Linguistic practices in Cyprus and the emergence of Cypriot Standard Greek’ (2006) 2 *San Diego Linguistics Papers* 1.

<sup>7</sup> Christiana Themistocleous, ‘Written Cypriot Greek in online chat: Usage and attitudes’ in Mary Baltazani (ed.) *Proceedings of the 8th International Conference on Greek Linguistics* (University of Ioannina, Greece: University of Ioannina, 2009) 473; Christiana Themistocleous, ‘Writing in a non-standard Greek variety: Romanized Cypriot Greek in online chat’ (2010) 2(2) *Writing Systems Research* 155.

<sup>8</sup> Spyros Armosti & al., ‘Addressing Writing System Issues in Dialectal Lexicography: The Case of Cypriot Greek’ in Carrie Dyck, Tania Granadillo, Keren Rice & Jorge Emilio Rosés Labrada (eds) *Dialogue on Dialect Standardization* (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014) 23.

<sup>9</sup> The use of CG lyrics in local popular music, and specifically in Greek Cypriot hip-hop, has been discussed by Evros Stylianou, ‘Keeping it Native (?): The Conflicts and Contradictions of Cypriot Hip Hop’ in Marina Terkourafi (ed.), *The Languages of Global Hip Hop* (London: Continuum, 2010), 194; Mike Hajimichael, ‘Hip Hop and Cyprus: Language, Motivation, Unity, and Division’ in Sina A. Nitzsche and Walter Grunzweig (eds), *Hip-Hop in Europe: Cultural Identities and Transnational Flows*, Vol. 1 (Zürich:



that has been enabled and strengthened by the technological advancements and the digitalisation of the music industry since the beginning of the century,<sup>10</sup> as well as the rise of platforms like YouTube and Bandcamp, which have paved the way for self-released creative output and the ability to bypass gatekeepers like record companies and ‘mainstream’ media.<sup>11</sup> One of the positive outcomes of these developments has been the democratisation of music-making, and the creative exploration of identities and musical, personal, and collective subjectivities.<sup>12</sup> Cypriot musicians have been using these digital possibilities in creation and distribution, collectively achieving an unprecedented growth in the song output of the country (an estimated 3,500 songs between January 2015 and November 2024 inclusive), with self-releases being a substantial percentage.<sup>13</sup> Following current music-sharing practices, these songs often find their way on content sharing platforms of which YouTube is arguably the most popular. When artists post their songs (as videos) on YouTube, they frequently also post the associated lyrics in the description or the comments section. Considering that CG has not been officially codified, and that Greek Cypriot lyricists/songwriters were never taught how to write in the language variety of their everyday life, their practices of rendering Cypriot Greek lyrics create multiple spaces for discussion.

This paper presents some examples, looking at lyricists’/songwriters’ choices on rendering CG lyrics in writing, and ultimately addresses the main question: Are these choices to be interpreted socio-politically, as a reappropriation of the cultural heritage that is the CG language variety, or are they to be seen simply as visual representations of

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Lit-Verglag, 2014), 37; and Maria Kouvarou, ‘(Re)claiming the Public Sphere: Greek Cypriot Dialect Hip-Hop and the Right to Say it in One’s Own Language’, (2022) 45(2) *Popular Music and Society* 221.

<sup>10</sup> On the digitalisation of the music industry, see Xiaorui Guo, ‘The Evolution of the Music Industry in the Digital Age: From Records to Streaming’ (2023) 5(10) *Journal of Sociology and Ethnology* 7; Hyojung Sun, *Digital Revolution Tamed: The Case of the Recording Industry* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019); David Hesmondhalgh & Leslie M. Meier, ‘What the Digitalisation of Music Tells Us about Capitalism, Culture and the Power of the Information Technology Sector’ (2017) 21(11) *Information, Communication & Society* 1,555.

<sup>11</sup> Morten Hviid, Sofia Izquierdo Sanchez & Sabine Jacques, ‘Digitalisation and Intermediaries in the Music Industry: The Rise of the Entrepreneur?’ (2018) 15(2) *Scripted* 242.

<sup>12</sup> Paul Chambers, ‘Producing the Self: Digitisation, Music-Making and Subjectivity’ (2022) 58(4) *Journal of Sociology* 554. Chambers discusses this in relation to women and non-binary identifying music-makers.

<sup>13</sup> As also shown by the author’s current postdoctoral research project ‘Tracing the PLAcE of Independent Cypriot MUsic in the Radio stations of the Republic of Cyprus: the hegemonic reasons behind a presence/absence (PLAI.I.Mu.R.)’, carried out at the Cyprus University of Technology, that required cataloguing music releases in the RoC dating from 1 January 2015.

what is meant to be heard in performance, rendered in the idiosyncratic ways in which individuals choose to express themselves?

## Rendering Cypriot Greek Lyrics in Writing

If a song in CG still reaches the country's soundwaves as a peculiarity, uncomfortably negotiating a place among the songs in the expected—and, to a degree, acceptable—languages for lyric writing (SMG and English), it seals this ironic peculiarity in putting down its lyrics on paper or, even better for our purposes, on screen. The close readings of the ways Greek Cypriot lyricists/songwriters render their lyrics in writing sheds further light on the tension between CG's institutional treatment as a dialect (substantiated by the absence of standard codification and its limited inclusion in the educational context) and its ever-growing status as the language variety chosen by numerous local creators as their expressive medium. Armosti & al. emphasise the need to codify CG in terms of script and orthography, not only because of the growing academic interest on the subject, but also because of the 'range of situations wherein writers choose to or must write in Cypriot Greek, and hence are inevitably faced with the quandary of how to write in this non-codified variety'.<sup>14</sup> The case of lyricists/songwriters and their activities on YouTube is an interesting example, as it shows how the void created by the absence of codification and the need to use CG in writing is filled with idiosyncratic and conventional approaches, as well as intentional and unintentional decisions that are also connected to social and technological advancements. It is also linked to computer-mediated communication and the younger generation. The above will be further discussed in the process of exploring the four main styles of rendering CG lyrics in writing on YouTube, as these have been identified during the research: Greeklish, the use of Greek script, the use of diacritics, and script mixing. Relevant excerpts and word examples, as they appear on YouTube, will be used as required.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Armosti & al. (no 8) 23.

<sup>15</sup> Permission was acquired by the content creators to present lyric excerpts as they appear on their YouTube channels. The excerpts or words taken from the lyric sets are typed exactly as found online on the last date of access. The accompanying translations are the author's, unless otherwise indicated.

### A. Greeklish (Latin-alphabet Greek)

‘Epian mas i krisi re je en vasto mpakkira  
Je epesan oulles oi dulies je efkiken i anergia’ [Zivanished, ‘I Krisi’ (Demo)]<sup>16</sup>  
[Crisis has caught us and I do not hold a cent  
And all the jobs have dropped and unemployment has risen]

‘Epia mia mera sto xorko, J esinaksa ampeli  
j ethkialEksa to kala, nan glijin melin’ [Zivanished, ‘To vouttiman’]<sup>17</sup>  
[I went one day to the village, and I collected grape  
And I picked it out well, to be sweet like honey]

The above examples are both in Greeklish; for clarity, the term is used here to indicate the practice of codifying (Cypriot) Greek by using the Latin alphabet, following Androutsopoulos’ description of Greeklish as the ‘representation of the Greek language with the Latin script’.<sup>18</sup> It is understood here as a practice reserved only for the written representation of the linguistic variety and therefore should not be confused with the relevant (and similar) terms Gringlish/Greenglish, which describe the development of new intra-language variations, with loan words,<sup>19</sup> a ‘hybrid form of English and Greek’,<sup>20</sup> that is a ‘pattern of speech’ developed by Greeks (and Greek Cypriots) of the diaspora, ‘replete with words and phrases from English’.<sup>21</sup>

A first reading of the two excerpts in Greeklish presented above indicates a ‘freedom’ in the codification of the lyrics, that leans more toward the phonetic representation of the words rather than any orthographical approach. What is interesting and possibly strengthens the idea of ‘freedom’, is that these two excerpts, albeit from the

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<sup>16</sup> Zivanished, ‘Zivanished - I Krisi (Demo)’ (10 January 2013) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=22l-8ch95fcU> accessed 7 April 2023.

<sup>17</sup> Zivanished, ‘Zivanished - To Vouttiman’ (25 May 2017) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HMU-vZuO30u4> accessed 7 April 2023.

<sup>18</sup> Jannis Androutsopoulos, ‘“Greeklish”: Transliteration Practice and Discourse in the Context of Computer-Mediated Digraphia’ in Alexandra Georgakopoulou and Michael Silk (eds) *Standard Languages and Language Standards: Greek, Past and Present* (Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2009) 221.

<sup>19</sup> Pénélope Gardner-Chloros, ‘The Sociolinguistics of the Greek-Cypriot Community in London’ (1992) 4 *Plurilinguismes. Sociolinguistique du grec et de la Grèce* 112.

<sup>20</sup> Alexandra Dellios, ‘A Cultural Conflict? Belonging for Greek Child Migrants in 1960s and 1970s Melbourne’ (2013) 84(2) *Victorian Historical Journal* 1, 17.

<sup>21</sup> Chrysie M. Constantakos & John N. Spiridakis, ‘Greek in New York’ in Ofelia García & Joshua A. Fishman (eds) *The Multilingual Apple: Languages in New York City* (2nd edn., Berlin, New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 2002) 143, 151.

same band, present certain words in different ways. Specifically, in the first excerpt we see the word *je* and in the second the single character *j*, both indicating the CG τζαι (SMG και, English *and*). While *je* is a common way to write τζαι in Greeklish, its appearance as *j* suggests the reader would know this variation as well. Although an assumption, it could be the case that the use of *j* is also a remnant of earlier texting conventions that restricted the number of characters that could be typed. According to Androutsopoulos, Greeklish is connected to the Greek-speaking internet from its early days. Although it was initially used due to technical constraints (i.e., the initial absence of the Greek script for computer-mediated communication), Greek-speaking users persisted in its usage in their internet interactions even after the introduction of Greek script for computer-mediated communication (in the 1990s). This, he goes on to add, moves beyond the technical and transpires into a ‘symbol of the medium in which it occurs’.<sup>22</sup> The widespread use of Greeklish in recent decades, especially in the realm of digital communication, has transformed it into a sign of modernity and a common communication practice among young people who grew up in the digital age and under the global influence of English as the main language of the internet. Although the popularity of Greeklish has provoked debate as to whether it poses a threat to the Greek language,<sup>23</sup> its use remains associated with values like technological competence, cosmopolitan outlooks, and global orientation.<sup>24</sup> This can be further exemplified by the fact that, apart from technology-mediated communication, other observations of its use include a few books written in Greeklish, the availability of summer schools to learn Greeklish, automated online Greeklish translation and converter tools, as well as its use in advertisements’.<sup>25</sup> As Laghos, Masoura and Skordi have pointed out, the popularity of Greeklish not only had to do with technical limitations, but with the character of Greeklish as a flexible code that makes the content of the message more important than spelling conventions.<sup>26</sup> Returning to the RoC, the use of Greeklish for the comput-

<sup>22</sup> Androutsopoulos (no 18) 221.

<sup>23</sup> Spiros A. Moschonas, “‘Language Issues’ after the “Language Question”: On the Modern Standards of Standard Modern Greek’ in Alexandra Georgakopoulou & Michael Silk (eds) *Standard Languages and Language Standards: Greek, Past and Present* (Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2009) 293.

<sup>24</sup> Andrew Laghos, Athina Skordi & Sophia Masoura, ‘The Impact of Social Networking and E-mail on Human Behavior’ (2013) 6(3) *Romanian Journal of Human-Computer Interaction* 47; Dimitrios Koutsogiannis & Vassiliki Adampa, ‘Girls, Identities and Agency in Adolescents’ Digital Literacy Practices’ (2012) 3 *Journal of Writing Research* 217; Androutsopoulos (no 18).

<sup>25</sup> Laghos, Skordi & Masoura (no 24) 48.

<sup>26</sup> Andrew Laghos, Sophia Masoura & Athina Skordi, ‘Greeklish/Greenglish: The Advent and Popularization of an e-Language through Social Networking, Social Media and Telecommunication Technologies’

er-mediated communication of CG acquires an additional layer of significance due to its capacity to signify sounds that exist in CG and cannot be represented by letters of the Greek script<sup>27</sup>—the letter *j* mentioned above is but one example.

The interplay between ‘oral’, ‘informal’, ‘computer-mediated’ and ‘freedom’ takes on an interesting dimension in the case of lyric-posting on YouTube, especially in relation to the use of Greeklish. Launched in the USA in 2005, YouTube has become one of the most important media platforms internationally. Its significance and its potential for research has been pointed out by Androutsopoulos and Tereick, who also touch upon the issue of dialect.<sup>28</sup> However, to my knowledge, studies have yet to focus on the language in the description sections of the uploaded videos,<sup>29</sup> although during our research it was the description section that lent itself to revealing observations. Despite being a platform on which creative content is uploaded to be consumed, heard, or viewed, the upload is most often done by the content creators themselves. In this sense, YouTube might be seen as standing at the intersection of social media platforms and publication ‘sites’, and can be justifiably treated like any other computer-mediated communication, albeit in a more informal manner. This is the case with most of the lyric sets included in this research. At the same time, the nature of lyrics as ‘spoken’ language, as words to be ‘heard’, possibly gives the content creators additional freedom when it comes to the codification of their work.

With the absence from the Greek script of certain CG sounds, Greeklish becomes, then, an acceptable (and phonetically appropriate) code in which CG can be rendered in writing. Nonetheless, as seen in the two examples above, its use also shows many inconsistencies and individualised choices of script. Androutsopoulos writes that this is connected to the fact that Greeklish ‘is neither acquired through the normative mechanisms of the educational system nor controlled by norm-enforcing authorities’.<sup>30</sup> Seen in relation to CG, a non-codified variety that is not taught at schools, this statement creates an interesting parallel. Considering how the need to write in

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(2013) 3(19) *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 160, 165.

<sup>27</sup> Armosti & al. (no 8); Themistocleous, ‘Written Cypriot Greek...’ (no 7).

<sup>28</sup> Jannis Androutsopoulos & Jana Tereick, ‘YouTube: Language and discourse practices in participatory culture’ in Alexandra Georgakopoulou & Tereza Spilioti (eds) *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Digital Communication* (Abingdon/New York: Routledge, 2015), 354.

<sup>29</sup> There has been, however, extensive study of the comment sections of YouTube videos. For a relevant example, see Unn Røyneland, ‘Virtually Norwegian: Negotiating language and identity on YouTube’ in Cecelia Cutler & Unn Røyneland (eds) *Multilingual Youth Practices in Computer Mediated Communication* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018) 145.

<sup>30</sup> Androutsopoulos (no 18) 229.

CG has itself been associated with the era of the internet and computer-mediated communication, and is emblematic of youth culture, then that it finds its expression through Greeklish (another free-from-enforced-norms code that is tightly connected to the rise of the internet) seems only fitting.

Returning, however, to the issue of lyric-posting, the use of Greeklish is but one of the styles chosen and that, as shown by the research, is not the one preferred by the majority of the lyricists/songwriters. In fact, a hypothesis that came up during the research is that the more the musicians/bands rise in experience, number of releases, and popularity, the more they seem to move away from the use of Greeklish, instead adopting the Greek script for rendering their lyrics in writing.<sup>31</sup> Future research could be useful for testing this assumption and investigating the reasons why this might be the case.

### *B. Greek Script*

‘ΚΑΜΙΑ ΦΟΡΑ ΤΖΑΜΕ ΠΟΥ ΚΑΘΟΥΜΑΙ ΑΠΛΑ ΣΒΗΝΝΩ ΤΖΑΙ ΠΕΜΒΑΖΩ  
ΣΑΝ ΤΟ ΒΑΖΟ ΠΟΥ ΕΝ ΠΑΣ ΤΟ ΠΑΡΑΘΥΡΟ ΤΖΑΙ ΜΟΙΑΖΩ  
ΜΕ ΕΝΑ ΠΡΑΜΑ ΑΨΥΧΟ ΜΑ ΜΕΣΑ ΜΟΥ ΧΟΧΛΑΖΩ...  
ΓΙΑΤΙ ΕΝ ΜΠΟΡΩ ΑΠΛΑ ΝΑ ΔΕΧΤΩ ΟΤΙ ΤΟΥΣ ΜΟΙΑΖΩ’ [JULIO, ‘Το βάζο’]<sup>32</sup>  
[Sometimes there where I sit, I just shut down and daydream  
Like a vase that is on the window and I look  
Like a soulless thing but within I seethe  
Because I just cannot accept that I look like them]

‘Εσύγχισες με κορασιά,  
χαρκούμαι εν να πελλάνω  
τζι αμάν σε βλέπω στα κρυφά  
αρκέφκω τζιαι ξιάννω’ [ΣαίΣ, ‘Επέλλανες με κορασιά’]<sup>33</sup>  
[You have confused me girl,  
I think I will go crazy  
And when I see you secretly  
I begin to forget]

<sup>31</sup> This is also the case with Zivanished, to which the Greeklish excerpts that we used as examples belong. More recent videos of the band are accompanied with lyrics that are written in Greek script.

<sup>32</sup> Julio Kompoloi, ‘JULIO - ΤΟ ΒΑΖΟ [Abstract #19]’ (27 February 2019) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ppBWctrpory> accessed 8 April 2023.

<sup>33</sup> Savvas Chrysostomou, ‘Επέλλανες με κορασιά – ΣαίΣ’ (5 December 2020) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aye3jlXX1Wk> accessed 8 April 2023.

The Greek script is arguably the most commonly used—and most expected—way of rendering CG in writing. With SMG being the official language of the RoC, and the central language of education from the first years of literacy, the Greek script is the one that Greek Cypriots are raised to consider the script of their native language. This applies to orthography as well. As put by Papadima & al., CG orthographic conventions are in their vast majority associated with Greek etymology and orthography, even if its dialectal sounds cannot be rendered sufficiently by the Greek writing system.<sup>34</sup> This has social and ideological extensions, as per Greek Cypriots' attachment to Greece and the language (SMG) as a symbol of national identity.<sup>35</sup> The fact that the SMG and CG language varieties are closely related (despite their significant differences), and CG has been historically considered a dialect of Greek, makes the use of the Greek alphabet to write CG the expected choice. This has been interrupted, as noted above, by computer-mediated communication and its extended use of Greeklish, which relates to the practice of writing in CG. Nonetheless, even in computer-mediated communication, it seems that when CG is used for 'publications' (for example, blogs) rather than synchronous communication, the writers tend to prefer the Greek script.<sup>36</sup>

As in the case of Greeklish, the absence of a standard codification leads to many creative approaches and idiosyncratic choices in rendering CG in writing in the Greek script, including the freedom to use different characters, something evident throughout the research process. To turn to the examples above, the first excerpt makes exclusive use of capital characters, a choice that also minimises the expectation of diacritics or accentuation marks (without, of course, insinuating that this is the lyricists'/songwriters' reason for writing in capital characters). Both excerpts seem to be following SMG orthographical conventions, with the exceptions of words that (do or should) sound particularly CG. These are, in the first example, the word TZAME (SMG *εκεί*, English *there*) that does not have the equivalent word in SMG and the word ΣΒΗΝΝΩ (SMG *σβήνω*, English *shut down*), which in SMG is written with one 'N'; the second 'N' is added to indicate the consonant's heavier pronunciation that is normally uttered in CG. In the second example, the orthographical inconsistency is again to do with sound; this time, it seems to be following the melodic utterance of the lyrics as these are sung by the performer. More specifically, we read 'αμάν', where the word should be 'άμαν' (SMG

<sup>34</sup> Aspasia Papadima, Ioli Ayiomamitou & Stelios Kyriacou, 'Typographic Practices and Spelling Convention for the Written Representation of a Non-Standard Dialect: The Case of the Greek-Cypriot Dialect' in Martin Lachout (ed.) *Aktuelle Tendenzen der Sprachwissenschaft* (Hamburg: Verlag Dr. Kova, 2013) 87.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Armostis & al. (no 8) 6.



όταν, English *when*). The issue of orthography in rendering CG in writing has also been raised by Papadima and Kyriacou, who point out that often in the effort to correctly represent the sound of the words, writers of CG make orthographical mistakes, something consistent with many instances that came up during the research.<sup>37</sup>

We also see how CG words that contain sounds that cannot be represented by letters of the Greek alphabet are presented differently. Specifically, the first excerpt has the form ‘TZAI’ and in the second, ‘τζιαί’ (SMG: *και*, English: *and*). While neither of these two forms are accurate representations of the sound of the word in CG, they are both used often for writing the word in various media with a credible assumption that any CG speaker would know how they are pronounced. That the words are also heard in the songs posted as videos on YouTube makes the sound accessible to non-CG speakers as well.

In our discussion so far, we have seen how Greeklish and the Greek script are used by the Greek Cypriot lyricists/songwriters to post their lyrics on YouTube. As indicated above, their usage, despite (or because of) coming with certain inconsistencies and limitations, also provides the writers with a certain sense of ‘codification freedom’. We now turn our attention to a third style of rendering CG in writing that can be found on YouTube under relevant songs, albeit less often, and that is the use of the Greek script with the addition of diacritics that signify sound specificities.

### C. Diacritics

‘Στα πισσούρκα ξημουτίζουν  
τζαι σε ξυρύνιν  
Τες οθόνες σου γυαλλίζουν,  
στ’ όρομαν σου ξαγρυπνούσιν’ [Monsieur Doumani, ‘Πισσούριν’]<sup>38</sup>  
[They sneak out in the darkness of night  
and they scratch you  
They polish your screens,  
they stay awake in your dream]<sup>39</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Anastasia Papadima & Stelios Kyriacou, ‘The Greek Cypriot Dialect in the School Linguistic Handbooks of the Cypriot Education: Orthographical Conventions and Typographical Practices’ (Η ελληνική κυπριακή διάλεκτος στα σχολικά γλωσσικά εγχειρίδια της κυπριακής εκπαίδευσης: ορθογραφικές συμβάσεις και τυπογραφικές πρακτικές) in *34 Annual Meeting of the Department of Linguistics* (Thessaloniki: Institute of Modern Greek Studies, 2014) 323.

<sup>38</sup> Monsieur Doumani, ‘Monsieur Doumani – Pissourin (Official Video)’ (26 May 2021) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s-mD6v-cOjk> accessed 8 April 2023.

<sup>39</sup> Translation taken from the description section of the YouTube video.



‘Χοντρούς λαιμούς ’καρκάλησες, αέρηες εζάλισες  
μα οι ψυῖές εν μάισσες, σφιχτές, αναγιωπές’ [Antonis Antoniou, ‘Θρόισμα’]<sup>40</sup>  
[You tickled fat necks, you dazed the winds  
but souls are witches, tight, adopted]<sup>41</sup>

As we can see in the two excerpts, diacritics are used above certain letters. Their use is meant to indicate the sounds that do not have phonetic equivalents in SMG. This style of rendering CG in writing is, according to Papadima and Kyriacou, the most prominent in lexicography, grammars, schoolbooks, and literary texts. Nonetheless, as they go on to add, far from being standardised, the style varies according to writer and their approach to it, be it etymological or phonetic.<sup>42</sup>

Although not widespread among the public, nor a writing skill taught at school, we occasionally see lyricists/songwriters use diacritics when writing CG lyrics. Some, including Monsieur Doumani whose lyrics we use here as an example, have the support of editors and specialists in CG, in this case the ethnomusicologist and writer Nicoletta Demetriou. At the same time, lyricists/songwriters also rely on CG literary texts and dictionaries. As one musician told me during interviews held in the wider context of the research project:

I don’t remember now whether the first times that I wrote in CG I looked for the ‘correct way’, but I remember that I saw the symbols above the consonants and I liked it very much. [...] While searching [for the correct way to write] I discovered that there was not one single correct way so I settled to that beautiful big dictionary of Yiangoullis. And based on that, mostly with the symbols and the double consonants, I tried on my own to find a logic behind that [...] to be as intelligible as possible. Meaning, the reader sees it and is able to recreate it phonetically. (Male, early 30s, translation by the author)

We read in the songwriter’s words a developmental attitude that started from a freer approach (not necessarily looking for a ‘correct way’) and then, through contact with writings that he liked, the turn towards diacritics, which he now refers to as the correct way of writing CG. We see also the acknowledgment that there is no single correct way, and his willingness and dedication to study more (referring to

<sup>40</sup> Ajabumusic, ‘Antonis Antoniou – Throisma (Official Video)’ (15 August 2022) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q03U63-QBt8> accessed 8 April 2023.

<sup>41</sup> Translation taken from the description section of the YouTube video.

<sup>42</sup> Papadima & Kyriacou (no 38).

Yiangoullis' dictionary). Possibly more importantly, we see how the artist's main concern remains the phonetic representation of the words.

Some musicians have a different stance in relation to diacritics and phonetic representation. Asked how she puts down her words on paper (or on the screen), another songwriter said:

When I write on paper, if it is 'σιέρι' I will write 'σχιέρι'. It is also hard to read the diacritics, whereas this let's call it 'phonetic representation' somehow makes sense. The other [the diacritics] you must learn to know how it should sound. (Female, mid-30s, translation by the author)

What we can understand by putting the two artists' words side by side is that the absence of codification, the lack of formal knowledge on writing CG, the unavailability in the Greek script of symbols that equate to specific CG sounds, and the evident need to express in CG are parameters that give the users of the language the agency to choose how to render their CG words in writing. The latter example, with its inclusion of the character *h* in the word *σχιέρι*, provides an example of script mixing, which is the focus of our next section.

#### *D. Script Mixing*

One of the most interesting observations that came up while studying CG lyrics on YouTube is the mixing of Greek and Latin alphabets for writing CG words. This section is dedicated to some of these instances, focusing on specific words that featured in the research. As can be seen from the first three subcategories, the character 'X' (in Greek *χ*, in English *ex*) holds a central role in script mixing, and calls for further research on its usage in different media.

##### *EΣXEI*

The word 'έσχει' (SMG *έχει*, English *has*) in Cypriot Greek is pronounced *eshi*. The sound *sh* [ʃ] does not exist in SMG, nor does the letter combination 'σχ' produce the sound [ʃ]. Nonetheless, we find the combination of the characters 'Σ' and 'X' used often for the representation of the CG sound [ʃ]: e.g., EΣXEI, ΣXEPI etc., and this is also the case for many of the lyrics posted on YouTube that this research focusses on. Considering the above discussion in regards to the relationship between written CG, computer-mediated communication, the use of Greeklish, and the younger generation, it is not clear whether the combination of Σ and X for the representation of *sh* as used on YouTube is a transliteration of the Greeklish form 'eshei' into the Greek

script, or stems from the (untaught) convention that, even if phonetically inaccurate, Σ and X can be combined to form a *sh*. This is a convention that seems to be known by musicians themselves and it was touched upon by another musician during the interview process:

We were never taught CG [...] Your question is very good, but I never gave it much thought. OK, I read CG poetry and so on. And I don't know if it is what I kept from there. For instance, I write 'ΕΣΙΕΙ' and not 'ΕΣΧΕΙ'. If I write it like that, I read it 'E Σ X E I' and I don't like it. So I don't know. I think it is what seems right to me...acoustically [...] Basically, if we are to write 'έσιει' correctly, we would have to write *έσσει*. (Male, late 30s, interview, translation by the author)

In the above quotation, there is the acknowledgment of the spelling convention 'ΕΣΧΕΙ', the personal choice of the spelling 'ΕΣΙΕΙ', but also the acceptance of the mixed script *έσσει* (that we also saw above) as the most appropriate phonetic representation of the word. What is also shown clearly by these personal choices, and can be read in the words of all the interview respondents, is that many of the codification choices discussed here are the result of idiosyncratic decisions specific to the person who produces the script.

### *ENIXEPO*

This word formation was only met once during the research, under a YouTube video that uses the capital characters of the Greek script to render CG in writing. 'ENIXEPO' presents a curious case here since, as a letter combination, it can be phonetically read both in Greek and Latin alphabets (although producing different phonetic results [Greek phonetic reading: *enihero* / English phonetic reading: *enixepo*]). At the same time, it does not have a semantic meaning in either of the two scripts. The word here is meant to be read as the CG 'enixero' (SMG: *δεν ξέρω*, English *I don't know*), and it is obvious that, in this case, the Greek letter 'X' (in lower case 'χ') is used in place of the Greek letter 'Ξ' in a clear transfer of Greeklish norms to writing Greek in the Greek script.

### *Xoro / Xaixouthkia / Exoglasen*

Something similar but in reverse might be happening in the cases of the words 'Xoro' (SMG *βλέπω*, English *I see*), 'xaixouthkia' (the word does not have direct translation, but it can be interpreted as 'making fun') and 'Exoglasen' (SMG *έβρασε*, English *it*

*has boiled*).<sup>43</sup> In all three words, it appears that the Latin letter ‘X’ is used in place of the Latin letter ‘H’, that would produce the expected phonetic representation. This could be either indicating the exact opposite situation than the case above (mixing Greeklish and Greek scripts), or it could be pointing to a visual representation of the sound of the Greek ‘X’, instead of an attempt to represent it phonetically. While the lyricist’s/songwriter’s intentions are not clear, it could be suggested that, in the case of an accurate visual representation, the letter ‘p’ would also be used in place of the letter ‘r’. However, it is not uncommon to find phonetic and visual representations used in the same Greeklish texts. It also seems that these go beyond spelling norms, creating spaces for sociological readings. As Themistocleous has pointed out, ‘the choice of writing in CG affects the ways that Roman characters are used’, a practice that is not ‘just a response to technological constraints but it actually has a wider social significance’.<sup>44</sup>

### *English Words Written in Greek*

As has been mentioned above, the songs of which the lyrics are discussed here belong to an array of popular music genres, most of which represent a globalised youth music culture (rock, rap, metal, etc.). It should therefore not come as a surprise that their lyrics also feature English words, something particularly common in rap/hip-hop tracks. As revealed in the research, when the lyricists/songwriters use the Greek script to write their lyrics, they type many of the English words with Greek characters as well. We see, for example, word formations like ΜΙΠΟ (bro), ΡΑΠΠΕΡΣ (rappers), ΓΚΑΓΣΤΕΡΣ [sic] (gangsters).

The reasons for this are hard to pinpoint without asking the songwriters themselves, but it could be the case that certain English words are so ingrained in the vocabulary of specific popular music genres, that they acquire a life of their own in the language variety of their local context. This can be supported by the fact that other words that appear in these same songs are typed in English, e.g., CAMP and BEAT. The latter presents yet another complication—it appears in a set of CG lyrics written in the Greek script, typed solely in capital letters. As all the characters of the word belong also to the Greek alphabet, it could be read in Greek (BEAT = V-E-A-T, which does not have a semantic meaning in the Greek language). Again, it is only if one is

<sup>43</sup> The words appear here exactly as found under the respective videos on YouTube.

<sup>44</sup> Themistocleous, ‘Writing in a non-standard...’ (no 7) 155.

familiar with the context and terminology of rap (or hears the song alongside posted lyrics), that they can read it as BEAT/beat.

The status of CG as a verbal variety and the incremental role of the internet as a medium to bring its written form into the daily lives of CG speakers and the public domain keep YouTube lyrics at the intersection of formal and informal texts. In their writings, the lyricists/songwriters make choices in line with their internet-literate, globalised generations, expressing in languages that they know intimately but lack the formal knowledge to codify, and therefore approach with freedom as creatives and agency as owners. Even a casual perusal of relevant songs on YouTube reveals interesting (in)consistencies, even regarding the most common words in the CG vocabulary. It is these observations that emphasise, once more, the personal choices made when artists turn to the codification of their lyrics. Given the freedom provided by CG's lack of official codification, the rendering of CG lyrics in writing creates space for the exercising of agency and presents the personal idiosyncrasies of the people who practice this rendering. Looking at a few words side by side:

- Τζαι / τζιαι / je / j / τζ̣αι (SMG: και / English: and)
- Ψυσήν/ ψυσσή / ΨΥXH / ψυῥές (SMG: ψυχή / English: soul)
- ΜΑΔΚΙΑ / ΜΑΘΚΙΑ / μμάθκια (SMG: μάτια / English: eyes)

Instances like these again raise the issue of orthography. Due to the absence of standard codification of and education in CG, orthography is arguably not an issue. Nonetheless, due to the close relationship of the varieties of CG and SMG and the central presence of the latter as the official language in the education and public spheres of the RoC, orthographical errors emerge, leading at times to hegemonic practices of language correctness and language policing.<sup>45</sup> Orthography, as Sebba has also emphasised, is embedded in culture and situated in social practice.<sup>46</sup> The internet however is a different area, one that assigns its users much more freedom in this sense. As Themistocleous writes, 'spelling rules are not imposed in the domain of the internet, which means that internet users are free to use whichever orthographic practices they wish'.<sup>47</sup> It is in the dynamic space created between the two that the rendering of CG lyrics in writing and their posting on YouTube takes place.

<sup>45</sup> One major incident occurred with the 'Ὦς Δαμέ' protest movement. The then Minister of Education commented on the wrong spelling of the protest movement's name, which to many was a strategy to divert attention from its significance and undermine it by hegemonic language policing.

<sup>46</sup> Mark Sebba, *Spelling and Society: The Culture and Politics of Orthography around the World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007) 13.

<sup>47</sup> Themistocleous, 'Written Cypriot Greek...' (no 7) 166.

## Discussion

This paper presented four main practices/styles in which Greek Cypriot lyricists/songwriters choose to render their lyrics in writing: a) Greeklish; b) the use of the Greek script; c) the implementation of diacritics; and d) script mixing. The use of Greeklish that, according to Themistocleous, ‘could also be connected with shedding the demonstration of loyalty to the norms imposed by societal institutions, thus a kind of rebellion against standard orthography’,<sup>48</sup> is very important as a codifying medium on an online platform like YouTube. It is the script of the younger generation that, in the case of CG, is also convenient since it can signify sounds that cannot be represented with characters of the Greek script. In addition, as it is a script without specific rules, it can be used freely for writing in a language variety that has not been codified. The use of the Greek script for writing CG can also be interpreted as an act of ownership and agency. As the official language of the RoC, SMG is the one acquired through formal education; therefore, the Greek script is the Greek Cypriots’ own script, and the one they can utilise creatively to write in the language variety of their everyday lives.

The use of diacritics, on the other hand, is an interesting choice for rendering CG lyrics in writing. The native lyricists/songwriters have never been taught this style and, therefore, its appearance on YouTube is either the work of editors, or the result of personal studies of CG dictionaries and literary texts. Although on one hand this might indicate a certain compliance with past (although informal and not standardised) norms, it could also be interpreted as a claim to the ownership of a language variety that is the one the songwriters live their lives and creatively express themselves in, but have been taught that they are not supposed to write in. This ownership is crystallised on the fact that, despite not having been taught it, the lyricists/songwriters decide to do their own research, to ‘study’ further, to access texts, and to reintroduce conventions of CG writing in their contemporary creations.

But, can any (or all) of these codification approaches be seen as reappropriation? Merriam Webster defines reappropriation as ‘tak[ing] back or reclaim[ing] for one’s own purposes’. In linguistics, reappropriation is also the ‘cultural process by which a group reclaims words or artifacts that were previously used in a way disparaging of that group’.<sup>49</sup> It is argued here that the various ways in which CG lyrics are written

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> See, for example, Adam D. Galinsky & al., ‘The Reappropriation of Stigmatizing Labels: Implications for Social Identity’ in Jeffrey Polzer (ed.) *Identity Issues in Groups*, Vol. 5: Research on Managing Groups

and posted on YouTube by the local lyricists/songwriters *are* to be seen as acts of reappropriation, although this might not be the creators' direct intention. CG is a living language variety, a part of cultural heritage that is alive and evolving. While still negotiating its place in the public sphere alongside the official language, CG becomes more and more visible, both in its verbal and written forms, and this can be substantiated by the rising number of songs that use CG lyrics. The various ways in which lyricists/songwriters choose to render their lyrics in writing by inventing and employing their own understandings of how this could be done can be seen as a reclamation of their right to use CG and, therefore, a reappropriation of the right to write in one's language variety; a reappropriation they act upon by rendering their lyrics in writing, each in their own way, sometimes following conventions and sometimes applying innovative and idiosyncratic practices.

Taking it one step further, in light of the fact that local language ideology considers CG inferior and its use associated to lower educational and social levels, the second type of reappropriation (use of the Greek script) is also arguably relevant here. From this perspective, the contemporary lyricists/songwriters who express themselves in CG are giving this language variation an even greater gravitas, by sharing their words in the written form, therefore turning CG (a language variety they were taught should remain on the 'verbal' spectrum) to a variety that can carry their words, as they are inscribed and posted online to be read. It is important to note that this usually takes place with a contemporary approach, with words and spellings and scripts that are mirroring the current use of CG, including associations with the internet and global cultural trends (not least, the musical), complete with the use of English words. It is also important to note that this is a generational turn, 'an expression of the Greek-Cypriot youth identity', to repeat Themistocleous' words in relation to computer-mediated communication.<sup>50</sup> It is a generational turn that unfolds in combination with other ways in which the young creatives reappropriate and reinvent elements of the cultural heritage, slowly shifting the ways in which the Cypriot aspect becomes a more definitive part of their expression.<sup>51</sup>

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and Teams (Bingley: Emerald, 2003) 221.

<sup>50</sup> Themistocleous, 'Written Cypriot Greek...' (no 7) 485.

<sup>51</sup> See also Maria Kouvarou, 'A step back, a leap forward: Tradition, heritage, and visions of a new post-colonial self in the Greek Cypriot popular music of the 21st century' (2024) 30(3) *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 285.

## Coda

With the significant development of digital technologies, including generative Artificial Intelligence (AI), the issue of CG use on online platforms might pose a linguistic challenge and open new spaces for further research. Considering that CG is not officially codified and is spoken by a very small fraction of the world population, it can be considered a low-resource language and, therefore, a challenge for natural language processing models.<sup>52</sup> Considering, also, that we have been discussing the codification of song lyrics, it could also create interesting observations on how spoken language identification technology will work in relation to CG,<sup>53</sup> and whether the results will be codified in the Greek or the Latin script (i.e., Greeklish). However, despite the way in which AI will adapt (if at all) and what type of relation will be created in terms of language codification in the context of CG, at the moment, and for the topic discussed here, we can only rely on data derived from human input.

It is the agency exercised by the creatives of the RoC and the decisions they consciously made while codifying their CG lyrics that created the most imminent need for discussion. As pointed out above, in doing so, they appear to be less confined by any ideologies linked to the language (be it national, social, or political), and to be actively practising their right to express in whichever language variety they choose at any time, both verbally and in written form. Of course, one needs to be careful not to over-romanticise such developments, and strive to read in them the various factors that have been merging throughout the years, as life in the RoC moved on and will continue to move on, technological developments notwithstanding. This is the stance that this research attempted to take, while listening to countless songs created by Greek Cypriot lyricists/songwriters, and playing the read-the-script game on YouTube.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Nitesh Upadhaya, 'AI-Augmented Dynamic Language Adaptation for Low-Resource Languages: A Transfer Learning Solution for Optimized NLP Performance' (2024) 9(4) *International Research Journal of Advanced Engineering and Science* 89.

<sup>53</sup> See, for example, Dmytro V. Lande & al., 'Spoken Language Identification Based on the Transcript Analysis' (2022) 38 *Digital Scholarship in the Humanities* 38 for a case study on spoken language identification that involved the Russian and Ukrainian languages.

<sup>54</sup> The author would like to thank the anonymous reviewers who, with their comments and suggestions, contributed to the enrichment of the paper.



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# **BOOK REVIEWS**



## **Searching for the Traces** **[Αναζητώντας τα Ίχνη]**

**Maria Karefyllidou-Ioannou**

**Hippasus**

**Nicosia, 2022 (pp. 240)**

**ISBN: 9789963676286**

### **Abstract**

Maria Karefyllidou-Ioannou's book, *Searching for the Traces*, represents a significant contribution to the ongoing discourse surrounding the issue of missing persons in Cyprus, particularly those lost during the Turkish invasion of 1974. This book is the culmination of extensive research conducted under challenging circumstances, focusing on the author's personal quest to uncover the fate of her brother, Christos Karefyllidis, who has been missing since that fateful year. This presentation explores the book's themes, methodology, and implications for both historical understanding and contemporary socio-political dialogue.

### **Introduction**

The subject of missing persons in contexts of conflict is fraught with deep emotional and political implications. In Cyprus, the legacy of the Turkish invasion of 1974 has left thousands of families searching for answers regarding the fate of their loved ones. *Searching for the Traces* is not merely a personal narrative; it is a profound examination of institutional failures and the psychological toll that unresolved disappearances impose on families and communities. Through her meticulous investigation, Karefyllidou-Ioannou sheds light on historical injustices that continue to impact the living.

### **Contextual Background**

The backdrop of Karefyllidou-Ioannou's work is the violent conflict that erupted in Cyprus in July-August 1974, when Turkey launched a military operation that resulted in numerous civilian casualties and the abduction of individuals from various backgrounds. The author poignantly recounts the systematic erasure of lives, as families were torn apart and communities left in mourning. Her brother, Christos, is emblematic of the many who have vanished without a trace, prompting a collective yearning for justice and recognition.



## **Thematic Exploration**

### ***1. The Psychological Warfare of the Missing***

A significant theme in the book is the concept of psychological warfare that the Turkish state has waged against the families of the missing. The author illustrates how the state's neglect and the ongoing uncertainty surrounding the fate of the disappeared serve as a relentless source of anguish. Families are subjected to a continuous cycle of hope and despair, exacerbated by institutional indifference and lack of transparency.

### ***2. Institutional Failures***

Karefylidou-Ioannou provides a critical analysis of the various institutions tasked with addressing the issue of missing persons, including the Committee on Missing Persons, the Office of the Commissioner of the Presidency, and the International Red Cross. She documents failures in their response to the plight of families, highlighting negligence, lack of effective action, and the inadequate handling of evidence. These systemic shortcomings not only hinder the search for truth but also contribute to the ongoing trauma experienced by affected families.

### ***3. The Legal and Moral Imperative for Justice***

The author emphasises the importance of addressing the legal and moral imperatives surrounding the disappearances. Citing international law and human rights conventions, she argues that the state and international bodies have a duty to investigate these cases thoroughly. The book serves as a call to action for both local and international communities to recognise and rectify the injustices faced by the families of the missing.

## **Methodological Approach**

Karefylidou-Ioannou's research methodology is rooted in both qualitative and quantitative analysis. She employs personal narratives, interviews, and archival research, to weave together a comprehensive account of the events surrounding her brother's disappearance. Her ability to synthesise personal grief with broader socio-political narratives enhances the book's emotional depth and scholarly rigour.

## **Personal Narratives**

The inclusion of personal testimonies adds a poignant layer to the book. It transforms statistical data into relatable human experiences, allowing readers to grasp the profound emotional impact of the missing persons crisis. By sharing her family's story, Karefylidou-Ioannou invites readers to engage empathetically with the broader socio-political issues at play.

### **Implications for Future Research**

*Searching for the Traces* does not merely recount historical events; it opens avenues for future inquiry. The author's findings challenge researchers to delve deeper into underexplored aspects of the missing persons issue, including the long-term psychological effects on families and the societal implications of unresolved disappearances. Moreover, it underscores the necessity of preserving historical memory in the face of political expediency.

### **New Directions in Investigation**

Karefylidou-Ioannou's work encourages the exploration of new methodologies in documenting the experiences of the missing and their families. By advocating for a more rigorous approach to evidence collection and analysis, she emphasises the importance of justice in restoring dignity to the victims and their families.

### **Recommendations for Readers**

This book is essential reading for scholars, activists, and anyone interested in human rights, conflict resolution, and historical memory. It challenges readers to confront uncomfortable truths about the past while advocating for a collective commitment to justice and accountability. Karefylidou-Ioannou's work is a vital contribution to our understanding of the complexities surrounding the issue of missing persons, and it is a poignant reminder of the enduring impact of conflict on human lives.

### **Conclusion**

Maria Karefylidou-Ioannou's *Searching for the Traces* is a compelling and urgent narrative that calls attention to a grievous chapter in Cypriot history. It serves as both a personal memoir and a critical examination of institutional failures in addressing the plight of missing persons. The book is a testament to the resilience of families who continue to seek truth and justice amidst enduring silence and neglect.

As we reflect on the stories of the missing, it becomes imperative to honour their memories through active engagement in the pursuit of truth and reconciliation. *Searching for the Traces* not only memorialises the lost, but also empowers the living to advocate for a future where such tragedies are not repeated. By illuminating the shadows of the past, Karefylidou-Ioannou's work paves the way for healing, understanding, and, ultimately, justice.

**Giorgos Kentas**

**Exiled for Freedom – EOKA Fighters in British Prisons and the Cypro-Irish Cooperation)**  
**[Εξόριστοι για την Ελευθερία - Αγωνιστές της ΕΟΚΑ στις Βρετανικές Φυλακές και η Κυπρο-Ιρλανδική Συνεργασία]**

**Lambros G. Kaoullas – Michalis Stavri**  
**Rizes Publications**  
**Nicosia, 2022 (pp. 200)**  
**ISBN: 978-9925-7899-1-7**

The book, authored by Lambros G. Kaoullas and Michalis Stavri, is consistent with the high standard of work the authors have produced so far -at least to the extent that I have read, whether jointly or individually.

With enthusiasm and a clear intention to contribute to the historical knowledge of a specific period in Cypriot history, the authors diligently analyse evidence and witness statements gathered from various sources, leading to reasonable and objective conclusions. More specifically, as they explain in the introduction, the book aims to shed light on the conditions of imprisonment and the daily lives of Greek Cypriots who were incarcerated in Irish prisons during the EOKA period. It further explores whether -and to what extent- their presence in Irish prisons and their interactions with Irish prisoners influenced the EOKA struggle and the broader English propaganda efforts. In my view, the authors' conclusions on this subject, as well as their examination of the impact of this unique relationship between Greek Cypriot and Irish prisoners, are particularly compelling. Not only does the book fill a gap in historical research that had not been previously addressed, but it also serves as a valuable tool for understanding the evolution of English propaganda, offering insightful conclusions based on meticulous research.

The book is structured into three main chapters, along with a brief yet significant analysis of the historical background of the Irish national movement. I consider the authors' decision to include this historical overview a wise choice, as it provides a natural and necessary context for the subject matter that follows. In the first chapter, they skillfully draw a parallel between the struggles of the IRA and EOKA, highlight-

ing similarities in their guerrilla warfare tactics, hunger strikes, and other forms of resistance.

The second chapter, which constitutes the core of the book, presents the findings of their extensive research. Here, the authors document the presence of Greek Cypriot prisoners in Wormwood Scrubs, Maidstone, Wakefield, and Perth prisons, supplementing their analysis with historical photographs, prisoner identification cards, personal records, and correspondence from key figures such as Republican Pat O'Donovan. One of the most fascinating aspects of this chapter, in my opinion, is the account of the encounters between Greek Cypriot and Irish prisoners at Wakefield prison, particularly their interactions with German scientist Klaus Fuchs and the close bond he developed with Renos Kyriakides and George Skotinos. The chapter also details the unsuccessful escape attempt from Perth Prison.

The third and final chapter concludes this historical examination by focusing on the return of the Greek Cypriot prisoners and the lasting impact of their experiences. It highlights the influence they had on their Irish fellow prisoners, the enduring relationships that were formed, and the continued support of the Irish people for the Greek Cypriot cause. This support is evidenced through various means, including articles in Irish newspapers during 1963-1964, with figures such as Seamus Murphy playing a key role.

Overall, I consider this book an outstanding effort to document and analyse this lesser-known historical intersection between two national movements. Once again, Lambros G. Kaoullas and Michalis Stavri have delivered a work of exceptional quality, one that I thoroughly enjoyed reading.

**Anastasia Papamichael**

## **Landbound Island: The Mediterranean and Cyprus in the Ottoman Age of Revolutions**

**[Χερσαίο Νησί: Η Μεσόγειος και η Κύπρος στην Οθωμανική Εποχή των Επαναστάσεων]**

**Antonis Hadjikyriacou**

**Psifides**

**Athens, 2023 (pp. 438)**

**ISBN: 978-618-84300-8-2**

Antonis Hadjikyriacou's *Χερσαίο Νησί* is a profound and methodologically innovative contribution to Cypriot, Ottoman, and Mediterranean historiography, confronting two of the most persistent and distorting tendencies in the writing of Cypriot history: insularity and teleology. The first sees Cyprus as an isolated and self-contained space, whose history unfolds largely independent of the broader Mediterranean and Ottoman worlds in which it was embedded. The second tendency imposes the backward shadow of the 20th century, particularly its nationalist conflicts and partitions, onto earlier centuries, producing a historical narrative that sees the island's past as merely a prelude to its modern ethno-political divisions. Hadjikyriacou resists both, offering instead a complex and nuanced account of Cyprus during the long 18th century, which was a crucial period of transformation and reconfiguration.

Drawing on the theoretical frameworks of Mediterranean studies, environmental history, and digital humanities, and grounded in unpublished Ottoman archival material, the book reframes Cyprus, not as an outlier but as a revealing microcosm of larger imperial and Mediterranean dynamics. In doing so, it deals with long-standing questions, while posing new ones about the relationship between geography and power, ecology and economy, community and conflict.

The book is structured into four thematic chapters, *Mediterranean*, *People and Environment*, *Communities*, and *Space*, each one building upon the last while also standing on its own as a distinct analytical lens. This structure allows Hadjikyriacou to trace long-term changes, engage with historiographical debates, and introduce new evidence and interpretations.

The opening chapter (*Mediterranean*) lays out the theoretical and historiographical framework of the book. It begins with an engagement with the classic approaches to

Mediterranean History, notably the one by Fernand Braudel, whose *longue durée* framework remains foundational. However, Hadjikyriacou also pays particular attention to the work of Faruk Tabak, whose *The Waning of the Mediterranean* offers a more dynamic approach to the region. Tabak's focus on ecological and economic transformations provides a conceptual backdrop for Hadjikyriacou's own investigation of Cyprus.

The second chapter (*People and Environment*) marks a significant departure from traditional historiography by integrating Geographic Information Systems (GIS) into historical analysis. Hadjikyriacou uses this technology in order to trace spatial patterns over time and reveal structures that would otherwise remain invisible. The core of the chapter is a comparative analysis of three sources: the Ottoman censuses of 1572 and 1832/33, and the Kitchener map of 1882, created shortly after the beginning of British rule. These sources, spanning over three centuries, allow for a remarkably detailed reconstruction of demographic distribution, land use, tax burdens, and economic activity. The island emerges as a landscape in constant flux, shaped by climate, social conditions, and human choices. In the 16th century, the demographic centre of gravity was concentrated in the western and mountainous regions, driven by political unrest, epidemics, piracy, and the heavy rainfall of the 'Little Ice Age'. By the 19th century, however, this centre had shifted to the eastern plains, due to the limitations of mountainous terrain for population growth and to the expansion of large landholdings and commodity crop cultivation, which required a substantial labour force. As the author argues, these patterns were not unique to Cyprus, but reflected broader Mediterranean trends of the same period.

The third chapter (*Communities*) turns to social and communal life in Cyprus during the Ottoman Age of Revolutions, a subject that has been extensively studied yet often distorted by modern Greek and Turkish historiography. Shaped by contemporary national priorities, these historiographies tend to portray the Ottoman period in Cyprus in starkly opposing ways, as an era of massacres and perpetual conflict, of brutal fiscal exploitation, or as a golden age of harmonious coexistence, depending on the author's perspective. Hadjikyriacou avoids these oversimplified extremes, recognising instead a broad spectrum of relationships that ranged from peaceful coexistence to violent conflict. As he aptly notes, 'they were not *only* peaceful or *only* conflictual. Not only were they both, but they were much more, encompassing a broad spectrum of contact and coexistence, marked by diverse forms and nuances' (p. 283).

He demonstrates that both inter- and intra-communal relations were shaped by a wide range of factors beyond ethnicity or religion, as economic class, gender, local hierarchies, and patterns of landholding and taxation all played significant roles. The

chapter pays close attention to social differentiation within communities, challenging the idea that Greek Orthodox Christians or Muslims formed monolithic blocs. Instead, Cypriot society emerges as a dense web of relations, often marked by cooperation, conflict, and negotiation across multiple axes.

The author interprets the religious and ideological tensions that intensified at the turn of the 19th century as symptoms of deeper economic and social shifts. At the heart of these tensions was the growing concentration of wealth and power in the hands of members of the island's Christian community, a development that many Muslims of the time viewed as a disruption of the established Ottoman order. A key example is the case of Dragoman Hadjigeorgakis Kornesios, whose accumulation of power in the late 18th century made him both a symbol of Christian advancement and a target of Muslim resentment. Hadjigeorgakis' trajectory, his control of tax farming, his links to Istanbul, and his unprecedented authority over Muslims, serves as a case study in the tensions that could arise when older social contracts were disrupted by new economic and administrative realities. Far from being a simple story of sectarian conflict, his fate reflects deeper structural contradictions within the Ottoman system as it adapted to internal and external pressures.

The final chapter (*Space*) examines the *respatialisation* of Cyprus during the Ottoman period, how shifts in the island's geopolitical significance influenced its historical trajectory. Hadjikyriacou argues that the island's strategic value fluctuated according to broader geopolitical conditions. After its conquest, Cyprus was elevated to the status of a *beylerbeylik*, an unusually high designation for an island, which included parts of Anatolia and Syria. This was not due to the island's intrinsic value, he argues, but to its location at a frontier of the empire, particularly during the unsettled decades following the conquest.

However, this status shifted after the Ottoman conquest of Crete in 1669. Crete's new role as a frontier zone demoted Cyprus in both strategic and administrative terms. From a once-central node, it became a marginal space, used as a place of exile and a backwater post for disgraced and incompetent officials. As Hadjikyriacou succinctly puts it, 'the Ottomans realised that the island was only valuable as long as it was in the hands of a competitor in the region, because it constituted a threat or external source of instability' (p. 296). In essence, the empire occupied Cyprus not out of a vision for its development but simply to ensure that no rival power could use it against them.

Yet the marginality of Cyprus was never permanent. The island regained importance in the late 18th century due to a convergence of internal revolt and external threat: the 1764 uprising, driven by resentment over taxation, and an unprecedented

geopolitical shift, the arrival of the Russian fleet in the Mediterranean during the Orlov Revolt of 1770, brought Cyprus back into focus, positioning the island as a frontier region and elevating its significance within the empire's defensive and administrative priorities. Later events, such as a series of uprisings between 1804 and 1833, Napoleon's invasion of Egypt, and the rise of Muhammad Ali, further reinforced the island's strategic relevance, prompting the Ottoman administration to strengthen its military governance. As Hadjikyriacou shows, these changing perceptions of space were not just matters of high politics. They had real consequences for local society: in administration, taxation, land tenure, and elite formation. In turbulent times, opportunities for wealth and power opened for certain figures, such as Hadjigeorgakis Kornosios, but these were also periods of volatility, as the state sought to reassert control through military presence and bureaucratic reform.

What ultimately makes *Χερσαίο Νησί* such a significant and relevant contribution is its ability to combine empirical depth with theoretical breadth. It is based on painstaking archival research, especially in underutilised Ottoman sources, yet it is never narrowly empirical. At every turn, Hadjikyriacou connects local dynamics to broader imperial and ecological processes, demonstrating how Cyprus was not only shaped by its environment but also played an active role in shaping it.

The book ends with a subtle and evocative anecdote about the *kourkouna* (marbled spinefoot), a fish species that migrated from the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean via the Suez Canal. The spread of this fish in Cypriot cuisine, driven by Lessepsian migration and the resettlement of refugees from Karpasia and Famagusta after 1974, becomes a metaphor for the book's core argument: that history is lived in motion, through migration, adaptation, and entanglement. Cyprus' history, like its ecology, is shaped by shifting imperial, environmental, demographic, and cultural currents.

In sum, *Χερσαίο Νησί* presents Cyprus not merely as a geopolitical pawn or a stage for nationalist myth-making, but as a dynamic, evolving entity, an island of rivers and mountains, trees and vineyards, inhabited by real people with daily struggles, ambitions, and priorities. They cooperate and clash, not always along religious or ideological lines, but within a dynamic world shaped by shifting forces. Although technically insular, Hadjikyriacou's Cyprus does not exist in isolation; it is not a bounded, self-contained island, but a landbound node in a wider Mediterranean world, surrounded by armies and fleets, merchants and pirates, droughts and floods, earthquakes and epidemics, shaped by and responding to the world around it.

Theoharis Stavrides



# **The Geopolitical Realities in the Cyprus Solution Plans (1948-1978)**

## **[Οι Γεωπολιτικές Πραγματικότητες στα Σχέδια Λύσης του Κυπριακού (1948-1978)]**

**Nicos Christodoulides**

**I. Sideris Publications**

**Athens, 2021 (pp. 467)**

**ISBN: 9789600808681**

### **Introduction**

Nicos Christodoulides' book, *The Geopolitical Realities in the Cyprus Solution Plans*, published in 2021 by I. Sideris Publications in Athens, offers a profound exploration of the complex geopolitical dynamics surrounding the Cyprus issue.<sup>1</sup> With an insightful introduction by Angelos Syrigos, Associate Professor at Panteion University, the work delves into the historical and contemporary factors that have shaped proposals for resolving this long-standing conflict. Having originally been released in 2009,<sup>2</sup> the updated edition reflects Christodoulides' extensive experiences as a diplomat and Minister of Foreign Affairs,<sup>3</sup> particularly during the negotiation attempts from 2015 to 2017. This review will examine the book's thematic structure, key insights, and its overall significance in understanding the Cyprus problem.

### **Historical Context and Geopolitical Dynamics**

The book is organised into eight chapters, each providing a detailed analysis of various proposals for resolving the Cyprus issue from 1948 to 1978. In the opening chapter, Christodoulides discusses the consultancy conference initiated by the British colonial authorities in 1948, with an aim to establish a new constitutional order in Cyprus. This historical context is crucial for understanding the roots of the conflict, as it sets the stage for the subsequent political developments. Christodoulides emphasises the prob-

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<sup>1</sup> An extensive analysis of Christodoulides' approach to Cyprus solution plans also appears in Christodoulides, N. (2012), 'In Search of a Settlement: Cyprus Solution Plans and International Diplomacy, 1974-1999'. In Christodoulou, P, Varmazi, V. et al. *Introduction to the History of Cyprus*. Open University of Cyprus (available at, <https://kypseli.ouc.ac.cy/handle/11128/1134>, last accessed January 2025).

<sup>2</sup> The 2009 edition was introduced by Evanthis Chatzivasilieiou.

<sup>3</sup> Currently, Nicos Christodoulides is the President of the Republic of Cyprus.

lematic nature of these early initiatives, revealing the challenges they posed to meaningful governance.

The second chapter focuses on John Harding's proposal in 1956, highlighting his correspondence with Archbishop Makarios. This exchange illustrates the political dynamics of the time, shedding light on the aspirations and fears of both the colonial authorities and the Cypriot leadership. The third chapter offers an in-depth analysis of the Radcliffe proposal, which aimed for a 'constitution of limited self-government'. Christodoulides critiques its feasibility and contextualises its shortcomings, providing insight into the complexities of governance that continue to resonate in contemporary discussions about Cyprus.

Transitioning to the fourth chapter, the author examines Hugh Mackintosh Foot's 1958 proposal for a transitional period of self-governance. Here, Christodoulides emphasises the reasons for its rejection by all parties involved, highlighting the inadequacies of the proposal in addressing the fundamental issues at stake. The fifth chapter delves into the Macmillan Plan of 1958, presented by British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan. Christodoulides critiques this proposal as fundamentally inconsistent, arguing that it failed to reconcile the conflicting interests of Greek and Turkish Cypriots, a theme that remains significant in contemporary negotiations.

The sixth chapter addresses the Acheson Plan of 1964, discussing the political landscape following the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus. Christodoulides compares this plan with prior British proposals, elucidating the reasons for its rejection and its implications for the broader conflict. In the seventh chapter, he outlines the intercommunal dialogue that took place in Cyprus between 1968 and 1974. This analysis reveals the failures of various initiatives to address the crises that emerged from intercommunal violence, underscoring the persistent challenges in fostering dialogue between the communities.

Finally, the eighth chapter presents an original analysis of the American-British-Canadian Plan, known as the ABC Plan, proposed in 1978. Christodoulides examines its domestic and foreign dimensions, providing a nuanced discussion of Varosha, a city central to the Cyprus conflict. Through these chapters, the author constructs a narrative that intricately weaves historical events with the geopolitical realities that have shaped the Cyprus issue.

### **Key Insights**

Throughout the book, Christodoulides arrives at critical conclusions regarding the geopolitical context of the Cyprus problem. He argues that the repeated failures of

proposed solutions stem from a fundamental misunderstanding of the interests and aspirations of the Cypriots themselves. Instead of fostering a common vision for the island, many proposals have been heavily influenced by the ambitions of foreign powers, which have consistently sidelined the voices of those directly affected by the conflict.

One of the most compelling arguments presented in the book is the assertion that resolving the Cyprus problem solely within the framework of the Greco-Turkish conflict is fundamentally flawed. Christodoulides emphasises that the United Kingdom's primary interest has often been to maintain its geopolitical foothold in the region rather than to facilitate a viable solution to the political disputes within Cyprus. This perspective invites readers to critically reassess the motivations driving international involvement in the Cyprus issue and consider the implications for peace and stability in the region.

The author's insights are particularly relevant in light of the deadlock that emerged during the 2017 negotiations, highlighting the recurring theme that foreign interests often outweigh the genuine aspirations of the Cypriots. Christodoulides' work serves as a critical resource for understanding the historical and geopolitical underpinnings of the Cyprus problem, challenging readers to reconsider past and present narratives surrounding resolution efforts.

## Conclusion

In summary, Nicos Christodoulides' *The Geopolitical Realities in the Cyprus Solution Plans* is an essential read for scholars, policymakers, and anyone interested in the intricate dynamics of the Cyprus problem. The book not only provides a historical overview of various proposals, but also offers valuable lessons about the importance of including the perspectives and interests of local populations in any resolution efforts. By systematically analysing the geopolitical factors that have shaped the discourse around the Cyprus issue, Christodoulides equips readers with a deeper understanding of the complexities involved in achieving a lasting settlement.

The work stands out as a significant contribution to the ongoing dialogue about the future of Cyprus, emphasising the necessity for a comprehensive, inclusive approach to peace-building in the region. By engaging with this text, readers gain not only a historical perspective but also a framework through which to view current and future efforts to resolve one of the most enduring conflicts in the Eastern Mediterranean. As the Cyprus issue continues to evolve, Christodoulides' insights will remain pertinent, guiding both academic inquiry and practical diplomacy in the pursuit of a just and lasting resolution.

Giorgos Kentas

## **Three Lefts (EDA, KKE, AKEL) and the Cyprus Issue [Τρεις Αριστερές (ΕΔΑ, ΚΚΕ, ΑΚΕΛ) και το Κυπριακό Ζήτημα]**

**Kyriakos Iakovidis**

**Epikentro**

**Thessaloniki, 2023 (pp. 304)**

**ISBN: 9786182043769**

The book *Three Lefts (EDA, KKE, AKEL) and the Cyprus Issue* by Kyriakos Iakovidis explores the historical and political roles of the three leftist parties -EDA, KKE, and AKEL- in relation to the Cyprus problem. The book provides an in-depth analysis of the ideological and strategic positions these parties adopted during critical periods of the Cyprus issue, particularly in relation to colonial rule, the armed struggle for union with Greece (Enosis), and the subsequent independence movement.

The publication is structured into several sections, each delving into different aspects of the left-wing movements' interactions with Cypriot affairs. The first section contextualises the leftist approach within the broader historical framework of the Cold War, discussing how global ideological struggles influenced the positions of EDA, KKE, and AKEL. It also examines their relationships with international communist movements and how these affiliations shaped their policies on Cyprus.

A substantial portion of the book is dedicated to the role of AKEL, the dominant left-wing party in Cyprus, in navigating the challenges posed by both British colonial authorities and the nationalist armed struggle led by EOKA. The author analyses the complex dynamics between AKEL and EOKA, highlighting the ideological rift between communist-led political activism and armed nationalist resistance. Furthermore, the book discusses accusations against AKEL of being passive or even collaborating with the colonial regime, while also presenting AKEL's counterarguments that armed conflict would ultimately serve the interests of the British by fostering internal divisions among Greek Cypriots.

Another section explores the impact of leftist policies on intercommunal relations between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. Iakovidis assesses how leftist parties approached the question of Turkish Cypriot political participation and whether their

strategies contributed to mitigating or exacerbating ethnic tensions. Additionally, the book provides insights into the ways in which the Greek Communist Party (KKE) and the United Democratic Left (EDA) in Greece influenced Cyprus' leftist movements and how their positions evolved over time, describing the course of relationships between AKEL and KKE mainly, and less in relation to EDA.

The role of EDA receives particular attention in the book, as Iakovidis examines its influence on Greek politics and its stance on Cyprus. EDA, as a significant yet often overlooked political force in Greece, played a crucial role in shaping leftist discourse on the Cyprus issue. The book highlights EDA's advocacy for a peaceful resolution and its opposition to military interventions, arguing that its position often contrasted with the more radical elements of the Greek and Cypriot left. Moreover, the author explores how EDA's parliamentary efforts and international lobbying contributed to shaping the broader political debate on Cyprus within Greece and beyond. Notably, the book suggests that EDA, with its ambivalent attitude, may have attempted to leverage the Cyprus issue to strengthen its political legitimacy within Greece, where its existence had and was still being challenged by the prevailing political system. By aligning itself with a significant national concern, EDA sought to gain broader recognition and legitimacy in the Greek political landscape.

One may say that the writer appears to take for granted an opportunistic standpoint of EDA, portraying its engagement with the Cyprus issue as primarily self-serving rather than principled. The author's perspective implies, on numeral instances, that EDA sought to exploit the political turmoil surrounding Cyprus, to establish a stronger foothold in Greek politics. This interpretation doesn't overlook, but also doesn't seem to take due account of the profound impact of the Greek Civil War, which had taken place merely some years earlier and had left deep scars on Greek political life.

Given that EDA emerged in a highly repressive political climate, its cautious and strategic manoeuvring might be seen as a necessary adaptation rather than mere opportunism. Iakovidis' analysis, however, does not fully account for these constraints, potentially resulting in a somewhat biased portrayal of EDA's motives and actions.

Furthermore, the book refers to how AKEL, despite its ideological commitments, strategically leaned on Archbishop Makarios, recognising his central role in Cypriot politics. Makarios, as both a religious and political figure, was instrumental in shaping the broader political environment in which left-wing parties operated. His leadership influenced how AKEL positioned itself on the Cyprus issue, as the party often sought to align with his policies while maintaining its distinct ideological identity.

The book also discusses how Makarios' political manoeuvring played a decisive role in defining the left's broader strategy and stance in Greece and in Cyprus on key issues related to Cyprus' future.

In its concluding chapters, the book evaluates the legacy of left-wing involvement in the Cyprus issue, questioning whether their strategies were effective in advancing their political goals. The author also engages with contemporary debates on the left's historical role, examining whether the positions taken by these parties helped or hindered a viable resolution to the Cyprus problem.

The book is well-documented, incorporating references from archival materials, party documents, and historical testimonies. However, some sections may be seen as leaning towards a sympathetic portrayal of AKEL's role, which could invite criticism from those who argue that the left's stance was overly cautious or ineffective in shaping Cyprus' political trajectory. Additionally, Iakovidis' treatment of EDA's role may be seen as overly critical, as he does take into account but possibly does not give due importance to the broader historical and political pressures that shaped its actions. Nonetheless, *Three Lefts (EDA, KKE, AKEL) and the Cyprus Issue* is a valuable contribution to the historiography of Cyprus, offering a comprehensive analysis of how leftist movements engaged with one of the island's most enduring political conflicts.

**Theodoros Kontakos**

# **The Value of English in Global Mobility and Higher Education: An Investigation of Higher Education in Cyprus**

**Manuela Vida-Mannl**

**Bloomsbury Academic**

**London, 2022 (pp. 247)**

**ISBN: 978-1-3502-3095-8 (HB)**

**978-1-3502-3096-5 (HB)**

**978-1-3502-3097-2 (e-book)**

## **Abstract**

Manuela Vida-Mannl's *The Value of English in Global Mobility and Higher Education: An Investigation of Higher Education in Cyprus* is a thought-provoking examination of the role of English in higher education in Cyprus, offering a critical look at English-medium instruction (EMI) and its implications. Through empirical research, Vida-Mannl dissects the multifaceted role of English in shaping both educational structures and student experiences, questioning its impact on social mobility, educational equity, and the commodification of language. This review explores the book's central arguments, provides critical reflections, and examines its broader implications for global educational systems and policies.

## **Introduction**

The ascendancy of English in global higher education is an undeniable phenomenon, especially since the language serves as a linchpin in connecting disparate educational systems. While this trend has been widely examined in contexts such as the U.S., the U.K., and Australia, Manuela Vida-Mannl's book offers a timely and much-needed exploration of its role in Cyprus, a country that finds itself at the crossroads of geopolitical, economic, and educational shifts. The book dissects English-medium instruction (EMI) in Cypriot universities, exploring how it serves as a tool for both academic success and social mobility. Yet, it raises essential questions about whether this language model actually democratises access to education or perpetuates inequality. Through careful analysis of the policies and experiences of international students, Vida-Mannl unpacks the potential and pitfalls of EMI in a complex, globalised world.

This book's choice of Cyprus as a case study is particularly compelling, as it offers insight into how a small, post-colonial island has been navigating the pressures of globalisation through the adoption of English as a primary language of instruction. The book's inquiry is crucial in understanding the broader consequences of EMI, not only for Cyprus but also for countries adopting similar educational models worldwide.

## Core Themes and Analysis

### *1. The Multifaceted Value of English: Ideological, Communicative, and Economic Dimensions*

Vida-Mannl's tripartite framework for understanding the value of English -ideological, communicative, and economic- offers a comprehensive analysis of how EMI is framed by different actors within the Cypriot higher education system.

The ideological dimension reflects how English has come to symbolise intellectual and cultural superiority. In Cyprus, this is particularly poignant due to the country's colonial past and its ongoing aspiration to be a competitive player in the global academic and economic spheres. Universities market EMI programs as gateways to success in an increasingly interconnected world, reinforcing the idea that proficiency in English is essential for access to international opportunities. Yet, this ideological value is not neutral. It plays into global hierarchies of knowledge, with English serving as a marker of academic legitimacy, while other languages and forms of knowledge are relegated to secondary positions. This colonial legacy subtly persists, influencing how Cypriot universities structure their educational offerings.

The communicative value of English in Cyprus, as Vida-Mannl explains, arises from its status as a lingua franca in academic and professional settings. Cyprus is uniquely positioned as a crossroads of cultures, with students and academics from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. English facilitates communication across these groups, theoretically creating a common ground for collaboration. However, Vida-Mannl cautions that the assumption of seamless communication is often problematic. Many students, particularly international ones, struggle with language proficiency, creating a disparity between the ideal of inclusive communication and the reality of language barriers that hinder learning and social integration.

The economic dimension of English is arguably the most pressing in the context of Cypriot higher education. Here, English is not merely a tool for learning, but a commodity. Universities market their EMI programs to international students as a way of offering access to better job prospects and international networks. For the Cypriot government and universities, this international student market is seen as an essential eco-



conomic driver. However, as Vida-Mannl points out, the commodification of English in this context often overlooks the socioeconomic barriers faced by students who are not adequately prepared for an English-language academic environment. This commodification creates an inherent tension: English is presented as the solution to global mobility, but it often becomes a source of exclusion for those unable to meet its demands.

## ***2. English as a Commodity in Cypriot Higher Education***

The commodification of English is central to Vida-Mannl's argument. Cypriot universities -particularly those in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC)- have capitalised on the global demand for English-language higher education, using it as a marketing tool to attract international students. The book details how these institutions promote EMI as a way for students to access lucrative job markets in Europe and beyond. However, Vida-Mannl's research reveals that these promises are often overstated.

International students, particularly those from non-EU countries, frequently encounter substantial language barriers. Despite their enrollment in EMI programs, many lack the language skills required for success in rigorous academic environments. This situation is exacerbated by the limited language support available to students once they are enrolled. Vida-Mannl emphasises that while English proficiency is often a prerequisite for admission to EMI programs, universities fail to provide adequate preparatory programs or language support once students begin their studies. This gap in institutional support leads to a situation where only the most linguistically and financially privileged students thrive in the system, while others face academic and social exclusion.

Additionally, Vida-Mannl discusses how English has become a financial asset for universities, both in Cyprus and globally. As international students seek to enroll in EMI programs, universities capitalise on the demand for English-language instruction. However, this creates a competitive market where the emphasis on profit can sometimes outweigh educational quality and student support. Universities may prioritise expanding their EMI offerings to attract a wider student base, but fail to implement the necessary infrastructure to ensure that all students can succeed, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

## ***3. The Lived Experiences of International Students***

A compelling section of the book is dedicated to exploring the lived experiences of international students in Cyprus. Through qualitative interviews and survey data, Vida-Mannl paints a vivid picture of the challenges these students face, many of which

are rooted in language barriers. While many students come to Cyprus with high hopes of academic success and future opportunities, their experiences are often marked by frustration and isolation.

International students frequently report struggles with adapting to academic expectations, particularly those related to language proficiency. While universities may offer English-medium programs, the varying levels of English proficiency among faculty and administrators contribute to a fragmented educational experience. Some professors are unable to effectively communicate in English, hindering students' understanding of course material. Furthermore, students report feeling socially isolated, with language barriers extending beyond the classroom and affecting their ability to engage in the broader social and cultural life of the university.

Beyond academic challenges, Vida-Mannl also explores the financial difficulties faced by international students. Many students from non-EU countries must support themselves financially, often through part-time jobs that offer limited opportunities for professional growth. This financial strain, combined with language challenges, can prevent students from fully integrating into the Cypriot society and realising the potential benefits of their education.

#### ***4. Global Perspectives on EMI and Mobility***

Vida-Mannl situates the Cypriot experience within a broader global context, where the expansion of EMI has been a key strategy for many countries seeking to internationalise their higher education systems. However, this expansion has not been without its challenges. In countries like Turkey, Malaysia, and the Netherlands, EMI has faced criticisms related to language equity, student preparedness, and institutional support.

In Turkey, for example, while EMI programs have become widespread in universities, the implementation has been uneven. Elite institutions have the resources to provide strong language support, while lesser-resourced universities struggle to meet the language needs of their students. Similarly, in Malaysia, the rapid expansion of EMI has been touted as a means of economic development, but it has raised concerns about the adequacy of language preparation and the potential erosion of academic standards. Vida-Mannl's book adds depth to these global discussions by highlighting how the commodification of English and the challenges of EMI affect students in both developed and developing educational systems.

#### **Methodology and Research Design**

Vida-Mannl's research methodology is robust and multifaceted, incorporating both

qualitative and quantitative approaches to provide a comprehensive understanding of EMI in Cyprus. The qualitative interviews offer rich insights into the subjective experiences of international students, while the quantitative data provides a broader picture of trends in student performance, language proficiency, and academic success.

While the methodology is analysed thoroughly, the review does not deeply criticise the limitations in the study or suggest improvements to the research itself. For instance, while Vida-Mannl includes a significant sample of international students, the study might have benefited from a more longitudinal approach to track the long-term effects of EMI on students' academic and professional outcomes. This would have provided a deeper understanding of how EMI influences students' careers and integration into the workforce beyond their time at the university.

Another potential limitation is the reliance on self-reported data, particularly when discussing students' language proficiency and perceptions of academic challenges. While these insights are valuable, self-reporting may introduce bias, especially if students feel pressure to present themselves in a favorable light. Future research could incorporate observational data or interviews with faculty and administrators to provide a more holistic view of the EMI experience.

### **Policy Implications for Cyprus**

The book's findings lead to several important policy recommendations for Cyprus:

1. **Enhanced Language Support Programs:** Universities should invest in comprehensive language support programs that offer preparatory courses before students enter their degree programs, as well as ongoing academic language support throughout their studies.
2. **Institutional Accountability:** Universities must balance the financial incentives of international student recruitment with a commitment to educational equity. This includes ensuring that all students, regardless of their language proficiency, receive the necessary support to succeed.
3. **Multilingual Education Policies:** EMI programs should be complemented by multilingual policies that recognise the value of students' native languages, allowing for more inclusive educational practices and reducing the cultural and linguistic divides between international and local students.
4. **Research on Long-term Outcomes:** Policymakers should conduct longitudinal studies that track the academic, professional, and social outcomes of EMI students, allowing for better-informed policy decisions that can address existing inequalities in the system.

**Conclusion**

Manuela Vida-Mannl's *The Value of English in Global Mobility and Higher Education* is a vital contribution to the discourse on English in higher education. By examining the Cypriot context, Vida-Mannl challenges us to rethink the role of English in shaping educational outcomes and global mobility. Her research uncovers the complexities of EMI, exposing the ways in which it serves as both an opportunity and a barrier for students. This book is essential reading for anyone interested in language policy, global education, and the challenges of creating equitable educational environments in a globalised world.

**Stylianos Vrakas**

## **14 Crimes of an Empire** **[14 Εγκλήματα μιας Αυτοκρατορίας]**

**Elina Stamatiou**

**Costas Epiphaniou Publications**

**Nicosia, 2021 (pp. 249)**

**ISBN: 978-9925-557-56-1**

The book is written by Elina Stamatiou, a journalist by profession. The author presents the stories of 14 men, aged between 17 and 37, who were subjected to torture and inhuman treatment by the British during the EOKA struggle (1955–1959), ultimately leading to their deaths. As the author explains in her introductory note, the book serves the need of the relatives of these 14 men to obtain answers regarding the circumstances of their deaths. The book, in particular, presents the cases of:

- Spyros Hadjiyiakoumi
- Charalambos Filippides
- George Christophorou
- Plato Stylianou
- Nikolas Yiangou
- Prodromos Xenophontos
- Loukas Louka
- Panayiotis Chysostomou
- Nikos Georgiou
- George Nikolaou
- Stelios Tritaios
- Andreas Panayiotou
- Vasilis Alexandrou
- Theodosia Chatzitheodosiou

The book consists of 15 chapters. The first 14 chapters are dedicated to the 14 men who, based on the evidence presented by the author, were all victims of torture. Each case begins with a headline that reflects the individual's death story, accompanied by a photograph of the deceased, reinforcing the fact that these were real people rather than just historical figures. The chapters are further divided into smaller sections,

supported by copies of photographs -some dating back to 1955-1959- including images of the deceased bodies, which are published without alteration. Additionally, the book includes copies of documents and information sourced from the State Archives, the Press and Information Office, personal archives of those who provided testimony to the author, and even records from English Major Michael Sturton. Particularly striking is the testimony of forensic scientists who admitted to having made false or inaccurate reports at the time due to fear for their lives under British rule. The book also features accounts from the relatives of the deceased. Chapter 15 is dedicated to Renos Lyssiotis, a survivor of torture.

A particularly noteworthy aspect of the book is the inclusion of introductory paragraphs for most cases, often written in a poetic style. This literary choice appears to be intentional, reflecting the book's deep respect for the 14 individuals it portrays. In contrast to the disrespect shown to them by the British -both in life and in death- this approach restores their dignity and individuality.

In my opinion, this book should not be read solely as a historical or, to some extent, legal documentation of the torture committed by the British -crimes for which they remain unaccountable. It should also be regarded as an effort to reaffirm the fundamental right of families to be informed about the true causes of their loved ones' deaths. I highly recommend this book as a powerful and important read.

**Anastasia Papamichael**









