

IDENTITY, IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP IN NORTHERN CYPRUS

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impact of Turkish ‘settlers’ on conceptions of collective identity in northern Cyprus during the period 1995-2013. It traces the discursive effects of immigration and the citizenship status of populations from Turkey on competing identity narratives in the context of Cyprus’s EU accession by focusing on three distinct empirical domains: political parties, civil society and the print media.

Inspired by the conceptual framework of the poststructuralist discourse theory and constructivist readings on nationalism and immigration, the investigation seeks to explain the discursive mechanisms of identity construction and transformation in relation to immigration from Turkey which represents a key element in the narration of identity in northern Cyprus. More specifically, the thesis explores how the presence of populations from Turkey has been framed within the dominant narratives on identity along two antagonistic versions: *Turkishness* and *Cypriotness*. Using qualitative methodology based on discourse analysis, the empirical sections trace the continuity and change in these narratives and their framing of the ‘settler issue’ in the course of Cyprus’s EU accession and the ongoing anticipation on part of the Turkish-Cypriot community for eventual membership. The purpose of the investigation is to reveal the logic of securitization within both discourses that compete to attach a meaning onto identity in northern Cyprus.

The findings demonstrate that the discursive space of the Turkish-Cypriot community is dominated by these competing, securitised versions of subjectivity and belonging. Traditionally interpreted within the hegemony of *Turkishness*, the antagonistic reading of immigration and the citizenship status of ‘settlers’ by the subversive *Cypriotness* discourse also reveals the potential to significantly increase the appeal of alternative visions and projects through securitization. Indeed, the northern Cyprus case testifies that appeal to identity involves much more than a source of self-identification, involving a contestation over autonomy, statehood and purpose.

In this sense, the thesis aspires to make a contribution in both empirical and conceptual terms. The investigation of identity politics in relation to Turkish ‘settlers’ provides fascinating empirical findings on Turkish-Cypriot politics and society but also the Turkish-Cypriot perceptions of Turkey which have attracted limited scholarly attention thus far. Placing the investigation within the wider discourse-analytical framework also offers significant insights to complement existing understandings of the political relevance of identity in particularly intriguing migration settings found in unrecognised states but also in other contexts involving similar dynamics such as the presence of a ‘kin’ state. The current thesis thus offers a particular aspect of the infamous ‘Cyprus Problem’ but one that points to many ‘bigger’ stories in Europe and beyond.

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis has been composed solely by myself and that it has not been submitted, in whole or in part, to any other university or institution in application for a degree or qualification. Except where stated otherwise by reference or acknowledgment, the work presented here is entirely my own.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- AKP: Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*)
BDH: Peace and Democracy Movement (*Barış ve Demokrasi Hareketi*)
BKP: United Cyprus Party (*Birleşik Kıbrıs Partisi*)
CEEC(s): Central East European Country/ies
CTP: Republican Turkish Party (*Cumhuriyetçi Türk Partisi*)
DMP: Democratic Struggle Party (*Demokratik Mücadele Partisi*)
DP: Democratic Party (*Demokrat Parti*)
EEA: European Economic Area
EOKA: National Organisation of Cypriot Fighters (*Ethniki Organosis Kyprion Agoniston, Εθνική Οργάνωση Κυπρίων Αγωνιστών*)
EU: European Union
EEZ: Exclusive Economic Zone
ICSO(s): Immigrant Civil Society Organisations
KKK: Cyprus Communist Party (*Kommounistiko Komma Kyprou, Κομμουνιστικού Κόμματος Κύπρου*)
KTAMS: Turkish Civil Servants Trade Union (*Kıbrıs Türk Amme Memurları Sendikası*)
KTGB: Turkish Cypriot Journalists Association (*Kıbrıs Türk Gazeteciler Birliği*)
KTOEOS: Cyprus Turkish Secondary Education Teacher's Union (*Kıbrıs Türk Orta Eğitim Öğretmenler Sendikası*)
KTÖS: Cyprus Turkish Teachers Trade Union (*Kıbrıs Türk Öğretmenler Sendikası*)
KTTO: Turkish-Cypriot Chamber of Commerce (*Kıbrıs Türk Ticaret Odası*)
MAP: Nationalist Justice Party (*Milliyetçi Adalet Partisi*)
NGO(s): Non-Governmental Organisation(s)
ÖRP: Freedom and Reform Party (*Özgürlük ve Reform Partisi*)
PEO: Pan Cyprian Federation of Labour (*Pankýpria Omospondía Ergasías, Παγκύπρια Εργατική Ομοσπονδία*)
PIO: Public Information Office (RoC)
RoC: Republic of Cyprus
TBP: Turkish Union Party (*Türk Birliği Partisi*)
TDP: Communal Democracy Party (*Toplumcu Demokrasi Partisi*)
TKP: Communal Liberation Party (*Toplumcu Kurtuluş Partisi*)
TMT: Turkish Defense Organisation (*Türk Mukavemet Teşkilatı*)
TRNC: Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (*Kuzey Kıbrıs Türk Cumhuriyeti*)
UBP: National Unity Party (*Ulusal Birlik Partisi*)
UN: United Nations
UNDP: United Nations Development Programme
US: United States
USAID: United States Aid for International Development

YDP: Rebirth Party (*Yeni Dođuş Partisi*)

YP: New Party (*Yeni Parti*)

YKP: New Cyprus Party (*Yeni Kıbrıs Partisi*)

YBH: Patriotic Unity Movement (*Yurtsever Birlik Hareketi*)

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

- 1571 Beginning of the Ottoman Rule in Cyprus.
- 1914 Full annexation of Cyprus by the British.
- 1925 The island becomes crown colony.
- 1955-1959 Clashes between the Greek-Cypriot led EOKA and British/ Turkish-Cypriots.
- 1960 Cyprus gains independence as the 'Republic of Cyprus'. Treaty of Guarantee gives Britain, Greece and Turkey the right to intervene.
- 1963-1967 Inter-communal clashes/ gradual Turkish-Cypriot retreatment into ethnic enclaves.
- 1967 Turkish Cypriots set up the 'Turkish-Cypriot Provisional Administration'.
- 1974 Military junta in Greece orchestrates a coup against the Cypriot President Makarios. Within days, Turkey retaliates with a military operation which is later consolidated into 'invasion' by enforcing the partition of the island between the north and the south. Around 165,000 Greek-Cypriots flee or are driven to south, and around 45,000 Turkish-Cypriots move to the north.
- 1975 (Feb) Turkish-Cypriots establish the 'Turkish Federative State of Cyprus' with Rauf Denktash as the President; the statelet is immediately denounced by the United Nations as 'illegal'.
- 1975 (May) The 'settler recruitment programme' (1975-1983) initiated by the Turkish -Cypriot authorities and Ankara facilitates the large-scale transfer of Turkish nationals into the north.
- 1977-1979 Makarios-Denktash '4 Points Agreements' for a federal, bi-communal, non -aligned state as the basis of negotiations on the Cyprus issue.
- 1980-1983 UN-Sponsored inter-communal talks, which, ultimately, collapse.
- 1983 Turkish-Cypriots proclaim the 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus' recognised only by Turkey
- 1984- 1991 Various UN efforts for resolution of the 'Cyprus problem' fail.
- 1990 Republic of Cyprus applies for European Union membership.
- 1995 The General Affairs Council confirms Cyprus's suitability for membership
- 1996 Turkish-Cypriot journalist Kutlu Adalı, murdered near his home in Nicosia.
- 1998 Beginning of negotiations for European Union accession of Cyprus.
- 1998 Turkey and Turkish-Cypriots pledge closer integration in reaction to Cyprus's EU accession process.
- 1999 Turkey becomes candidate for European Union membership, with the resolution of the 'Cyprus Problem' as part of her accession conditionality.
- 2000-2001 Banking crisis in the north erupts into civil unrest.
- 2002 (Nov) First presentation of the United Nations sponsored 'Annan Plan' for the resolution of the 'Cyprus Problem'.
- 2002 (Dec) Rise of 'Justice and Development Party' government in Turkey.

- 2002-2003 Rise and prevalence of Turkish-Cypriot public opposition to Denktash leadership and the right-wing administration led by the 'National Unity Party' and the 'Democratic Party'
- 2003 (Apr) Cyprus border partially opens for the first time since 1974.
- 2003 (Dec) Moderate, pro-EU CTP wins the Turkish-Cypriot legislative elections.
- 2004 (Apr) 'Annan Plan' is accepted by the Turkish-Cypriots and rejected by the Greek-Cypriots.
- 2004 (May) Cyprus enters the European Union as a divided island.
- 2005 Moderate Mehmet Ali Talat replaces Rauf Denktash as the second Turkish-Cypriot President.
- 2008 New inter-communal talks on the Cyprus issue commence.
- 2009 'National Unity Party' returns to the Turkish-Cypriot government.
- 2010 Hard-liner Derviş Eroğlu becomes the third Turkish-Cypriot President.
- 2010-2012 A series of 'Communal Survival Rallies' are organised to protest new austerity measures and demographic changes.
- 2013 The leftist 'Republican Turkish Party' returns to office after winning the legislative elections on an identitarian ticket.

NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

This thesis does not deal with the legality of the self-proclaimed Turkish Republic of northern Cyprus and the legitimacy of its governing institutions. Northern Cyprus (with a small 'n') is the term generally preferred in this study to designate the distinction of the Turkish-Cypriot political space. For purposes of analytical clarity, public institutions are nonetheless referred here by their original name, as used by the Turkish-Cypriots themselves ('president', 'government', 'minister', etc.) The term 'settler', though not part of the Turkish-Cypriot political lexicon, is modified in its usage here with a view to reveal the complexity (and the contingency) of the context in which it is utilised. Other categories, such as 'immigrants' and 'citizens' are also used in tandem, to further distinguish between different groups with varying legal statuses and rights in a real albeit unrecognised regime.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Case Study

1.2 Focus and Timeframe

1.3 The Conceptual Framework

1.4 Scope, Limitations and Contribution

1.5 Methodology

1.6 Thesis Overview

1.1. The Case Study

The 'Cyprus Problem' has long drawn world attention, perhaps increasingly more so in the context of the island's accession into the European Union in May 2004. On 11 November 2002, the then United Nations (UN) Secretary General Kofi Annan proposed a comprehensive plan towards settling the diplomatic dispute to allow the EU accession of a reunified Cyprus. Following extensive negotiations, the fifth version of the so-called 'Annan Plan' was submitted to simultaneous referenda on 24 April 2004, the results of which are well-known: 65 percent of Turkish-Cypriot voters accepted the Plan while 76 percent of Greek-Cypriot voters casted 'no'.² The aborted plan notwithstanding, the Republic of Cyprus (RoC), representing the whole of the divided island, joined the EU a week later on 1 May 2004. Talks were relaunched at the end of a two-year deadlock, when the Cypriot President Papadopoulos and the newly-elected Turkish-Cypriot leader Mehmet Ali Talat agreed, on 8 July 2006, to discuss 'issues that affect day-to-day life' and, concurrently, substantive issues.³ The 'Gambari Process', as it came to be known, almost

² For a comprehensive analysis of the Greek Cypriot 'no' vote in 2004 referendum, see Lordos (2004).

³ In July 2006, the Under-Secretary General of the United Nations for Political Affairs, Ibrahim Gambari was successful in bringing the leaders of the Turkish and Greek side together to break the post-Annan Plan deadlock. The outcome of the initiative was a statement agreed by two leaders reaffirming the basic principles of a solution within the framework of a "bizonal, bicomunal federation, with political equality, in accordance with UN Security

immediately developed into a stalemate however, and the five-point accord was not implemented. Dimitris Christofias' election as the Republic's President in 24 February 2008 ended the impasse and in March, he and Talat agreed to resume the settlement process, with working groups and technical committees.⁴ Talat was ousted at the 'presidential' elections on 18 April 2010 by Derviş Eroğlu, a right-winger, who continued negotiations with Christofias under the UN Special Envoy Alexander Downer. Though without much progress, peace negotiations came to a complete halt in 2014 when the Greek-Cypriots walked out in protest of a Turkish ship entering Cypriot Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) in search for natural gas. At the time of writing, Cyprus, once again stands at a cross-road with renewed efforts by the Turkish-Cypriot leader Mustafa Akıncı who was elected in 2015 and Nicos Anastasiades who succeeded Christofias in 2013 to push forward the new round of negotiations with an aim to reach a deal by the end of 2016 (*Cyprus Mail*, 2016a).⁵

Numerous studies have been published over the years to illuminate the nature of the conflict in Cyprus and the current impasse with a good number of them aiming to overcome the existing political stalemate and averting the recurrence of similar ones in the future, all building up to a remarkable body of work on the 'Cyprus Problem'.⁶ This thesis, while taking stock of the

Council Resolutions". The agreement also reintroduced the so-called 'Confidence Building Measures (CBMs)' and announced new rounds of negotiations on "issues of day-to-day cooperation" (PIO, 2006).

⁴ For a detailed account of the negotiations between Talat and Christofias, see Kaymak and Faustmann (2010).

⁵ With six official areas to negotiate (governance and power-sharing, property, territory, security and guarantees, the economy and EU matters, Anastasiades and Akıncı had, at the time of writing, held over 30 meetings.

⁶ For an excellent review of the literature on the history of the conflict and its EU dimension, see Demetriou (2004); for a more recent discussion on the security dimension of the Cyprus Conflict, see Ker-Lindsay, (2008); edited volume by Bozkurt and Trimikliniotis (2012) offers a number of fresh and critical perspectives on the island's politics; Kyris' (2015) work is an exciting new addition to the body of work on the 'Cyprus Problem' with an exclusive focus on the 'Europeanization' of the Turkish-Cypriot community'.

existing knowledge, nonetheless departs from the current literature on the 'Cyprus Problem' by seeking to shed light into an important aspect of the island's politics which has attracted limited scholarly attention thus far: the migratory flows from Turkey into northern Cyprus since the *de facto* partition of the island in 1974 and the impact this has had on Turkish-Cypriot conceptions of identity.

Estimated to be around 105,000 in a population of around 295,000⁷, the presence of Turkish immigrants and 'settlers'⁸ in northern Cyprus constitutes one of the most contentious issues in the Cyprus negotiations and on the political agendas across the 'Green Line'.⁹ The Republic of Cyprus has consistently argued that the presence of the Turkish population constitutes a violation of international law with particular reference to the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949.¹⁰ Any Turkish national who travels to Cyprus using the air or sea ports in the 'occupied areas' is thus automatically considered an 'illegal settler'. In addition, the continuous 'transfer of population', for the Republic of Cyprus, amounts to a 'process of colonization pursued by Ankara' (RoC, 2006). RoC position is further echoed in a number of international opinions on the issue; according to a 2003 Recommendation by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of

⁷ Figures based on the latest (2011) census conducted by the 'State Planning Organisation' (DPO), a comprehensive breakdown of the results are available online at <http://devplan.org/Nufus-2011/nufus%20son.pdf>. It should be noted here, however, that the population of the TRNC and the number of Turkish settlers/immigrants within it are much contested with other estimates citing much higher figures ranging from 120,000 (DPO, 2016) '200,000 upwards in a population of 300,000' (International Crisis Group, 2010, p.2) and 500,000 (Cole, 2011).

⁸ For the analytical distinction between the two categories, see section 2.4 in Chapter 2.

⁹ The term 'Green Line' refers to the cease fire line, controlled by the United Nations Peacekeeping Force (UNFICYP) that *de facto* divides Cyprus, cutting through the capital of Nicosia.

¹⁰ The Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 states that '*the occupying power shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies*'. International Committee of the Red Cross (1949, art 49, par. 6).

Europe (CoE): ‘the presence of the settlers constitutes a process of hidden colonization and an additional and important obstacle to a peaceful negotiated solution of the Cyprus problem’ (CoE, 2003). Public attitudes in the Republic also appear to be in favour of taking a tough stance¹¹ and attitudes towards Turkish migrants and ‘settlers’ are often hostile.¹²

Turkish-Cypriot positions on the issue, however, are less clear. The nationalist discourse — fervently advocated by the former Turkish-Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash and to a large extent by the right-wing parties that have historically dominated the Turkish-Cypriot administration (see sections 4.3 and 4.4 in Chapter 4) — does not differentiate a Turkish-Cypriot from a Turkish national. Denktash’ often-cited formulation, ‘A Turk goes, another Turk comes’, appears to sum up the line of thought which guided official views and policies on immigration and citizenship for the greater part of the administration’s history. In the last two decades, however, public opinion — galvanised by the Turkish-Cypriot left (see section 4.5 in Chapter 4), large segments of the civil society (section 5.4 in Chapter 5) and oppositional newspapers (see section 6.3 and 6.4 in Chapter 6) — is presumed to have taken a more critical stance toward immigration and the naturalisation of Turkish migrants in articulating their identity-related anxieties within a *Cypriotness* discourse.

¹¹ According to a 2009 poll, Greek Cypriots are willing to accept a mix of citizenship and residence permits only for two categories of Turkish immigrants: those born in Cyprus of mixed Turkish/Cypriot parents and those married to a Turkish Cypriot. For all other categories of Turkish immigrants, large Greek Cypriot majorities favour either immediate or gradual repatriation. Lordos, A. et al. (2010)

¹² Christiansen (2005); for Lordos et al. (2008), Greek Cypriot intolerance for the presence of Turkish nationals’ links back to the Greek Cypriot tendency to be suspicious of the multicultural transformation their community is currently undergoing.

Previous studies have thus far attempted to explain this shift in identity discourse with inadequate reference to immigration from Turkey, although the notion of the immigrant ‘other’ is inherent in the so-called *Cypriotness* discourse.¹³ Indeed, a ‘hierarchy of Cypriotness’ is often constructed whereby Turkish immigrants are categorised as the ‘others’ which threaten, or are perceived to threaten presumed Turkish Cypriot ‘authenticity’ (loss of cultural identity) and ‘autonomy’ (fear of political subordination). The key objective of the study is to place the presence of populations from Turkey at the heart of its investigation of the development and transformation of collective identity in northern Cyprus.

1.2. Focus and timeframe

Understanding the impact of Turkish migration into northern Cyprus on conceptions of identity involves studying identity change. Accordingly, the investigation traces the transformations in identity narratives in the course of Cyprus’s EU accession period (this is elaborated further below). Conceptualising identity as a discursive construct which is made possible through the exclusion of ‘otherness’, the analysis here selects one central dimension of the ‘self-other’ dialectic that accounts for identity construction in the Turkish-Cypriot community, Turkish ‘settlers’ — and follows its evolution under two dominant narratives, namely *Turkishness* and the rival *Cypriotness* discourse. While the focus is predominantly on the articulation of the

¹³ Several studies, most notably those by Ramm (2005), Lacher and Kaymak (2005), Vural and Rustemli (2007), Hatay (2005, 2007), Sahin (2008), Loizides (2011) and Akcali (2011) highlight the identity transformation in northern Cyprus with reference to the *Cypriotness* discourse but do not engage sufficiently with the impact of immigration on the notion of identity or the framing of ‘settlers’ in competing identity discourses.

twin issues of immigration and the citizenship rights of Turkish ‘settlers’, the investigation attempts to identify transformations both in the discursive position of the ‘other’ but also in the ‘self’. It therefore follows identity narratives articulated toward the domestic discursive space (see below). Empirically, this implies studying variations diachronically within empirical domains and synchronically across the domains in which concepts under investigation are constructed. Competing articulations of immigration narratives are therefore traced around three empirical domains that have traditionally offered important sites of identity (re)construction in northern Cyprus: political parties, civil society and the print media.

The process of Cyprus’s EU membership is seen here as showcasing the hegemonic struggles taking place in this context. As it will be demonstrated throughout the study, the prospects of European Integration brought about significant changes to the discursive space of the Turkish-Cypriot community in a very visible way by enabling the *Cypriotness* discourse to compete with the dominant meanings established by Turkish nationalism whilst at the same time revealing the securitizing attempts of both discourses in the context of heightened contestation. The period leading to the accession of the island also displays a distinct openness about the legitimacy of nationalism because of the specific historical juncture it created (this is further elaborated in section 2.5).

A logical approach to setting the timeframe within which identity change will be analysed here is therefore to look at identity narratives at the outset of Cyprus’s EU accession process and after. Though Cyprus’s membership bid was formally launched in July 1990, a discretionary

criterion has been preferred here to select 1995 as the beginning of the analysed period. Despite the significant symbolism of the July 1990 bid, it was not until March 1995 that Cyprus's suitability for membership was confirmed. In this sense, it can be suggested that the prospects of EU membership became more salient only after 1995 and would mark the beginning of a period of intense contestation in the Turkish-Cypriot community. The chronological point marking its end is set by the Turkish-Cypriot legislative elections of 2013 featuring identity and immigration as key electoral battlegrounds.

Within this timeframe (1995-2013), identity narratives articulating the discursive positions on immigration from Turkey and the citizenship rights of Turkish nationals/settlers are studied around the moments of increased salience marked by significant events and discursive occurrences. Of particular importance here are election periods, major developments in relation to the 'Cyprus Problem', significant events concerning immigration (such as amnesties for unauthorised workers), and other events of bilateral concern including various economic and political protocols/treaties signed with Turkey. Therefore, the discursive space which is object of this investigation is chronologically oriented toward these points (Table 1).

The conceptual insights from the poststructuralist discourse theory and its principal methodological tool of discourse analysis that are utilised to carry out the analytical task in the empirical sections are outlined further below.

Figure 1. Analytical timeframe and salience of immigration-related identity

Event	1995-2000	2000-2004	2004-2009	2009-2013
Elections	1998. Parliamentary Elections	2003. Parliamentary Elections	2005. Parliamentary Elections 2009. Parliamentary Elections	2013. Parliamentary Elections
Amnesties, court cases, public rallies, etc.	1996. Kutlu Adalı murder 2000. Banking crisis erupts into civil disorder.	2002-2004. Turkish-Cypriot mobilisation in favour of reunification and EU membership March – October 2003. 'Citizenship stripping battles'	2006. Census 2008. Amnesty for unauthorized workers	2011. Census 2010-2012. 'Communal Survival Rallies'
Peace Talks		2002. Annan Plan Published 2004. 'Annan Plan' Referendum	2008. Talat-Christofias Negotiations	
Inter-state Relations	1995. Turkey-TRNC Joint Declaration 1998. Turkey-TRNC Joint Declaration	2002. AKP wins elections in Turkey	2007-2008 Turkey-TRNC Economic Protocol	2010-2012. Turkey-TRNC Economic Protocol

1.3. The Conceptual Framework

In tracing the impact of Turkish immigration on conceptions of identity, the study develops an eclectic¹⁴ conceptual framework, combining discourse theory with constructivist strands from two academic (sub-)disciplines: nationalism and immigration studies. Inspired by critical theory and the postmodernist school, poststructuralist and constructivist approaches not only suggest new ways of conceptualising about the ‘nation’, power relations and political control but also provide the analytical tools to uncover mechanisms of hegemony and domination over such social meanings as nationhood, belonging, purpose and otherness. Thus, some of the seminal ideas of earlier modernists such as Anderson’s ‘imagined communities’ (1991) are operationalised within a conceptual framework of seeing identity and its elements as subjective and contextual. Poststructuralist and constructivist approaches also emphasise the central role of language in constituting social reality, objective knowledge and/or power relations¹⁵, which suggests that any relevant understanding of social phenomena, such as identity change, should start from studying the language used to speak of them. A key focus of these approaches toward identity, therefore, is *discourse* and the meanings it articulates in order to establish the contours of the ‘imagined community’. Looking at collective/national identity from the cross-section of these academic fields permits a more rounded understanding. It allows for the incorporation of various theoretical approaches (securitization theory and critical approaches to studying

¹⁴ This relates to Mouzelis’ idea of ‘conceptual pragmatism’ in social theory which “has as its major task to clarify conceptual tools and to construct new ones by following criteria of utility rather than truth” (1995: 9).

¹⁵ See below for a brief discussion of the ontological differences between some strands of the Critical Discourse Analysis and the poststructuralist discourse theory.

nationalism), various levels of analysis (distinguished by various domestic remits or empirical domains) and various qualitative methods, discourse analysis in particular, to uncover the dynamics of identity construction and highlight the mechanisms through which they change and with what implications. Thus, it promises to guide the key research question of this study:

Q: What has been the impact of immigration from Turkey on conceptions of identity in northern Cyprus?

1.4. Methodology

Originating in branches of philosophy, literary theory and linguistics, discourse analysis has been utilised within a wide range of disciplines including sociology, anthropology, communication, and politics. One of its most relevant contribution to the study of politics has been demonstrating the discursive construction of “objects of knowledge, situations and social roles as well as identities” (Wodak et al., 2009: 8). Informed by aforementioned conceptualisations of power, the discourse analysis method and that of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) within it, is aimed at studying the contexts in which language operates or the ‘text in context’ (Van Dijk, 1977: 2008), to reveal the rhetorical strategies, and the goals a language is meant to impose, in the constitution of particular social conditions and identities. This is an important distinction of the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) developed in the works of Fairclough, Van Dijk and Wodak, in relation to other discourse-analytical approaches, in the sense

that the main focus is not on the linguistic system and its grammatical and semantic functions but rather the linguistic relations between discursive practices and social structures.

In a similar vein, Ruth Wodak's 'socio-diagnostic' critique further suggests going beyond the 'text' and indeed, for the analysis making use of "background or contextual knowledge" in order to embed the discursive event in a wider frame of social and political relations, processes and circumstances (Wodak, 2001: 65). The methodological approach that is utilised hereafter adheres to this premise of the discourse-historical approach of Wodak and others, by integrating a large quantity of available knowledge about the historical sources and the background of the social and political fields which form the 'context'. From this perspective, an important methodological advantage of discourse analysis is that it facilitates approaching the 'object investigated from multiple theoretical and methodological perspectives', implying using various methods of data collection and the analysis of different sets of data.

This is particularly helpful for the purposes of the current investigation because the discursive construction of collective/national identity in relation to immigration involves articulation at different levels: government (adopting relevant legislation on citizenship, work permits, amnesties, etc.), political parties (press statements, speeches, publications), print media (opinion making on day-to-day issues) and civil society (indicating public debate on various aspects of the subject), etc. Discourse analysis as a method allows for the incorporation of these levels and a rich data set into the investigation to identify and contrast competing identity narratives and divergent articulations of immigration within them. The current analysis therefore

uses a customised selection method that has been designed to incorporate data comprising both oral and written texts (primary and secondary) from across the three empirical domains. The following paragraphs summarise the data set utilised to investigate identity narratives and their transformation in relation to Turkish immigration.

The introduction of the conceptual framework (Chapter 2) includes a thorough review of a wide range of secondary sources on identity, nationalism and immigration including books and journal articles. Chapter 3 which highlights the genesis of *Turkishness* in Cyprus uses a wide range of secondary sources primarily on the modern history of Cyprus but also some primary texts produced in news reports and other archival material relevant to the investigation. In the remainder of the study, the bulk of the empirical analysis uses texts from primary sources produced by government representatives such as the Prime Minister, the President, members of the Parliament, relevant ministers, but also print media, leading journalists, relevant civil society actors as well as the mainstream parties. In form, the corpus of texts covers, among others, official statements by governmental actors, press-conferences, press releases of parties and other actors, speeches, official interviews in the media, news reports, relevant columns, editorials and op-eds in the print media and interview transcripts.

The selection process to produce a viable research corpus, moreover, is based on the topical area and subjective judgement. The topical area involved manually identifying texts

containing interpretations predominantly concerned with identity, and searching contextual occurrences of particular words such as ‘immigration’, ‘immigrants’, ‘Turkish-born nationals’, ‘citizenship’, ‘naturalisations’, etc. A further ‘temporal’ criterion has also been followed to reduce the data set in line with the timeframe of the investigation which has meant that data collection, for the empirical chapters in particular (Chapters 4, 5 and 6) was restricted predominantly to the texts produced between 1995 and 2013.¹⁶ The search was further focused around key chronological moments (i.e. discursive events) determined by the salience of the studied narratives (see Figure 1).

In addition, the empirical chapters draw extensively on semi-structured interviews conducted with a variety of Turkish-Cypriot elites in Nicosia during the investigation (appendix.) Whilst majority of them being face-to-face, a small minority of interviews were conducted via email whereby interviewees were provided with a list of questions to respond. The entire sequence of question sets (appendix 5) was introduced in all the interviews in the same order. The analysis of the interviews concentrated on the discursive constructions of identity narratives and the articulation of Turkish immigration within them. The results were organised according to the thematic and chronological discussion in the study. In this sense, the transcripts were interpreted in a stylised way to highlight the specific contexts. The name and exact position/status of the interviewees remain confidential (appendix 4).

¹⁶ To provide a fuller understanding of discourses being investigated, those events that stood outside of the selected timeframe were nonetheless acknowledged and referenced in the introductory sections providing contextual background for each case study.

Last but not least, it is important to emphasise again that the discursive analysis undertaken here concentrates less at the micro-linguistic level but more so on the content level i.e. on the specific interpretations of key elements and concepts as well as the recurring patterns of argumentation (and their ‘securitization’ in particular, see section 2.3.a in Chapter 2) and modification of identity and immigration-related narratives and the ways in which these were combined within rival interpretations. This is related to the understanding of ‘text’ here as a specific and unique realisation of a discourse. In other words, the study is concerned with text in so far as it relates to the socio-political and the historical context. As stated earlier, one principal aim is to uncover securitizing logics that different yet competing identity interpretations rely on. Depending on the context, i.e. the empirical domain and the event related to immigration – one or another aspect of the identity discourse evoked with the securitizing logic¹⁷ is thus brought into prominence in *text*. In all three case studies, or empirical domains therefore, discourse analysis is aimed at following the genesis and transformation of narratives in a historical trajectory and in line with the social interests of the actors and their power relations through the interaction between *text* and ‘context’.

This distinction does point, to some extent, to an ontological issue that often sets Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and the Discourse Historical Approach (DHA) from the traditional Discourse Theoretical (DT) approaches that are at best suspicious of any ontological distinction

¹⁷ Logic here refers to a more or less intentional plan of discursive practices adopted to achieve a particular social, political, psychological or linguistic aim. As far as the articulation of immigration is concerned, it relates to the framing of the latter as an ‘existential threat’ to evoke a particular understanding of identity in an attempt to fix its meaning, thus rendering it ‘hegemonic’. This is elaborated further in the following chapter.

between the 'text' and the 'context' (especially if the latter is conceived as a 'constraint', see for example Balzacq, 2011). In DT approaches, more specifically, the distinction between linguistic (text) and non-linguistic (context) is internal to discourse. CDA approaches, on the other hand, retain a distinction between the semiotic and material dimensions of social relations and processes (Wodak and Meyer, 2009). While it is beyond the scope of this investigation to clarify at length the conceptual presuppositions that both approaches share¹⁸ suffice it to say that it aligns itself with both approaches. Theoretically, the analysis follows Laclau and Mouffe in breaking away from a strict discursive/non-discursive dichotomy and the strong realist tendencies that are at the heart of some CDA approaches. Methodologically, on the other hand, it aligns itself with the Critical Discourse Analysis and the historical-discursive approach of Ruth Wodak (2009) in particular, in collating a wide range of data and conducting the micro level analysis of texts as a means to reveal their interaction with the context and macro-level structures whilst, of course, acknowledging the latter's discursive contingency, at least in theory (see section 2.2.b in Chapter 2).

Within this framework, access to data has been unproblematic. Since the investigation used texts that are produced for public consumption, they were accessible through electronic sources and were available online through newspaper websites, leading media archives and other institutional platforms (governmental websites, websites of the political parties, civil society organisations, etc.) When it was not (mostly material from the 1990s), it was consulted upon request at the central reference library (*Atatürk Kültür Merkezi*) in Nicosia. The majority of

¹⁸ A brief discussion is nonetheless provided in (2.2.b),

these texts are produced in Turkish (which this author is fluent) with a small portion of it being English. They were analysed in the original languages they were produced and translated by the author.

1.5. Scope, Limitations and Contribution

The specific focus of the thesis on the politics and discourses of identity in northern Cyprus seeks to provide an original, much-needed contribution to existing academic knowledge on the modern history and politics of Cyprus. Whilst the inter-communal conflict and the ‘Cyprus Problem’ has drawn significant academic attention over the years, there is scant information on the socio-political development of the Turkish-Cypriot community and more so on Turkish ‘settlers’ which is an important aspect of that conflict. When they have been studied at all, it has often been through an anthropological and socio-psychological approach, insufficiently embedded in the political context, or in a language not accessible to the English-speaking world (for exceptions, see Chapter 3). This thesis aims to go some way toward filling this gap by providing extensive empirical findings with regard to Turkish ‘settlers’, Turkish-Cypriots and Turkey during a particularly captivating and important period (1995-2013). Synthesised literature review, official document and news report analysis but, mainly, extensive fieldwork and interviews with central actors of this process in each empirical domain (the print media, civil society and the political parties), seeks to provide new, exclusive and fascinating insights into the framing of immigration and the citizenship rights of Turkish ‘settlers’ in the context of intense contestation over identity during that period.

At the same time, the thesis provides useful conceptual insights for the discussion on identity and immigration that are of comparative value to other case-studies similar to northern Cyprus i.e. in relation to the presence of settlers in unrecognised states or in fact cases in which the context of identity politics resembles that of the identity politics in northern Cyprus involving a kin-state (Romania-Moldova, Crimea-Russia, Abkhazia-Russia, etc.) The study offers an original conceptual framework, combining discourse theory with constructivist strands from two academic (sub-)disciplines: nationalism and immigration studies. Looking at collective/national identity from the cross-section of these academic fields permits a much broader and fuller understanding. It allows for the incorporation of various theoretical approaches (securitization theory and critical approaches to studying nationalism), various levels of analysis (distinguished by various domestic remits or empirical domains) and various qualitative methods (through discourse analysis of official publicly produced texts, news reports and elite interviews). Placing this investigation within the wider discourse-analytical framework can complement existing understanding of many aspects of the political relevance of identity in particularly intriguing migration settings or contexts involving similar conflict dynamics and/or the presence of a kin-state. The current thesis thus offers a particular aspect of the 'Cyprus Problem' but one that points to many 'bigger' stories in Europe and beyond.

Finally, there is a group of issues that lie beyond the scope of this investigation. The 'Cyprus Problem' is addressed here insofar as it relates to the identity politics of the Turkish-Cypriot community, as a discursive frame that structures conceptions of identity and the framing of immigration within it. In this sense, though the relevant sections highlight the trajectory of the

inter-communal fighting and the diplomatic efforts in relation to ending the dispute, the study does not provide an exclusive and/or exhaustive account of the conflict. In a similar vein, the study also does not position itself in the strand of literature that investigates the EU as a 'conflict resolution actor' or an overarching identity narrative for that matter. Rather, the EU and the anticipated Turkish-Cypriot integration into it, is seen here as yet another discursive element that is relevant to the framing of competing identity narratives within the empirical domains and by the domestic actors that are investigated. Lastly, the precise operationalisation of identity within this investigation also precludes an in-depth examination of the latter at the individual (micro) or state (macro) level. Such a process would entail at the very least an ethnographic inquiry informed by psycho-sociological and cognitive insights at the micro level, and/or a different research design to be valid for the level of the state, both of which lie beyond the scope of this investigation. Though very much relevant to such inquiries, the analysis offered in this thesis operates at the domestic (middle-range) level of national parties, civil society and the print media.

1.6. Thesis Overview¹⁹

The thesis is divided into 7 chapters. Following the introductory chapter, Chapter 2 takes up the key concepts which the analysis works with – identity, nationalism, immigration, discourse, articulation and securitization. These key concepts operationalised in the investigation are delineated in relation to existing academic literature before the chapter lays out in detail the

¹⁹ A more detailed analytical plan of the dissertation is provided in section 2.5 of Chapter 2.

conceptual framework, combining discourse theory with constructivist strands from the academic literatures on nationalism and immigration. A set of hypotheses are also introduced to further test the analytical scaffolding in the subsequent empirical chapters.²⁰

Chapter 3 begins by charting the emergence of Turkish-Cypriot identity in a historical context. In this sense, it acts as the link between the conceptual and the empirical parts of the thesis by a) further building the conceptual argument presented in Chapter 2 and b) presenting the dominant discursive contexts that have shaped the main concepts and dynamics under investigation. These include: i) the ‘Cyprus Problem’ ii) *de facto* statehood and non-recognition; iii) bilateral relations with Turkey and iv) EU accession process.

Chapter 4 is the first empirical chapter of the thesis and investigates how and to what extent the mainstream political parties in northern Cyprus have articulated immigration and the citizenship rights of Turkish ‘settlers’ within competing narratives on Turkish-Cypriot identity over the specified timeframe (1995-2013). In other words, it places the ‘settler issue’ at the heart of the identity politics in northern Cyprus and tries to account for continuity and change in the extent to which immigration from mainland Turkey and other closely related issues such as the citizenship status of Turkish ‘settlers’, bilateral relations with Turkey, the ‘Cyprus Problem’ but

²⁰The epistemological issues relating to positivist perspectives and their clear differences with constructivist approaches notwithstanding, the study utilises a set hypotheses (section 2.5 in Chapter 2) to help maintain focus and strengthen the overarching structure of the thesis without presupposing a strong, causal relationship. These hypotheses are based on the theoretical hunches (outlined in Chapter 2) but also preliminary evidence relating to the historical trajectory which rival identity claims have followed (Chapter 3). More specifically, they deal with particular events and processes that connect them in a specific case-study. The investigation nonetheless acknowledges and delineates the complex interaction of ‘causal’ influences and ‘discrepancies’ and corroborates its findings through triangulating its methods and data sets.

also the anticipated EU integration are represented and instrumentalised within party-political rhetoric in relation to identity in northern Cyprus since 1995. Civil society positions on these issue and their articulations in the Turkish-Cypriot newspapers are analysed in detail in Chapters 5 and 6 subsequently. The working hypotheses developed in line with the conceptual framework and introduced in Chapter 2 are tested in all three case-studies by tracing the overall trajectory of identity politics and by examining the crucial discursive shift that occurred in relation to the articulation of the 'settler issue' discourse during the 1990s and again in late 2000s.

Chapter 7 concludes the thesis by recapping the empirical findings, highlighting the original research contributions of the thesis, and considers the bearings of its conclusions on a range of discussions including their possible application to future research.

CHAPTER 2. IDENTITY CONTESTATION AND SETTLER POLITICS IN THEORETICAL CONTEXT

2.1 Introduction

2.2 Collective Identity: A Review of the Literature

2.2.a The social-constructivist paradigm 2.2.b. Discursive approaches

2.3 Connecting Identity and Immigration

2.3.a. Securitization approach

2.4 Collective Identity and the 'settler debate' in northern Cyprus

2.5 The Conceptual Framework

2.6 Conclusion

2.1. Introduction

This chapter introduces the discourse-analytical framework to examine the constitution of collective identities in northern Cyprus in relation to immigration from Turkey. The first section of the chapter (2.2) is concerned primarily with delineating the concept of identity that is operationalised in the remainder of the study. It starts by outlining the modernist insights garnered from the literature on nationalism and national identity with a particular emphasis on the social agents and institutions as the primary drivers of this process. This is followed by a discussion of the more contemporary approaches to the study of collective identity inspired by Discourse Theory (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001) and Critical Discourse Analysis (Wodak, 2001,2009; Fairclough, 2001). The section concludes by clarifying the constructivist position which is adopted towards the study of collective identity throughout the study premised on a contextual understanding of collective identity as *discourse*. The following section (2.3) then looks at identity with regards to immigration, conceptualising how specific articulations of immigration construct and invoke collective identities. More specifically, it accounts for the *symbolic* relationship

between identity and immigration by exploring comparative cases which deploy the ‘securitization approach’ and suggests conceiving immigration as a ‘floating signifier’, open to competing articulations by antagonistic discourses on identity. Sections 2.4 and 2.5 outline the theoretical framework in which the conceptual tools delineated in the previous sections (2.2 and 2.3) are operationalised within the northern Cyprus case. Section 2.4 in particular highlights the *hybrid nature* of Turkish migration in the northern Cyprus context by drawing attention to the strategic/ideological considerations in the deployment of contested ‘settler’ and ‘immigrant’ categories. Section 2.5 then revisits the main research question outlined in Chapter 1 (‘Introduction’) and introduces several working hypotheses based on the analytical framework. The last section of the chapter summarises the conceptual discussion which informs the empirical studies presented in Chapters 3 to 5.

2.2. Collective Identity: A Review of the Literature

Cultural theorist and sociologist Stuart Hall (2000: 2) once described identity as ‘an idea which [...] cannot be thought in the old way, but without which certain key questions cannot be thought at all’. These questions Hall refers to — on the form and shape of identity — have been a central focus of scholars working within disciplines as diverse as political philosophy, sociology, anthropology, social psychology, cultural studies, politics and international relations. The result of this sustained academic engagement with identity is, naturally, a colourful array of stimulating conceptualisations and insightful empirical findings. It is not possible to provide a detailed review of such a vast literature on identity in a brief space as this. This section is therefore limited in its

scope to only briefly highlight the key arguments suggested by seminal works on the subject of national identity and those developed within the nationalism literature in particular. It should be stressed that the picture sketched here is selective and stylised so as to outline a theory of collective identity that will be used for the purposes of this study.

2.2.a. The social-constructivist paradigm

Nationalism and ethnicity literature proves a good starting-point to begin a theoretical survey on collective identity.²¹ Indeed, as others have acknowledged (Fearon and Laitin, 2000: 851), the theoretical paradigm on modernity within the nationalism literature associated with Ernest Gellner (1997), Eric Hobsbawm (2003, 2012), Miroslav Hroch (1985), Benedict Anderson (1991), and others presents the most-developed case study on the social construction of a particularly intriguing type of collective identity; namely, national identity. These scholars, in one way or another, have all rejected the primordialist/essentialist view of nations as historical continuities, arguing instead that the idea of the nation and the notion of national identity became salient only in the modern period as a result of economic and social changes. From this perspective, nations and national identities attached to them are seen as modern *constructs*, forged by elites to achieve various socio-political and economic objectives. Gellner (1997: 7), for example, famously suggested that nationalism was not an ‘awakening of nations to self-consciousness’ but that it invented nations where they did not exist. He also convincingly argued that the nationalist project in most instances sought to facilitate modernity and industrialisation.

²¹ As it will be elaborated further below, collective identity is considered here in relation to social systems. The focus of the research, therefore, is “not individual people, but rather groups, organisations, classes, cultures [...] *people* [emphasis added] who reveal the social system through descriptions” (Frey and Hausser cited in Wodak et al. (2009), p.15)

In a similar vein, Eric Hobsbawm (2012: 1) suggested that nationalist leaders went so far as to *invent* 'national traditions' in order to reproduce nationalist sentiment which implied continuity with the past in order to invoke legitimacy for the present. For Hobsbawm, common national symbols, such as flags, anthems, ceremonies, monuments and statues were all *invented* for the national cause (in some cases quite recently) but are presented as elements of the nation's distant past (Hobsbawm, 2012: 1-2). Furthermore, in cases where the modern nation was formed recently, Hobsbawm asserted that, 'even historic continuity had to be invented, for example, by creating an ancient past beyond effective historic continuity, either by semi-fiction [...] or by forgery' (Hobsbawm, 2012: 7). Hroch (1985) also argued that nationalism arose from the activities of cultural elites seeking histories that constituted the identities of nations. Benedict Anderson (1991) developed these arguments in his *Imagined Communities* with more systematic attention to the role of 'print capitalism' which has not only engaged in history-making but has constituted the nation as a community albeit an *imagined* one. As he put it succinctly: "It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion' (Anderson, 1991: 1).

A notable exception to the constructivist/instrumentalist formulations on nations and national identities has been the work of Anthony D. Smith (2011). While Smith's work has progressively evolved to incorporate some of the constructivist findings, he has nonetheless maintained a middle-ground, 'ethno-symbolist' approach which defines national identity as a product of both natural continuity and conscious manipulation. Natural continuity emanates

from pre-existing ethnic identity and community, or what Smith (2011) has called the 'dominant *ethnie*'; and conscious manipulation is achieved via 'traditions', 'symbols', 'myths' and 'memories' such as myths of 'common origin', memories of 'golden ages', etc. Thus, for Smith (2011: 234): 'national communities [in Europe] were created around one or more dominant ethnies or ethnic categories, which formed the basis of the polity; the intelligentsia frequently made use of biblical and/or classical myths and prototypes [...] and nationalisms in Eastern and Southern Europe frequently looked to the West, especially France and Germany, for their blueprints'. It is important to stress that Smith does not refute the constructedness of nations, national identities or for that matter the so-called *ethnie*. Rather, he claims that *ethnie*, once formed, tends to be exceptionally durable under normal fluctuations, and to persist in the long term. It is nonetheless suggested that Smith in particular and the ethnosymbolist school in general take the existence of "the people" and "collective memories" for granted; as Özkırımlı (2003: 348) has put it: "[...] they never ask the questions 'which people' and 'whose memories'".

Indeed, the key premise of many contemporary, constructivist²² readings of identity and nationalism is that concepts of 'nation' and 'national identity' in particular and that of identity in general confuse more than they illuminate. Building upon the earlier modernist/constructivist approaches, a number of scholars have widely argued that it is *nationalism* that creates and defines nations and our attention should return to more fruitful concepts of *power*, *discourse*

²² Following Crotty, constructivism is defined here as the ontological position which posits that "*all knowledge, and therefore, all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context*" (2003: 42).

and *ideology* (Balibar, 1991; Calhoun, 1993, 1997; Brubaker, 2000; Özkırıklı, 2003; Kaldor, 2004; Malesevic, 2011). Indeed, as Balibar put it (1991: 140): '[...] no nation possesses an ethnic base naturally, but as social formations are nationalized, the populations included within them, divided up among them or dominated by them are ethnicized — that is, represented in the past or in the future as they formed a natural community, possessing of itself an identity of origins, culture and interests which transcends individuals and social conditions'. Calhoun (1997: 30) has further argued that the construction of national identity is 'a self-conscious and manipulative project carried out by elites who seek to secure their power by mobilizing followers on the basis of nationalist ideology'. As Malesevic (2011) has asserted, rather than arguing that national identity requires those who share it to have 'something in common', we need to explore *how* such claims are made and *when* and *why* they publicly resonate:

"National identities" are neither things nor living beings that can impose requirements, make connections or feel threatened. Rather than simply assuming the existence of national identities or using this concept as an explanation of social behaviour, it is crucial to carefully unpack the different and often contradictory processes hidden behind this giant and loose umbrella term (2011: 281).

In a more critical vein, others have suggested that the over-exhausted concept of identity should now be dropped from the analytic terminology altogether (Brubaker and Cooper, 2000). Rogers Brubaker has been at the forefront of the radical call for abandoning the use of identity as an analytical concept. For Brubaker (with Cooper, 2000: 1), the term 'identity' is simply over-stretched: "'Identity" [...] tends to mean too much (when understood in a strong sense), too little (when understood in a weak sense), or nothing at all (because of its sheer ambiguity)". The first part of Brubaker's criticism points out to different uses of identity (heterogeneous meaning

across social sciences) as well as its essentialist/primordial baggage whereas the second part is a more particular charge against what he calls soft/weak conceptions of identity and 'clichéd constructivism' (2000: 11). Constructivist conceptions of identity almost always refer to identity as 'multiple', 'fluctuating', 'constructed', 'negotiated', and so on. These qualifiers, have become so common-place, Brubaker argues, that a) they risk becoming a mere form of lip-service 'to signal a stance' and b) they leave the concept too weak as to be 'incapable of performing serious analytical work' (2000: 11). The pinnacle of Brubaker and Cooper's argument is that the contemporary salience of identity as a 'category of practice' (a term he borrows from Bourdieu, 1990) does not require its use as a 'category of analysis'. This is all the more important, Brubaker argues, if we are to avoid reifying essentialist/primordial beliefs about identity by uncritically adopting categories of practice as categories of analysis.

Brubaker and Cooper's criticism, as they somewhat admit, is perhaps too harsh on constructivist theorising and conceptualisation. After all, it was the constructivist approaches, developed across the disciplines of anthropology, sociology, political science, history and literature, which has discredited the *primordialist* approach (for a detailed review, see Haslam et al., 2000) by showing that identities are constructed, fluid and endogenous to a set of social, economic and political contexts. As Chandra (2001: 1) underlined, it is now virtually impossible to find a social scientist openly defending a primordialist position. Nonetheless, Brubaker's critical exertion is certainly worthy for pointing to the *reification trap* and calling for more vigour in separating analytic from common-sense/popular concepts which is fundamental to any social inquiry (for a critique of Brubaker's position, however, see Csergo, 2008).

This study is broadly sympathetic to Brubaker's caveat except that it suggests altering it in one important sense. Instead of risking 'throwing out the baby with the bathwater' i.e. 'ditching' the concept of identity together with the analytic opportunity of its contextual taxonomy, the study re-conceptualises identity in a more operationalised and embedded way. More specifically, it pegs the notion of collective identity, in the case of northern Cyprus, onto a theory of *discourse* which is produced through competing articulations of 'Turkish settlers' and dispersed by the political parties, civil society organisations and the mass media. To suggest that collective identity be understood as a discourse does not assume *a priori* definition of that category or the attributes attached to it. Instead these definitions are allowed to emerge from specific empirical analyses. It will therefore be suggested that the concept of discourse is central to the sustained critique of identity — and that of national identity in particular — for allowing the multiple, highly complex and power related processes associated with identity construction to be revealed rather than concealed.

2.2.b. Discursive Approaches

Borrowing from various critical perspectives offered by Louis Althusser (*Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*, 1971), Michel Foucault (his *genealogy* and concepts of *discourse*, *knowledge* and *power* developed in *Discipline and Punish*, 1971 and thereafter), Jacques Derrida (the notion of *différance*, 1978) and Pierre Bourdieu (his concept of *habitus*, 1980) several discourse-analytical works have made a significant contribution to our understanding of identity construction/transformation and the ideologies that support these processes. Within this

intellectual tradition, Wodak et al. (2009: 153) have argued that the idea of a 'national community' becomes reality through reification and rhetoric orchestrated by the political elite, intellectuals and the media and circulated through education, mass communication, and other policy regimes. In their influential and aptly-titled work, *The Discursive Construction of National Identity*, these authors employ 'Critical Discourse Analysis' (CDA) developed by the Lancaster School of Sociology and in the writings of Norman Fairclough (Fairclough, 2001, 2005a, 2005b; Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 2010) as their framework for the analysis of Austrian national identity. Their dualist, middle-ground discourse theory distinguishes between discursive and 'non-discursive' dimensions of social practice and assumes a dialectical relationship between them: 'on the one hand, the situational, institutional and social contexts shape and affect discourses; on the other hand, discourses influence social and political reality' (2009: 8). The conception of discourse, adopted by CDA approaches as 'an element of social practice' — often based on the critical-realist social ontology of Fairclough (2005a, 2005b) with greater emphasis on structural dependencies — is usually taken as a point of departure from more post-structuralist approaches such as the Discourse Theory of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe developed in their seminal work *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (2001).

Indeed, it is central to Laclau and Mouffe's approach that *all social practice is discursive*. Their post-Marxist theory of discourse is firmly based on the argument that social world is constituted through the discursive practices that furnish the social as well as the material with a determinate sense of *being*. Laclau and Mouffe have further argued that it is precisely the *discursive* character of social relations and identities, their *unfixity* which allows them to be

contested and modified. Their theory is highly-complex but can (very briefly) be sketched as follows. For Laclau and Mouffe, the specificity of a *discourse* lies in its novel articulation of *signifying elements* from pre-existing discourses, what they have called 'floating signifiers'. Floating signifiers are concepts or political demands that do not have any pre-assigned meanings except traces of past articulations that are not deterministic; their actual meaning, in this sense, depends on their precise definition in a specific historical context. Terms such as 'unity', 'liberation', 'revolution', 'order' and so forth are examples that Laclau uses (1996: 44). For Laclau and Mouffe, political discourses and identities are constituted entirely through *articulation*, which they define as 'any practice establishing a relation among elements [i.e. 'floating signifiers'] such that their identity is modified as a result of the articulatory practice' (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001: 105). An *articulation* consists of the transformative combination of two or more *floating signifiers*.

The political aspect of discourse is further elaborated by reconceiving Gramsci's notion of hegemony for which power and exclusion are essential features. Dominant discourses prevail or hegemonise by marginalising radically different discourses, by naturalising their hierarchies and exclusions (presenting them in the form of 'common sense') and by concealing the traces of their own contingency. Yet, despite this, no hegemony can remain stable. This is because a) a hegemonic discourse cannot assign a permanent meaning onto a 'floating signifier'; and b) because hegemony involves a certain exclusion, there is always an 'outside' in the *field of discursivity* which threatens its stability and reveals the traces of its *contingency*.

This also presupposes the notion of *dislocation* referring to the process whereby a hegemonic/dominant discourse is dislocated and its contingency revealed. Such processes disorientate the already existing identities (or discourses) and induce an identity crisis which, in turn, opens up a discursive space for the constitution of new identities. It is also what will be referred in the remainder of this study as a *critical juncture* (i.e. times when social identities are in a crisis and structures need to be recreated) that subjects are compelled to identify with discourses that seem capable of giving meaning to the symbolic order. At these *critical junctures*, alternative representations or what Laclau calls *myths* emerge to articulate dislocated elements and social demands. When a *myth* or a political project has proved to be successful, it is transformed into a *social imaginary* (Howarth et al., 2000: 16).

Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory is often criticised for overestimating change and the authors are charged with overlooking the structural constraints as they focus on *contingency*. As noted above, this also appears to be the departing point for Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approaches which distinguish more sharply between a contingent (discursive) domain and a structural domain. It is important to note, however, that this distinction between discursive and non-discursive is generally carried out in order to emphasise the 'relatively durable' nature of particular social practices that are themselves originally constituted (Fairclough, 2005: 924). What Laclau and Mouffe insist on, on the other hand, is that all traditions and social practices are, in principle, open to new articulations; as Smith asserts, they certainly do not abandon the analysis of 'asymmetrical social structures [...] tracing traditions, institutionalizations and genealogies' (Smith, A.M., 2012: 106). As she puts it:

[...] their theory [of hegemony] can in fact be used to detect the social structures that, in spite of their incomplete nature, do indeed create specific limits for political practice. From their perspective, we can use contextually-sensitive genealogical studies to suggest that in a specific moment, some forms of identity formation will — thanks to their “family resemblances” with already institutionalized identities — probably offer more compelling interpretative frameworks than others. (2012: 106)

In other words, what Laclau and Mouffe suggest, in fact, is that articulations become more influential insofar as they are *institutionalised*. Laclau and Mouffe’s distinction between ‘structural position’ and ‘subject position’ with regards to identity formation can further redress the structure-related concerns of CDA without resorting to *a priori* categorisation of social phenomena as discursive and non-discursive. Certainly, Laclau and Mouffe do not turn a blind eye to *structural positions*; rather they insist that structural positionings do not determine *subject positions*. For Laclau and Mouffe, it is the discourse-articulated subject positions that provide individuals with (often institutionalised) interpretative frameworks to interpret their structural positionings. Laclau (1990: 16) argues, for example, that an individual’s class structural position becomes coherent for her through some specific and compelling political discourse. It then becomes possible to argue that our structural positionings are discursively constructed. These subject positions tend to imply certain practices and are located in multiple normative systems, although in a non-deterministic sense; in other words, they can become contingent depending on subversive intervention. Laclau and Mouffe further situate the networks of subject positions with respect to hegemonic power relations (Smith, A.M., 2012: 148). Hegemonic discourses construct normative horizons that ‘delineate what is possible, what can be said and done, what positions may legitimately be taken, what actions may be engaged in, and so forth’ (Norval in

Smith, A.M., 2012: 64). In sum, it is the power relations that *structure* and shape what is an 'available' or 'compelling' subject position for individuals.

It is then a matter of interpretation whether CDA approaches really depart from Laclau and Mouffe's intellectual trajectory. In fact, conceptual insights attributed to CDA often overlap with the poststructuralist discourse theory. In addition, Jørgensen and Phillips (2002: 44-60) have shown how insights from other discourse-analytical approaches, such as the CDA, can be methodologically articulated with Laclau and Mouffe's post-structuralist discourse theory. Indeed, the methodological strength of the Critical Discourse Analysis over the more methodologically abstract post-structuralist approach is well-known (see for example, Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002; Dahlberg and Phelan, 2011).

In any case, this brief sketching of the ontological overlap but also the analytical differences between the two discursive-analytical approaches is not to assert one over the other but to clarify the position of this study which aligns itself with both approaches. Theoretically, the analysis follows Laclau and Mouffe in distancing itself from a sharp discursive/non-discursive dichotomy that is at the heart of some CDA approaches. Methodologically, on the other hand, it aligns itself with the Critical Discourse Analysis and the historical-discursive approach of Ruth Wodak (2009) in particular. While this second proposition is dealt in detail under the section on 'Methodology' (1.4 in Chapter 1), the theoretical position which is inspired by Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory in conceptualising national identity as discourse is outlined below.

Firstly, the risk of running into the trap of 'clichéd constructivism' notwithstanding, it has to be stated that collective identities are 'multiple', 'fluctuating' and fragmented'. They are not 'fixed' precisely because they are constructed through competing discourses. Discourse here has to be understood in the broader sense that is not merely as 'linguistic phenomena' but also institutions and practices through which a discursive formation is structured (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001: 109). Consequently, because identities are constructed within and not outside discourse, they have to be seen as produced in specific historical and institutional sites, within specific discursive practices and strategies. (Hall, 2000: 17) This, in return, means thinking of discourse rather than identity and thinking of it in terms of political projects, actors, institutional forms and contingent events. Discourse, then, refers here to concrete systems of meaningful, social practices that form the identities of subjects and objects (Howarth et al., 2000: 6). Their formation, moreover, is a political act related to power, which involves the construction of antagonisms and the drawing of political frontiers between 'insiders' and 'outsiders' (Howarth et al., 2000: 6).

This second proposition draws on the notion of 'other' in suggesting that discursive construction of collective identities is intimately linked with the construction of difference and exclusion. Derrida argued that an identity's constitution is always based on excluding something and establishing a violent hierarchy between the two resultant poles. (Derrida cited in Laclau, 1990: 32) For Hall (2000: 7), too, because identities emerge within the play of specific modalities of power, they are more the product of the marking of difference and exclusion. From this perspective, moreover, identities depend for their 'reality' on processes of exclusion that create

marginalised 'others'. As Hall (2000: 17) has described: '[...] it is only through the relation to the Other, the relation to what it is not, to precisely what it lacks, to what has been called its constitutive outside that the "positive" meaning of any term - and thus its "identity" can be constructed'. Or as Billig puts it (1995: 78): 'there can be no 'us' without "them"'

The concept of the 'other' has been popular in nationalism literature for some time with a wide range of studies focusing on the role of 'other' in the formation, consolidation but also transformation of national identities (Smith, 1998: 13). As Edward Said (1995: 332) has put it: 'Each age and society recreates its "Others"'. Triandafyllidou (1998: 609) has further argued that the presence of 'significant others' influence the development of national identity by means of their 'threatening presence' for example, during nation-formation or during periods of instability which may put the identity of the nation into question. A number of typologies are also available within the literature. Duara (1996), for example, identifies 'internal historical others', 'potential others' and 'hidden others'. Triandafyllidou (1998, 2001), on the other hand, has distinguished between 'external' and 'internal others' and supplements these with subtypes. More recently, Triandafyllidou (2002: 34) has revised her earlier typology by introducing a further category of 'inspiring others' or '[...] the out-group [...] perceived as an object of admiration and esteem, an exemplary case to be imitated, a group with a set of features to be incorporated into the national identity, a higher ground to be reached by the nation'. Triandafyllidou (2002: 35) further suggests that the representation of the 'other' may change in different periods: '[...] they may be initially an inspiring Significant Other and later be perceived as a threat to the ingroup'. Triandafyllidou's

work departs from much of the earlier writings and aligns itself with the argument that identities do not necessarily have to be perceived as 'negative' or 'threatening'.

Indeed, it is important to treat these typologies with care since they may misguide analysis towards attributing essential characteristics to categories and reifying them as concrete groups. It is through these ideal-types that immigrants and ethnic minorities may be treated as internally homogeneous and externally bounded groups of 'internal-negative-others'. These typologies may further preclude discursive-analysis by stopping short at identifying the 'other', and describing what their attributes are. Perhaps the more serious analytical problem, somewhat inherent with these typologies, is that they limit the scope of inquiry by assuming either that i) there can be only one 'other' at any one time; ii) and/or that the same 'other' cannot be both positive and negative simultaneously. The latter assumption is particularly problematic as it may obscure the diverse, ambivalent and often contradictory nature of framing by not recognising that competing identity discourses in some cases may claim positive or negative attributes over the same 'other'. For example, 'immigrants' may be articulated as 'negative others' by a right-wing political party, to be excluded from the national community and even the 'national territory' but a liberal business association may call for better integration (or indeed assimilation) of economic migrants into the 'national community' alongside an 'immigration as economic benefit' discourse. Similarly, the same right-wing political party may distinguish between different immigrant groups by identifying positive 'co-ethnic' migrants and demonising other immigrant groups as 'negative others'. Each of these discourses is a social and political construct that assigns a meaning for the 'other' while providing (subject) positions with which social agents ('the right-

wing party', or the 'liberal business association') can identify. The 'other' in each case may be framed as 'economic migrants (positive)', 'unauthorised/illegal workers (negative)', 'co-ethnic brothers (positive)' and so on. This work will therefore assume that there may be more than one 'other' group at any given time and that the same 'other' may simultaneously be articulated as negative or positive within different identity discourses.

This complexity can be captured by Laclau and Mouffe's concept of a *floating signifier* briefly outlined earlier. A floating-signifier is a concept that is open to re-definition or subversive intervention since it does not carry a fixed meaning. From this perspective, it becomes possible to rethink of '(Immigrant) other(s)' as well as immigration alongside other political concepts as a signifier, an element which belongs to the ongoing struggle between competing identity discourses, available for multiple, alternative articulations. The ways in which immigration and the 'immigrant other(s)' become privileged signs, or a key signifier in the organisation of collective identity discourses is the theme of the following section.

2.3. Connecting Identity and Immigration

Immigration is a highly topical issue in public and political debates across Europe and in North America. While there is variation in the way it is represented in different domestic contexts within Europe and in comparison with the North American cases, a number of similarities and convergences in policy, rhetoric and popular attitudes have increasingly attracted the attention of academics and other observers working on immigration and immigration-related phenomena

(see below for citations). One such feature the prevalent immigration discourses in Europe and in the US and Canada have in common is the omnipresent perception of threat.

In political discourses, immigration is commonly (though not often explicitly) conceptualised as an ‘economic threat’ to the State and the national economy as well as a ‘cultural threat’ to the national identity of the host society. In addition, the notion of ‘terrorist threat’ that was articulated in the aftermath of the attacks in the US in 2001, and in Europe more recently with the attacks in Brussels and France by ISIS, has further consolidated these traditional threat perceptions with a new understanding of immigration as a ‘national security’ concern that ties immigration together with the notions of *defence, control, sovereignty* and *national priorities*. This, in turn, has translated into restrictive immigration policies (stricter entry requirements, advanced surveillance both within and outside the national territory, restrictions on welfare entitlements, re-introduction of ‘assimilationist’ policies, etc.) at the policy level as well as an increasingly militarised presence (military-style border agencies, detention centres, patrols, etc.) at the borders.

In public discourses, too, popular frames and attitudes towards immigration have tended to correspond with the *security* concerns of governments, local politicians and — to borrow from Michel Foucault (1991) — other professionals of *governmentality*. Indeed, the burgeoning literature in social psychology suggests that public opinion across Europe and in the US and Canada toward immigration is largely influenced by anxieties and fears about physical security, ‘well-being’ and national identity. In addition to physical in-security, threat perceptions to

presumed authenticity of the national culture and national identity have been shown to promote ingroup solidarity (Triandafyllidou, 2000) but also ethnocentrism and xenophobia (Tajfel and Turner, 1979; McLaren, 2001; Scheepers et al., 2002; Lahav, 2004; Hjerm and Nagayoshi, 2011).

The notion of *border* is a particularly relevant signifier which articulates immigration within a *securitised context* (see below) and in relation to collective (national) identity. Political actors and governmental figures often use this notion to invoke the symbolic representation of state authority. Once again, the prevailing symbolic power of borders is well-established: as social constructs, they signify a power relationship between the controllers and those who are controlled (Sack, 1986); they are also tied to identity by representing the bond between the nation and the territory in nationalist-mythology (Angus, 1997; Newman and Paasi, 1998). A border is also conceptualised as an institution which allows a state to exercise sovereignty over its territorial/political space (Newman and Paasi, 1998; Anderson, 1996; Kaiser, 2002; Paasi, 2009); Thus, as Geddes (2003: 8) has also argued, it is politically important for the governments to make claims to be able to 'control' their borders and the flow of immigration because these issues are intimately-related to their ability to regulate access to the national territory and therefore an important aspect of their sovereign authority. Arguably, the same applies not only for the governments but to political parties across the political spectrum competing with each other for authority. Indeed, what Derrida (2005: 12) once observed in France now seems relevant for multiple cases across Europe and in North America: 'Both to the Right and to the Left, [French] politicians speak of the control of immigration [...] this forms part of the compulsory rhetoric of electoral programmes'. By the same token, the notion of border links immigration and national

identity to one another by articulating the 'immigrant' as a cultural 'other' who disturbs the identity and the presumed authenticity of the host society by crossing the border. Immigrants are then associated with 'culture(s) of criminality', 'incivilities', and 'alien forms of violence' or even deemed non-compatible with the ways of life, culture and the identity of the society (Ceyhan and Tsoukala, 2002; Carr, 2006; Fekete, 2009).

According to Bigo (2002), the work of the 'political professionals' (i.e. politicians, governmental agencies and departments, authorities such as the police, other internal/external security professionals as well as some NGOs and policy think-tanks) is at the heart of the *securitization of immigration* – the general perception of immigration as a risk/threat, to national security as well as the identity and the well-being of the host society. From this perspective, the relationship between security and immigration is *political* for 'both migration and security are contested concepts and they are used to mobilize political responses not to explain anything' (2002: 71). Bigo has argued that the securitarian discourses on immigration are based on the conception of the State as a 'body' for the polity and the symbolic control over it. The contemporary revival of sovereignty in political debate on immigration is thus suggested to be understood as the deployment of a narrative, 'with the specific purpose of playing with positions of symbolic authority' (2002: 68).

In a similar vein, Huysmans (2000) has described immigration as a *nodal point* in the internal security field. It is a key issue which facilitates the connection between the security practices and the normative and political questioning of immigration. Immigration and the

categories of 'immigrant', 'foreigner' and 'asylum-seeker' are 'politically powerful signifiers with a capacity to connect the internal security logic to the big political questions such as cultural identity' (2000: 761). At the same time, immigration for Huysmans is a meta-issue, or a discursive formation that can be referred to as the cause of many social, economic and political problems. Indeed, it is within this discursive formation that issues such as urban decay, unemployment and crime are reduced to the problem of immigration. Multiple actors involved in the securitization process (national governments, civil society organisations, transnational police networks, etc.) also suggest that social and political agencies use the theme of immigration to articulate a range of political issues in their struggle over power, resources and knowledge (2000: 762).

For Ceyhan and Tsoukala (2002), too, through its presentation in public and political debate as a threat to state security as well as the cohesion of the host society, immigration has become securitised involving new actors and leading to stricter policies and to new surveillance methods. Also inspired by the work of Edelman (1985) on 'symbolic power', Ceyhan and Tsoukala have further argued that the securitization of immigration is articulated through *symbolic politics* involving the deployment of a corpus of semantic creations, discursive strategies and rhetoric. The obvious implication of the process of securitization for immigration, for Ceyhan and Tsoukala, is that securitarian discourses 'demonise' immigration based on the fear of a loss of sovereignty (authority), collective identity and the well-being of the society.

The securitizing practice which takes place over immigration, described so far, is dispersed and developed through the proactive strategies and articulations of the state officials, security

professionals, political parties and other civil society actors for the purposes of attaining power, resources and knowledge. Yet, another aspect of the securitization practice that is worth mentioning here arguably stems from the 'pragmatic' essence of security that takes place within a particular configuration of circumstances, including the context, external objective developments and finally the psycho-cultural disposition of the 'audience' as well as the power this has over the 'securitizing act' (see below). The last point is taken on by Vukov (2003) in calling attention for the psychological climate of insecurity sustained by the 'affective processes' — what she describes as a set of resonances, sensations and intensities (akin to 'moral panics') that circulate socially and accumulate to form a kind of backdrop or climate. Vukov suggests tracing the proliferation of the 'sense of threat' through the media and the news media in particular. More importantly, she has argued that the *affect* generated around immigration in the (Canadian) mass media plays a critical and mobilising role in articulating the popular frames that effectively shape the formation of immigration policy, either through 'mediated panics' or 'celebratory portraits of desirable immigrants' (2003: 336).

In a similar vein, Buonfino (2004) points out that the hegemony of the securitization discourse over other, antagonistic discourse types on immigration ('liberal', 'cosmopolitan' and 'human rights discourses', etc.) is only one possible outcome that can be explained by the 'interplay between public opinion, mass media and national governments' (2004: 48). For Buonfino, fears and concerns within the public sphere that are 'fuelled, reproduced and amplified' by the mass media influence the choices that governments take. As a result, so the argument runs, governing parties and policy-makers make a rational choice in adopting one

discourse type (e.g. *securitization* of migration) over another (e.g. *liberalisation* of migration) in order to comfort and match their electorates' expectations (2000: 37). In other words, the securitised discourse of immigration which aims at containing and controlling the phenomenon is prevalent since it responds well to the public fears of economic competition and of threat of being 'swamped' by foreigners.

While Vukov and Buonfino both rightly point out to the role mass media plays in the construction and articulation of immigration discourses (this is elaborated further in Chapter 6) as well as further highlighting the populist considerations of political parties over such issues as immigration, their emphasis on a perceptive climate and public opinion appears to be based on the notion of an 'audience' that exists prior to and outside discourse together with the possibility of invoking its support. The idea of an audience-centred securitization is also put forward by Balzacq (2005, 2011) in his formulation of the so-called 'pragmatic' theory of securitization. To win an audience, Balzacq has claimed, depends on an objective context rendering the audience more perceptive to its vulnerability. In other words, if times are critical enough, the securitarian discourse put out there 'on the marketplace of ideas', would get the support of the masses (2005: 182). As argued below, however, the notion of a context that is 'outside' discourse is problematic since the utilisation of a securitarian discourse or the 'speech-act' of security itself constitutes the (now already securitised) context. Moreover, it is important to note that what is of interest with regards to public opinion for the purposes of this study is not what the members of the public believe 'as the representation of the public proper' or whether they agree with the

securitarian discourse but for what the public perceptions tell us about that discourse and the political sphere in which it is constituted.

2.3.a. The Securitization Approach

As already indicated above, one of the most important and controversial contributions to critical scholarship on immigration has been the theory of securitization, elaborated in the works of Ole Wæver and Barry Buzan, also known as the Copenhagen School (CS) securitization theory. The novelty of CS securitization theory, in line with other constructivist perspectives, lies in its interpretation of security as a *social construct*. In this view, security does not point towards an objective reality or the existence of a real threat; instead, 'the utterance itself is the act' (Buzan et al., 1998: 26). As Wæver puts it, securitization approach points to the 'inherently political nature of any designation of security issues' (1999: 334). For Wæver and Buzan, the *definition* and *criteria* of securitization is 'the intersubjective establishment of an existential threat with a saliency sufficient to have substantial political effects' (1998: 25). In other words, securitization is a successful *speech-act* through which an understanding is constructed within a political community to treat something (immigration) as an existential threat to a key referent-object (national identity) and to legitimise a call for urgent and exceptional measures to deal with the threat (Buzan and Wæver, 2003: 491). Within the securitization framework, moreover, security is no longer viewed as referring naturally and solely to the physical/military security of the State, the protection of its boundaries, its integrity and its values against dangers out there in the hostile international environment. Instead, the process of designating security issues through successful

speech-acts, that is the process of *securitization*, is analysed to better understand how different referent-objects, national identity for instance, are removed from the realm of 'normal' politics and with what consequences.

In their attempt to broaden the concept of security by introducing the notion of 'societal security', Buzan and Wæver have suggested that societies, defined in terms of identity, could be seen as the referent-object for some cases of securitization in which 'what could be lost is not sovereignty but identity' (1997: 242). As the authors have argued, the two concepts can share the same label of existential threat since: 'for a state, sovereignty defines when a threat is existential, because if a state is no longer sovereign, it is no longer a state; and similarly identity is the defining point regarding existential threats for a society [...]' (1997: 242). Indeed, identity could be a possible object of securitization since it can hold a 'symbolic power' which makes it efficient to invoke and it can take a form which makes securitarian discourse possible i.e. making a claim to survival as well as articulating what non-survival would mean (1997: 243) In other words, within a securitarian discourse, national identity can be linked to immigration by framing the latter as an existential threat to the presumed 'authority', 'authenticity' and 'ways of living' of the host society (Ceyhan and Tsoukala, 2002).

It is important to note here that the Copenhagen School of securitization theory has been subject to various criticisms not least for being somewhat skewed towards a realist, state-centric understanding of security where the state (together with its agencies) is seen as the central-securitizing actor (Doty, 1998; Trombetta 2008). For Trombetta (2008), the Copenhagen School's

understanding of security brings with it a certain way of dealing with a security problem: 'it entails a specific logic or rationality, independent of the context or the intentions of the speakers' (2008: 588). More specifically, Buzan and Wæver's agenda is thus seen as the operationalising of this rationality to other contexts and domains with the implication that such concepts as *societal security* appearing as just another form of 'state security' (Trombetta, 2008). This is especially apparent in the earlier writings of Wæver, insisting on a particular security logic behind securitization: 'When a problem is 'securitized', the act tends to lead to specific ways of addressing it: threat, defence, and often state-centred solutions' (1995: 65). As it will be argued here however, it is inadequate to see security as one-dimensional, confined to a classical, statist logic. The state-centred logic of security, as Wæver and Buzan suggest, may be the prevalent logic which dominates the security field. It is also true that governmental figures (and other power holders) are often the key participants in the social construction of security issues (see for instance Bigo, 2002 but also Huysmans, 2000). However, it is important to stress that through securitization, other logics which characterise different contexts, can be brought into existence and more importantly, new actors can gain relevance. In other words, the state is not the only entity that can label an issue a security problem and state actors are by no means always the only or the most significant actors. In fact, securitization of an issue can be initiated and/or carried forward by a variety of sources including the opposition, civil society or in fact, the mass media. Understood in this broader sense, concepts of *societal security* and *securitization* can then help discern alternative discourses on collective (national) identity and immigration which compete against official articulations as well as highlighting the conditions in which they become securitised, by whom, against what and with what consequences.

This perspective on securitization has the potential to open a broader landscape for analysis. It enables the analysis of discursive dynamics and strategies in the construction of immigration as a security concern by other, non-state actors which can then be linked to a securitised discourse on identity either in terms of state or societal security. By deploying the securitization lens, the analysis can also *deconstruct* (or 'desecuritize') the threat perceptions articulated within securitised discourses by demonstrating the contingent character of their politicisation. This, of course, does not mean that the construction of immigration as a security issue or an 'existential threat' is the only possible articulation of immigration. Rather, the view taken here is that securitization of immigration is only one possible discourse type amongst others but a particular type which is often linked to a securitarian discourse on collective (national) identity. In other words, immigration is conceptualised here as a powerful 'floating signifier', open to competing articulations by antagonistic discourse types but with particular currency for securitised discourses on collective (national) identity.

This argument also raises a number of important questions about how the interplay between immigration and collective (national) identity feeds into the discussions on an equally important concept of citizenship which features prominently in immigration and (national) identity debates. While it is outside the scope of this study to discuss the normative dimension of citizenship in relation to immigration and 'settler' integration (see below, in section 2.4 of this chapter) in the northern Cyprus case, suffice it to say that contested framing of citizenship (policies, laws, rhetoric and institutions) is a *discursive* social practice that constitutes an important aspect of identity politics. Accordingly, the arguments developed in the remainder of

this study is concerned with citizenship as another ‘floating signifier’ or a “communicative achievement” (Bora et al., 2001: 3) which belongs to the ongoing struggle between antagonistic identity discourses. This conceptual perspective adopted here entails a particular emphasis on citizenship as a feature of the wider discussion on collective identity, and its articulation by those political actors in constructing ‘imagined communities’.

2.4. Collective identity and the ‘settler debate’ in northern Cyprus

Immigration literature and the securitization approach that has been further developed within it provides an intriguing account of how immigration and such categories of ‘immigrants’, ‘foreigners’ and ‘asylum-seekers’ become politically powerful signifiers in constituting collective (national) identities. The issue of populations that have relocated into northern Cyprus from Turkey, however, presents a controversy that makes adopting an immigration framework somewhat less straightforward. The particular difficulty stems from the fact that northern Cyprus is regarded in international law as the ‘territories under Turkish occupation’ and just like in other instances of foreign occupation, ‘the colonization of occupied territories’ is a violation of international law (ICRC, 1949). There are also a number of ideological/normative considerations that makes equating settlers with immigrants problematic. In particular, the mechanisms involved in the migration of populations into a contested territory are usually cited as the primary factors which necessitate the analytical distinction between ‘immigrants effectively permitted into an undisputed territory and settlers introduced with the explicit aim of gradually transforming ownership of a contested territory’ (Loizides, 2011: 392). From this perspective,

settlers are seen as part of the colonization process aimed at getting rid of the indigenous population in what is seen as 'virgin or empty land' (Elkins and Pedersen, 2005) and conceived (often with implicit reference to the case of Israeli settlements in the West Bank) as 'a key obstacle to peace' and as 'ultra-nationalists', engaging at times with ideologically led violent terrorism (Hirschhorn, 2015).

Other accounts however, point out to the inherent tension between international law and the human rights of the settlers and their descendants. Political philosopher Joseph Carens (2000), for example, has advanced the idea within his contextual and historical approach to justice (what he aptly calls an 'even-handed' approach) that while the passage of time does not absolve the immoral and unjust consequences of foreign occupation, the 'settler issue' that is the presence of settlers in a contested territory, nonetheless has a humanitarian dimension and that 'it seems problematic to penalize present generations for what their ancestors have done'. Loizides (2011) also takes a similar view in acknowledging the distinctions but also the potential overlaps between the settler and immigrant categories. Crucially, he points out to the essentially *contested nature* of such framing of these populations as 'settlers' or 'immigrants' and the potential consequences of adopting any such frame in consolidating in-group narratives by excluding 'uncomfortable facts' but also 'others'. Hirschhorn also underlines the complex *mélange* of ideological and political outlooks in the case of Israeli settlers in that 'this isn't a group that thinks alike, looks alike or speaks alike anymore and after four decades you have also inter-generational differences on both ideological and tactical issues' (Hirschhorn, 2015).

This study is sympathetic to these important normative concerns in adopting a simple settler vs. immigrant dichotomy, and so wishes to acknowledge the *hybrid nature* of the contested migration in the northern Cyprus context. It also recognises that such categories not only conceal a complex picture but are also fluid themselves within rival accounts of the Cyprus conflict between the Greek and Turkish-Cypriot side and indeed within the latter in relation to competing identity claims.²³ To that extent, it carefully unpacks these categories within their distinct contexts to explore the hegemonic identity projects of different social groups in northern Cyprus. To this end, it fully utilises the insights garnered from the immigration literature outlined above to show how the ‘immigrant’ category that is generally favoured in northern Cyprus is articulated within a range of collective identity claims without any normative predisposition towards a particular account or category. This strategic positioning of the study offers important knowledge about the contested nature of settler-immigration politics in unrecognised states as well as its crucial interplay in the constitution of rival identity claims in these contexts that have not being adequately researched until now.

²³ Indeed, it is an analytically futile attempt to maintain a neat distinction between settlers and immigrants in the context of a frozen conflict as any such attempt carry the potential of disavowing the past injustice and simultaneously distorting the diverse and subjected (i.e. ‘securitised’, see 2.3 in Chapter 2) nature of migration into a territory even though the sovereignty of the territory in question is disputed. As such, they should be appraised together. To this end, the study retains both categories i.e. ‘immigrant’ and ‘settler’ with the latter generally designated for the Turkish nationals holding TRNC citizenship. Though imperfect, this categorisation should not detract from the fact that the primarily focus of the investigation will be the ongoing competition between different ideas about the nature of the migration and the presence of populations from Turkey that are articulated within each of the identity narratives examined further in the subsequent empirical chapters (4, 5 and 6).

2.5. Operationalising the hypotheses

Within the conceptual framework that is adopted towards the study of identity in northern Cyprus, the former is understood as a *discourse*. The basic premise of this approach, as indicated above (section 2.2 in this chapter) is that identities are not tangible or material ‘things’ in reality and cannot impose conditions or feel threatened as such. Rather than simply assuming the existence of collective identities *ipso facto*, this analysis thus aims to carefully unpack the different and often contradictory processes that take place in their constitution. The concept of discourse is introduced as a critical analytical tool precisely to better understand these processes. It suggests that any appeal to identity is a contingent political effect involving the discursive construction of the political community. Discourse here has to be understood in the broader sense that is not merely as ‘linguistic phenomena’ but also institutions, rituals and practices through which a discursive formation is structured (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001: 109). The constitution of an identity discourse, moreover, entails the articulation of ‘floating signifiers’: concepts or political demands that are open to multiple definitions in a historic context.

Given the role of Greek and Turkish nationalisms in leading up to intercommunal strife and ultimately the *de facto* partition of the island in 1974²⁴, the persistence of the Cyprus conflict between the two main communities has important implications for the identity politics of the island (Papadakis, 2003; Psaltis, 2012). In this regard, representations of the past continue to inform identity narratives at the communal level which often construct a certain victimhood and

²⁴ This is discussed at length in section 3.2 of Chapter 3.

a 'national struggle for survival' that sustains prejudice and mistrust toward the other community.²⁵ At the same time, given the history of Greek-Cypriot aspirations for union with Greece (*enosis*) and the existence of an unrecognised state in the form of the TRNC with a rather asymmetrical relationship to Turkey — both on premises of ethnic kinship and also on strategic grounds for supporting the Turkish-Cypriot 'national cause' (as the 'protector') — there exists a certain 'motherland nationalism' which gives emphasis to a primary sense of loyalty to 'national centers' (Turkey and Greece) and identification as Greek or Turkish. There are also various subversive discourses, often related to left-wing political orientations, that aim to resist these superordinate forms of identification with the so-called motherlands and the official narratives of victimhood, promoting instead a Cypriot identity emphasising the local Cypriot traditions and cultural similarity between Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots. Such Cypriot-centric discourses were boosted with the launching of Cyprus's EU accession process in the early 1990s when the latter was initially tied to a federal solution (European Council, 1993) and led to a certain albeit temporary dislocation of hegemonic, exclusionary discourses which were clearly incompatible with such efforts or with the notion of political community such a solution implies (see also Loizides, 2007).

Another important dimension of the Cyprus issue implicated in identity politics is the presence of a large number of individuals of Turkish origin who have moved to Cyprus from Turkey since 1974. While the Greek-Cypriot arguments on the issue are well-known (see section 1.2 in Chapter 1), research on the Turkish-Cypriot positions and perceptions on Turkish

²⁵ For the corresponding Turkish-Cypriot narrative, see section 3.2 in Chapter 3.

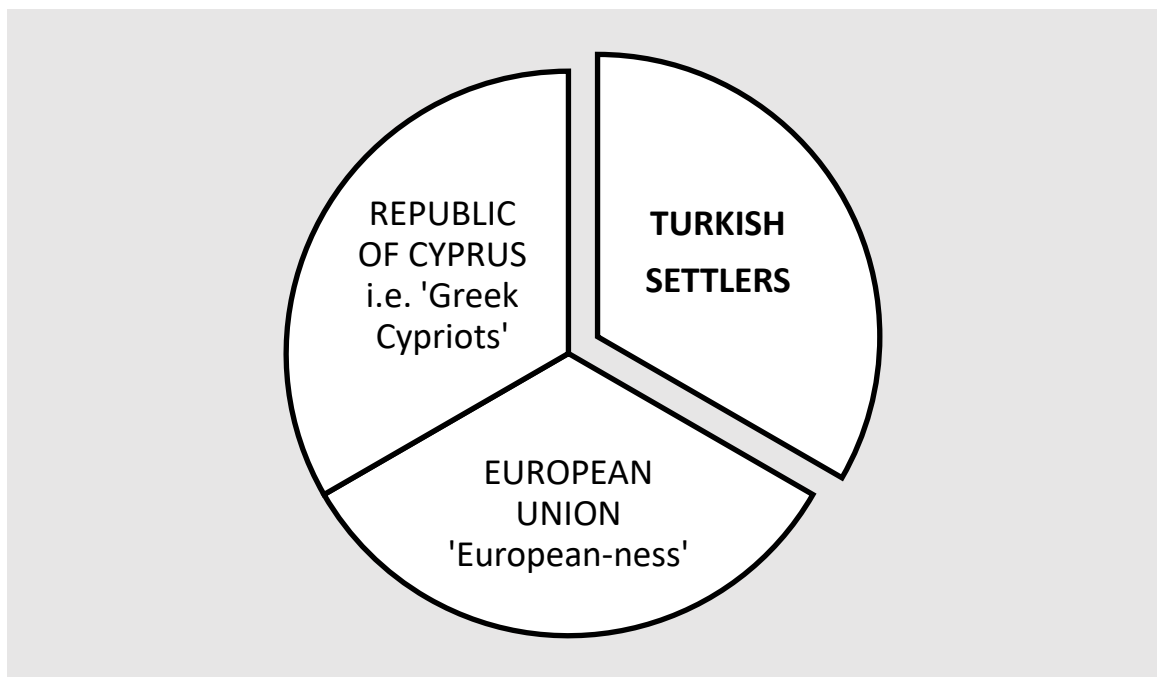
immigrants/settlers — who first arrived as part of a ‘settler recruitment programme’ (see section 3.3 in Chapter 3) — is rather scarce but still reveals important intergroup tensions as well as intense ideological contestation around the national identity of Turkish-Cypriots (Hatay, 2005; Navaro-Yashin, 2006; Psaltis and Chakal, 2016). As Psaltis and Chakal (2016) note, while the Turkish influx created an opportunity for interaction between mainland Turks and Turkish-Cypriots (for the latter, their ethnic kin in Turkey were a mere abstraction before 1974), Turkey’s continued and heavy interference in the Turkish-Cypriot affairs meant the settlers/immigrants are perceived as a threat to the cohesion the Turkish-Cypriot community and with many fearing that ever increasing numbers of immigrants/settlers from Turkey dilute the ‘Cypriot’ character of their identity as well as their community’s autonomy (see also Hatay, 2005).

In northern Cyprus, there are thus various forms of identification and multiple identity signifiers which makes it a challenging task to capture identity politics and the ideological contestation taking place in a culturally and ethnically diverse context. The discursive approaches briefly outlined above and the conceptual framework that is elaborated further below nonetheless aims to overcome some of the ramifications of this complexity by focusing on identity as discourse beyond binary distinctions, that is Greek-Cypriot/Turkish-Cypriot or Turkish-Cypriot/Turkish ‘settler’ etc.

In this sense, while acknowledging that other important identity signifiers do exist in the northern Cyprus case (most notably the indubitable relationship with the Republic of Cyprus and the Greek-Cypriot ‘Other’), immigration from mainland Turkey and the presence of Turkish

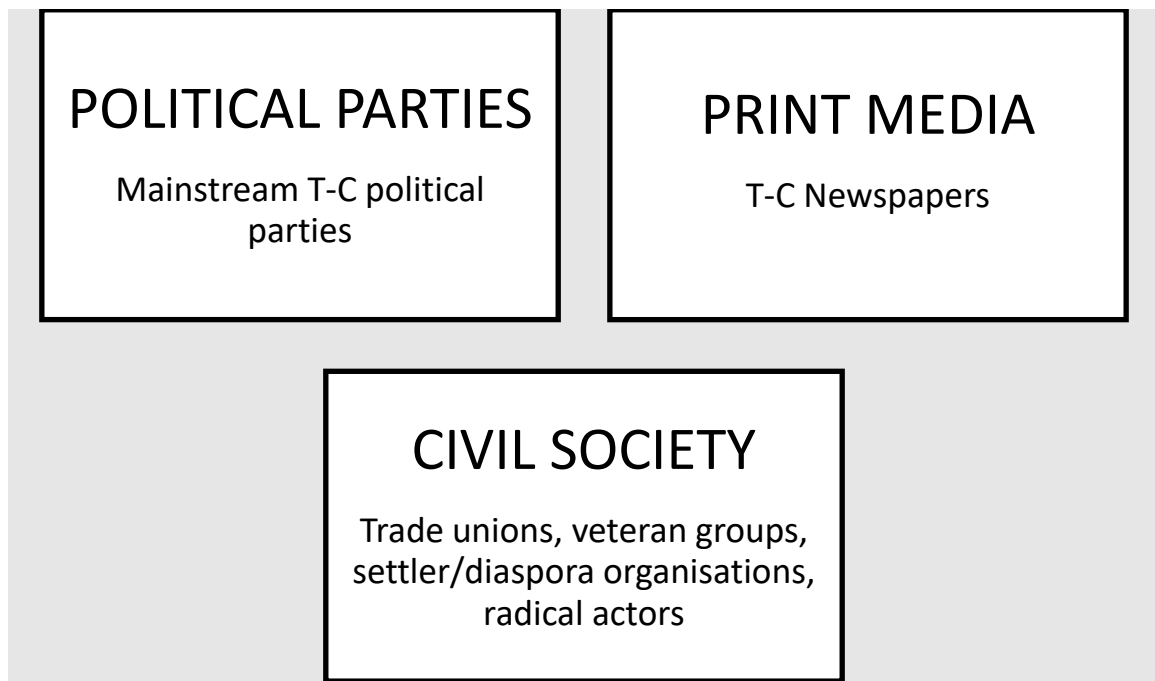
settlers in northern Cyprus, or 'the less known schism of Cyprus' (Christiansen, 2005: 156) is chosen here as the *key signifier* which organises rival accounts of the Turkish-Cypriot identity. This is based on the assumption that the 'settler' issue also influences the inter-communal relations between Turkish-Cypriots and Greek-Cypriots, relations of the Turkish-Cypriot community with Turkey as well as the other related identities including 'Europeanness'. Other main identity signifiers outlined in Fig. 2 are therefore delineated in tandem with the 'settler debate' in the empirical chapters (4,5 and 6) and specific attention is paid within each empirical domain to attitudes toward the Greek-Cypriot community as well as the centrality of the Cyprus issue and the EU integration process within the rival identity discourses, wherein concepts such as 'isolations', 'solution', 'statehood', 'EU integration' and 'justice' are also explored throughout.

Figure 2. Research focus and the main signifiers of Turkish-Cypriot identity



It is argued that competing claims of Turkish-Cypriot identity are made chiefly in relation to the migration and settlement of populations from Turkey and are orchestrated and dispersed by various political actors, the civil society and the print media. From this constructivist perspective, the relationship between Turkish-Cypriot identity and the Turkish immigrants/settlers is enacted in the proactive strategies and articulations of the Turkish-Cypriot political parties, the civil society and the media. This is captured further in the twin notions of 'securitization' and 'societal security' elaborated in the works of the Copenhagen School of securitization theory (see above, section 2.3 in Chapter 2). In this view, security is no longer viewed as referring naturally to the traditional state security problematique. Instead, the process of designating security issues through successful speech-acts, that is the process of securitization, is analysed to better understand how different 'referent-objects', immigration or collective identity for instance, are securitised. A discourse-analytical account of collective identity is provided for all three domains of empirical investigation (Fig.2). These domains have been selected on the theoretical assumption but also preliminary evidence that they represent important sites for the construction of rival identity claims in northern Cyprus. In addition, a particularly relevant argument which is tested is that the securitization of an issue can be initiated and/or carried forward by a variety of sources including the opposition, the civil society (including settler/immigrant organisations) or the media, sometimes in direct conflict with official state positions.

Figure 3. Domains of empirical investigation



In the following chapters, the conceptual framework outlined above is deployed to analyse the emergence and diachronic development of multiple identity discourses in northern Cyprus in the period following the endorsement of Cyprus's accession to join the European Union. As it will be argued below in more detail, Cyprus's accession to the EU presented a critical juncture which led to a disorientation of the hegemonic *Turkishness* discourse and presented a strategic opportunity for the proliferation and legitimation of alternative identity discourses (see below). It is further argued that the inability of the 'EU Project' to integrate northern Cyprus into the European mainstream has resulted in a dislocatory experience which led to a crucial discursive shift in oppositional, pro-EU discourse to transform and reorganise around the issue

of Turkish settlers and opposition against the ‘assimilationist’ immigration and citizenship policies purportedly engineered by the AKP government in Turkey.

More specifically, the study identifies and examines the articulations of identity, immigration and citizenship rights of Turkish migrants/settlers along two antagonistic discourses: a historical version emphasising irredentist ‘motherland nationalism’ characterised by the right and the newer, subversive version of *Cypriotness* discourse, galvanised by the left. The nationalist discourse — fervently advocated by the Turkish-Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash and to a large extent by the right-wing parties that have historically dominated the Turkish-Cypriot administration — does not differentiate a Turkish national from a Turkish-Cypriot. Turkish immigrants/settlers are seen as co-ethnics or ethnic-kins from the historical homeland and Denktash’ often-cited formulation, ‘*A Turk goes, another Turk comes*’ appears to sum up this line of thought which guided official views on national identity, immigration and citizenship for the greater part of the administration’s history. This can be formulated in the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: *Given the local history and in the context of the Cyprus conflict, Turkish-Cypriot identity was cultivated and subsumed within a hegemonic notion of Turkishness that did not distinguish between Turkish-Cypriots and Turkish settlers.*

On the other hand, the gradual strengthening of the nativist *Cypriotness* discourse, which gained momentum with the launching of Cyprus’s accession process in 1995 and reached its apex during the ‘Annan Peace Process’ (2001-2004) to unify the island within the European Union,

appears connected to the somewhat implicit articulation of anxiety in the context of immigration from Turkey and the related fears of changing demographic equilibrium, loss of cultural identity and the erosion of political autonomy as a result of the influx from Turkey which leads to the second hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: *In the context of Cyprus's accession to the EU and the anticipated Turkish-Cypriot integration into the European mainstream, Turkish settlers came to be perceived as a threat to Turkish-Cypriot identity.*

With the failure of the 'Annan Plan' to reunify the island ahead of its EU entry in May 2004 however, the Turkish-Cypriot community was left on the margins of the EU and the pro-EU *Cypriotness* discourse, which brought together large segments of the Turkish-Cypriot society, became disorientated. This is also evident in the return of the nationalist forces (UBP and the DP) into power in 2009 and then again in 2010 with the election of hardliner Derviş Eroğlu as the new Turkish-Cypriot leader.

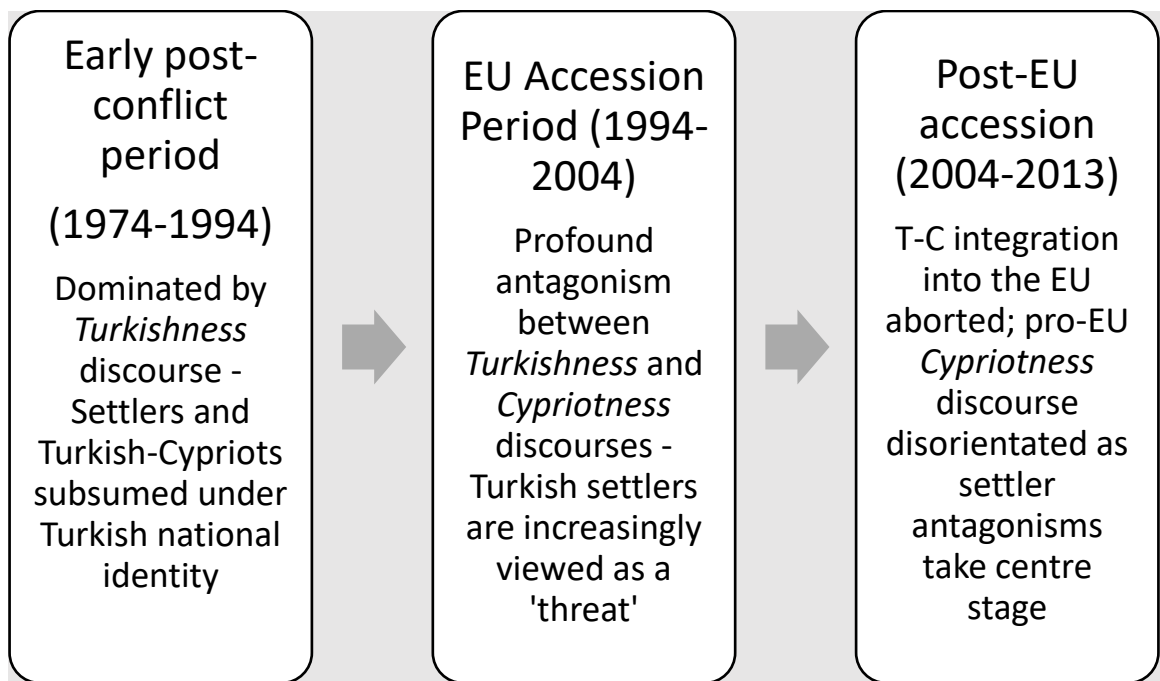
More importantly, this period has also seen a significantly more vocal anti-Turkish rhetoric on the part of the *Cypriotness* camp that has overshadowed its distinct pro-EU stance. Such a discursive shift can be explained by the inability of the 'EU project' itself to consolidate the social imaginary that could structure the post-accession order. In other words, the failed attempt to integrate the Turkish-Cypriot community into the European mainstream obstructed the continuity of the common 'social imaginary' that was represented by the pro-EU camp and

thwarted the emergence of a stable hegemonic formation in Turkish-Cypriot politics during this period. It is argued that the dislocatory experience of the aborted EU-membership has led to a new reconfiguration of the pre-existing elements articulated within the oppositional *Cypriotness* discourse in which settler antagonisms took centre stage. This argument is hypothesised below:

Hypothesis 3: *With the failure of the ‘Annan Plan’, the pro-EU Cypriotness discourse is disorientated and settler antagonisms take centre-stage.*

The transformation of the pro-EU *Cypriotness* discourse into a more radical ‘anti-tutelage’ struggle organised around opposition towards immigration/settlement from mainland Turkey that has occurred during the past two decades is analysed with a view to putting into focus the emergence and changing contours of competing identity discourses in northern Cyprus (Fig.4).

Figure 4. Settler representations – securitizing logic



Chapter 3 begins by charting the emergence of Turkish-Cypriot identity in a historical context. Section 3.1 sets the scene and outlines historic identity and citizenship conceptions covering the period beginning with the start of the British rule (including the 1960-1974 period of Independence) until the *de facto* partition of the island in 1974. Subsequent sections in the chapter, in turn, look at the diachronic impact of immigration/settlement from mainland Turkey on competing identity discourses since 1974. This part of the thesis is chiefly a historical account that provides the backdrop for the discussions presented in the following empirical chapters (4 to 6). In this sense, it acts as the link between the conceptual and the empirical parts of the thesis by a) further building the conceptual argument presented in Chapter 2 and b) presenting the dominant discursive contexts that has shaped the discussions on identity and immigration under investigation. These include: i) the 'Cyprus Problem' ii) *de facto* statehood and non-recognition; iii) bilateral relations with Turkey and iv) EU accession process.

Chapter 4 analyses how and to what extent the mainstream political parties in northern Cyprus have articulated immigration and the issue of Turkish migrants/settlers within competing narratives on Turkish-Cypriot identity over the specified timeframe (1995-2013). In other words, it places the 'settler issue' at the heart of the identity politics in northern Cyprus and tries to account for continuity and change in the extent to which immigration from mainland Turkey and other closely related issues such as the citizenship status of Turkish settlers, bilateral relations with Turkey, the Cyprus Problem and the EU are represented and instrumentalised within established party-political discourses on identity in northern Cyprus since 1994. A further aim of the chapter is to test the working hypotheses posited above (**1**, **2** and **3**) by tracing the overall

trajectory of identity-settler discourses within Turkish-Cypriot party-politics and by examining the crucial discursive shift that occurred within the oppositional *Cypriotness* discourse during the 1990s and again in late 2000s.

Chapter 5 focuses on the civil society positions on the discussions examined in the earlier chapters. Sections 5.1 and 5.2 deal with the nationalist veteran groups and trade unions respectively. Selected participants in this section are considered influential political agents regularly engaged in public and media debates on identity and immigration. Sections 5.3 and 5.4 then look at the 'other side' of the debate by exploring the identity and citizenship conceptions articulated by the settler/diaspora organisations (5.5) and other radical groups promoting counter-cultural agendas (5.6.) in order to shed much-needed light onto this important aspect of the debate that has received limited attention thus far. In this sense, Chapter 5 introduces a multiplicity of actors involved in the constitution of identity and immigration discourses in northern Cyprus. The decision to include civil society articulations in examining political discourses also reflects the broader understanding of the 'political' adopted here which entails not only official or mainstream discourses but semi-official and informal ones. Indeed, discursive acts can be initiated and/or carried forward by a variety of sources, including the civil society, sometimes in direct conflict with official state or mainstream positions. This is particularly relevant for the arguments put forward in **Hypotheses 2 and 3** which posited the dissolution of the hegemonic *Turkishness* discourse and the emergence of alternative political identities. It is also in this chapter that the extent to which discursive/rhetorical acts of some of these civil

society actors can be described as ‘securitizing moves’ and constitute securitised discourses on identity and immigration-settlement is examined.

Chapter 6 examines the role of the Turkish-Cypriot newspapers in constituting and articulating competing identity claims. It is primarily concerned with tracing the diachronic impact of competing identity discourses on the linguistic construction and framing of identity and immigration-settlement in the media narratives. The chapter focuses on three historical framing events (Fig. 2) and delineates the process whereby linguistic, ideological and political strategies adopted by the newspapers and their columnists played a critical and mobilising role in articulating the popular frames that simultaneously shaped the discourses on identity and immigration-settlement. All three hypotheses posited above are further elaborated in this chapter.

Chapter 7 is a concluding chapter that ties together and scrutinises the findings of the empirical chapters. It also takes a step back to reflect on the possible limitations of the study and considers the bearings of its conclusions on a range of discussions involving Cyprus and beyond.

2.6. Conclusion

This chapter introduced a discourse-analytical framework for investigating the impact of immigration-settlement from mainland Turkey on conceptions of collective identity in northern Cyprus. The first part of the chapter (sections 2.2 and 2.3) provided a brief review of the literature

on collective identity and immigration respectively. It looked at the scholarly debate on the constitution of collective identity particularly focusing on the earlier modernist readings on national identity and followed the intellectual trajectory of the constructivist paradigm into the contemporary period, arguing for a contextual understanding of collective identity as *discourse* inspired by the poststructuralist Discourse Theory and the insights offered by the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) school. Important conceptual definitions that underpin the theoretical framework of this thesis such as 'discourse', 'floating signifiers', 'articulation' and 'dislocation' were also provided throughout the discussion. Section 2.3 then looked at the recent immigration literature that has conceived immigration as a *discursive formation*. In this respect, section 2.3 also accounted for the symbolic relationship between identity and immigration by exploring comparative cases which deploy the constructivist 'securitization approach' to suggest immigration to be conceptualised as a powerful 'floating signifier', open to competing articulations by antagonistic discourses on identity.

Having outlined the constructivist paradigm and the discursive approaches developed within it towards the study of collective identity and the theoretical frame of analysis towards immigration, the next part of the chapter (sections 2.4 and 2.5) then turned on to explore their applicability to the case of northern Cyprus. Section 2.4 pointed out to some of the normative considerations in adopting an immigration framework for the purposes of this investigation. In this respect, it highlighted the *hybrid nature* of the migration in the northern Cyprus context and drew attention to the strategic/ideological considerations in the deployment of competing 'settler' and 'immigrant' categories. Based on this utilisation of the identity and immigration

framework, the next section (2.5) then introduced several working hypotheses that are tested in the empirical chapters of this thesis (Chapters 4, 5 and 6). The purpose of the following chapter is to provide a historical account of the emergence of dominant identity narratives which informs the subsequent discussions presented in Chapters 4 to 6.

CHAPTER 3. THE DEVELOPMENT OF SETTLER ANTAGONISMS IN THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT

3.1. Introduction

3.2. Historical Legacies: Early conceptions of Turkishness in colonial Cyprus

3.3. Turkish-Cypriot conceptions of identity after partition: 'Turk comes, another Turk goes?'

3.4. The EU and collective identity in northern Cyprus

3.5. Conclusion

3.1. Introduction

Conceptions of collective identity in the Turkish-Cypriot community are inextricably linked to the recent turbulent history of Cyprus marked by geopolitics, nationalism and a complex legal context. Under Ottoman rule (1571-1878), collective identity was largely based on religious affiliation which distinguished the Muslim population from the Orthodox Christians. With the beginning of the colonial period under Britain (1878) religion remained the primary site of identification for the Muslim community and identity politics mainly evolved around religious appeals for unity against *enosis* or refusal to be incorporated in a Christian/Greek state. The nationalist victory in Turkey and the founding of the Turkish Republic (1923) together with growing Greek nationalism on the island then gradually shifted identity from Islamic forms of belonging towards a Turkish national consciousness.

In the 1950s, Turkish nationalism became a reckonable movement and fought under the banner of TMT (*Türk Mukavemet Teşkilatı*) against Greek-Cypriot *enosis* and ultimately for the partition of the island in order to unify with Turkey (*taksim*). The establishment of an independent, bi-communal Republic in 1960 failed to resolve the violent nationalist conflict

which prepared the ground for the *de facto* partition of the island when large numbers of Turkish-Cypriots retreated into ethnic enclaves (1963-64). Turkish-Cypriot enclavement contributed significantly to the further deterioration of relations between the two communities but most importantly, it consolidated the hegemony of Turkish nationalism. Territorial separation was also fortified with the ideological exclusion of *Cypriotness* from official discourses dominated by a monolithic conception of *Turkishness*. The Turkish-Cypriot community remained under nationalist instigation when the island was partitioned as a result of Turkish military intervention²⁶ and declared separate statehood with the proclamation of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) in 1983 (Fig.5).

The nationalist leadership maintained its control over the community until the early 2000s when it was ousted by a societal movement championing the reunification of the island within the European Union. International non-recognition of the Turkish-Cypriot statehood, limited prospects of its overall viability in the context of international isolations and change in domestic perceptions of Turkey were key to setting the stage for the gradual emergence of alternative political identities from late 1980s onwards that began to gradually challenge predominant notions of *Turkishness*; they would later converge with the 'EU effect' (see below) to produce a dramatic political upheaval in the Turkish-Cypriot community on the eve of Cyprus's EU accession. The political sea-changes that took place within the Turkish-Cypriot community

²⁶ First launched in July 1974, chiefly in reaction to a coup attempt orchestrated by the Junta in Greece to overthrow President Makarios, and again in August that year to 'restore peace', the Turkish military intervention is described as 'peace operation' and 'invasion' in official Turkish-Cypriot and Greek-Cypriot narratives respectively. For analytical clarity, it will be referred throughout the remainder of the study as 'intervention'.

Figure 5. Cyprus map – administrative divisions (CIA, 2017)



during this time were drastically deflated however, when Cyprus acceded into the EU as a still-divided island. The inability of the 'EU Project' to integrate northern Cyprus into the European mainstream has resulted in a dislocatory experience which gradually led to a crucial discursive shift in oppositional, pro-EU discourse to transform and reorganise around the issue of Turkish settlers and opposition against the 'assimilationist' immigration-settlement policies purportedly engineered by the AKP government in Turkey.

The main aim of this chapter is to chart the historical trajectory of these antagonistic conceptions of collective identity in the Turkish-Cypriot community in a structured, historical context before turning to examine more closely the effect of populations migrating from mainland Turkey on such conceptualisations over the selected timeframe in the subsequent chapters (4, 5 & 6). In this sense, the chapter acts as the link between the conceptual and the empirical parts of the thesis by a) further building the conceptual argument presented in chapter 2 and b) presenting the dominant discursive contexts that act as mediating factors for the settler antagonisms under investigation. These include: i) non-recognition and *de facto* statehood ii) bilateral relations with Turkey iii) the Cyprus Problem and iv) EU accession.

The chapter is divided into six sections. The first section (3.2) discusses the specific historical juncture at the beginning of the twentieth century by providing a brief chronological analysis of the spread of Turkish nationalism which rendered *Turkishness* the primary site of collective identity. Key elements of the nationalist discourse which came to constitute and entrench *Turkishness* are also highlighted throughout. The remaining sections in the chapter then

present the diachronic development of other, subversive conceptions of collective identity which began to challenge the hegemonic *Turkishness* discourse. Section 3.3 deals with the period which followed the partition of the island as a result of the Turkish intervention into the early 1990s. The domestic political scene of the Turkish-Cypriot community is presented with a particular focus on immigration from mainland Turkey that became a contentious issue during that time. The next section (3.4) then focuses on the period marked by Cyprus's application for EU membership and its aftermath; developments triggered by the publication of a UN peace plan (the so-called 'Annan Plan') and the post-accession period which is characterised by the ongoing relevance of Turkish settlers for discussions on identity within the Turkish-Cypriot community are also highlighted in this section. Section 3.4 deals with the period 1994-2014 that falls, to a large extent, within the analytical timeframe set for the empirical Chapters 4, 5 and 6. Discussions in these chapters nonetheless depart from the general overview of the introductory section to focus in detail and almost exclusively on distinct spheres of the Turkish-Cypriot identity politics (political parties, civil society and the print media respectively) and how they have contributed to the initiation and reproduction of competing identity narratives over the specified timeframe. Finally, the concluding part of this chapter (3.5) underlines the main themes that are relevant to the subsequent investigation of immigration-settlement from mainland Turkey on conceptions of collective identity in the Turkish-Cypriot community and link this historical review to the conceptual framework developed in the previous chapter (Chapter 2).

3.2. Historical Legacies: Early conceptions of *Turkishness* in colonial Cyprus

A brief survey of the existing scholarly accounts on rival Greek and Turkish nationalisms in Cyprus reveals that the latter, in comparison with the chronological development of a Hellenocentric consciousness among the island's Orthodox community, flourished much later – gaining significant mainstream exposure only at the turn of the twentieth century (Attalides, 1979; Pollis, 1973, 1996; Kitromilides, 1990; Kızılyürek, 2002; Morag, 2004; and Nevzat, 2005). Certainly, as Nevzat (2005) has recently shown, there were early signs of a certain nationalist sentiment that was promoted by the elite and intellectuals in the late nineteenth century onwards. However, as he also concedes, this sentiment was largely based on loyalty to the Ottoman state and the Muslim identity attached to it (Nevzat, 2005).

Another important premise that is highlighted more specifically by the literature on Turkish nationalism is that the spread of Turkish nationalist sentiment in Cyprus was both a product of domestic and external circumstances. With regards to the external dimension of *Turkishness*, the creation of the new Kemalist Republic in Turkey in 1923 was the ultimate event that would enable the fostering of a Turkish identity. Yet, even before the actual emergence of *Turkishness* as the official ideology of the Kemalist Republic in Turkey, the Muslim elite in Cyprus had begun promoting nationalist views largely in reaction to Greek-Cypriot campaign of *enosis*. Encapsulating the idea of Cyprus's union with Greece, the goal of *enosis* laid at the heart of Cypriot Muslims' fears over their autonomy as a religious community. And in the following

decades, it would gradually galvanise these anxieties into stronger national identification with *Turkishness*.

Before proceeding with the analysis of these external but also internal factors which progressively transformed the Ottoman-Muslim community into the 'Turkish community of Cyprus' by the mid-twentieth century, it is important to briefly outline some of the legacies of the Ottoman era in terms of the administrative setting and ethno-cultural cleavages and in comparison with the political setting under British rule. As it will be shown below, these legacies display intriguing continuities and overlaps in the constitution of collective identities later on.

During the Ottoman rule, the Muslim *millet* of Cyprus was given clear privileges in the administration of the state.²⁷ As Navaro-Yashin remarked: 'if anything differentiated "Muslim" from "non-Muslim" subjects of the Ottoman Empire, it was the easier access of the former (sometimes through conversion to Islam) to political (i.e. state and military) power' (2008: 111). Indeed, the most explicit of such privileges and the one which indicated the island's Muslims belonged to the ruling group was the exclusive right to military service and to bear arms (Attalides, 1979: 38). In this respect, the Muslim political elite opposed any increase in political power of the numerically superior Orthodox Cypriots and rejected demands to extend citizenship privileges to non-Muslims. Muslim religious authorities also regularly appealed to their congregations on the basis of a threat to Islam posed by the strong Orthodox Church or the possible political equality of the Christians (Nevzat, 2005). With the start of the British colonial

²⁷ For a recent discussion of the Ottoman *millet* system, see, Stamatopoulos (2006)

rule in 1878 however, the privileged position Muslims enjoyed under Ottoman rule ended and the traditional *millet* system characterised by religious autonomy was replaced with a centralised state.²⁸

The British colonial period also marked a new era of communal representation which was to further intensify the *enosis*-related anxieties of the Muslim elites. More specifically, the Muslim elite which had enjoyed a privileged/ruling status under the Ottomans feared that a proportionally elected 'Legislative Council' introduced by the colonial administration would pave the way for independence and ultimately *enosis*. Such prospects of 'Greek-rule', for the Muslim community, translated into their exodus from Cyprus.²⁹ An important reference point for such Muslim anxieties, in this respect, was the former Ottoman territories of Thessaly (*Thessalía*) and

²⁸ Others have also accused Britain of initiating the process of 'ethnicisation' and recasting of religious identities thus contributing to the rise of ethno-nationalism (Pollis, 1996; Morag, 2004). Pollis, for example, has argued that it was the colonial administration which introduced structures "designed to pit the two communities against each other" (p.76). While Pollis' starting-point, that there was 'no preordained necessity and inevitability leading to the existence of two nationalities on Cyprus' is certainly commendable, her tentative assertion that it was the British who intentionally created interethnic cleavages *ipso facto* is too simplistic an argument to claim. In fact, as Peristianis (2008, p. 439) has argued, 'the roots of the problem were there long before the British arrived' since the Greek nationalism had been on the rise since 1830s.

²⁹ The following Memorandum which was sent to British Secretary of State Lord Kimberley by the Muslim members of the Legislative Council in 1882 after the announcement of a new constitution to introduce proportional representation in the Council is particularly revealing of earlier Muslim elite positions on the status of their community, its relations with the Greek/Orthodox Cypriot community and as well as its attitudes towards the Colonial administration and is quoted at length below: 'Our forefathers occupied this land more than three hundred years ago comfortably with the established rules respected by all nations, leavening and dyeing its soil with their own blood and sacrificing their lives even for a handful of its earth [...] ever since that time we have been the ruling element; [...] while at the time of the change of the administration of the island we knew we were losing a Government of our own faith, we willingly submitted to Her Britannic Majesty's Rule [...] it is proposed that the Greek-Cypriot community whose thoughts and intentions of oppressing and vexing us are made manifest under all circumstances, and in every one of their acts, who have constantly made all sorts of complaints[...] and whose endless cries of 'We want the Hellenic Government for our rulers' [...] should all at once be granted a privilege [of proportional representation] The Legislative Council, which is hereafter the basis of the administration of the island, will ultimately become a prelude to the independence which is the motto constantly repeated by our Christian compatriots[...] the franchise in question [...] if enforced, will absolutely compel us all to leave the island for some other place.' (cited in Hill,1952: 97-99).

of course, Crete which had now become part of the Greek state.³⁰ Muslim grievances in former Ottoman territories was also a bone of contention between the Muslim and Orthodox members of the Legislative Council (Samani, 2011: 46). From then on, the Muslim elite regularly expressed these anxieties in frequent protests. It is also within this context that the annexation³¹ of Cyprus by Britain in 1914 was tentatively welcomed by the leaders of the Muslim community since the elite believed that it would derail the establishment of a protectorate and potential handing of the island to Greece.³²

With the start of the ‘Turkish War of Liberation’ (1919), the nationalist sentiment would converge with such anxieties to leave its mark on the Muslim community. In this sense, pro-Kemalist coverage of the war by influential Turkish-Cypriot newspapers and magazines were instrumental in the amplification of nationalist sentiment amongst the Muslim community (Nevzat, 2005). Public affection created around the ‘Turkish War of Liberation’ was also displayed in several high-profile rallies. In particular, the military victory in Izmir (*Smyrna*) on 9 September

³⁰ It is important to note here, that Cretan War was fought in 1897 and it is only in the years following the war that it entered the nationalist discourse as a reference point. As Bryant (2004, p.98) has further stressed, the commotion Cretan war caused in Cyprus at the time it broke out was limited to ‘isolated coffee house fights, much the way a football match may cause today’. Nevertheless, Crete would become an important reference point for Turkish nationalism in the years ahead and nationalist leaders such as Rauf Denktaş would regularly point to the ‘massacres’ of Muslims in Crete by that island’s Greeks as proof of the prospects that awaited Turkish-Cypriots were they not to resist the Greek-Cypriots’ struggle for *enosis*. (Denktaş, 2005).

³¹ Cyprus became a British protectorate in 1878 although it remained under Ottoman sovereignty until 1914. The island was then annexed by Britain in 1914 following the Ottoman Empire’s decision to declare war against Britain and the other *entente* powers.

³² For the Cypriot Muslims, there was thus an ‘imminent danger’ from the side of the Greek-Cypriot nationalists who agitated for *enosis*, and rekindled hope from the side of the colonial administrators who, having now annexed the island officially, could act as a buffer against Greek-Cypriot national aims. Fears of *enosis* would thus intensify again in 1915 when Britain offered to hand Cyprus to Greece on condition that the latter sided with the Allies in Serbia. Due to the pro-German attitude of the King Constantine, however, the offer was not taken up and never renewed (Crawshaw, 1978: 25).

1922 caused considerable excitement amongst the Turkish-Cypriot community followed by a large gathering in capital Nicosia to celebrate the events (Ateşin, 1999: 20). Indeed, as Dr Fazil Kuchuk who would later serve as the Vice-President for the Republic recalled: 'At the end of that gathering, people decided to support Ataturk without reservation and celebrate all his victories from then on' (Ateşin, 1999: 20). The Muslim elite was now in the process of elevating the *Turkishness* discourse as the primary form of identification.

By the late 1920s, advances in education also meant that Muslim children attended segregated schools and taught Turkish *curricula* which further cultivated ideas of *Turkishness*. While the colonial authorities tried to curb these tendencies, their efforts were largely dismissed by nationalist schoolteachers who were educated in and brought directly from Turkey.³³ Perhaps more remarkably, the influence of the nationalist schoolteachers in most cases, went beyond the confines of the classroom. While pupils were taught nationalist ideas by their teachers during classes, the latter would also indoctrinate the coffee-shop congregations by reading them nationalist/patriotic articles (Nevzat, 2005). As Kızılyürek (2002) and others have also pointed out, when the British did try to play a more intrusive and direct role in the educational affairs of the community, especially in the late 1920s and following the 1931 'October Revolt'³⁴ their

³³Indeed, despite official restrictions introduced by the British following the 1931 October Revolt (see below), school teachers in Turkish schools were to continue disseminating nationalist discourse in secret. As Dr Kuchuk recalled: 'Turkish teachers would get hold of books, secretly and at their own expense, [...] and read these to their students during class' (Kuchuk, 2010: 205).

³⁴ This was an island-wide revolt, largely motivated by economic reasons against the background of the Great Depression that led to the burning down of the British Governor's Residence in Nicosia. In the aftermath of the revolt, the colonial authorities abolished all representative institutions and repressive measures were introduced.

efforts only provoked further nationalist sentiment.³⁵ The ideology and reforms of the Kemalist Republic were also progressively adopted in Cyprus to foster the growth of the Turkish nationalist sentiment. Such revolutionary reforms to replace Arabic with the Latin alphabet and adopt western attire (abandoning the *fez* and the *niqab*³⁶) were closely followed and widely introduced.³⁷ Turkish national commemorations also began to be enacted in Cyprus, becoming semi-official occasions that celebrated *Turkishness*.

Last but not least, the rise of nationalist sentiment during the 1920s championing *Turkishness* soon began taking hold in the ranks of the Turkish leadership. Since the start of the British rule, Cypriot Muslims had been represented by the conservative, loyalist elements of their community. The leading conservative politician İrfan Bey, for example, had served in various high ranks (as delegate of the *Evkaf*, member of the Legislative Council but also as the member of the Executive Council) and remained a loyalist until his death. He was replaced by Sir Münir (the first ever Turkish-Cypriot to be knighted for his loyalty, see appendix 2) in October 1925. While İrfan, and then Münir did oppose the spread of Turkish nationalism, they were soon challenged and eventually defeated by the so-called ‘populists’ (*halkçılar*) led by Necati Özkan and Mehmet Zeka who were to rise from 1930s onwards on a Turkish nationalist platform (Nevzat, 2005; Evre, 2004).

³⁵ Thus, for example, the British decision to change the name of the ‘Turkish Lycée’ in Nicosia to ‘Islam Lycée’ causing a public outcry, see Kizilyurek (2002).

³⁶ Niqab is a full body cloak that leaves the area around the eyes clear

³⁷ Nonetheless, it would be incorrect to claim there was no dissent amongst the Turkish-Cypriots towards these reforms. For a particularly revealing incident involving hostility towards a Kemalist teacher in 1924, see Atesin (1990, pp.30-31)

As mentioned earlier, while Turkish nationalism in Cyprus was to an important extent characterised by kin-state nationalism, inspired by the nationalist developments in the Turkish mainland, yet it also had its own specific characteristics and conditions which instigated, sustained and at times, magnified nationalist sentiment. Of these domestic factors, the long-term economic prospects of the Turkish-Cypriot community, rapid and large-scale emigration but also the prospects of communism — all perceived as threats to the very survival of the Turkish community in the face of *enosis* — were particularly instrumental in the articulation of the early *Turkishness* discourse in Cyprus. The framing of ‘economic backwardness’ as an existential threat had already begun gaining sway among the Muslim intellectuals at the end of the nineteenth century (An, 2006). The argument advanced here was that economic prosperity was not only a goal in-itself but would provide the Muslim community with the means they desperately needed in order to maintain their cultural identity and reassert their autonomy against the economically superior Greek/Orthodox community. By the 1920s, numerous articles and editorials appeared on Turkish newspapers on a regular basis lamenting the Muslim dependence on Greek businesses, presenting such economic reliance as an existential threat; the idea of economic segregation, namely that Turks should exclusively support fellow Turks, a policy that was formally put in practice in the 1950s (see below) was also being advanced during this time. In addition, the leading business elite began appealing for assistance from Turkey to support the community’s economic development not only through direct involvement such as by establishing a commercial/national bank that would provide ‘Turkish businesses’ with much-needed credit and encourage investment but also by ‘[sending] *immigrants to boost the population*’ (An, 2006: 166). Indeed, by the 1950s, nationalist instigators were championing the idea that economic well-being

of the Turkish population, hence their very survival as a 'national community', depended on assistance from Turkey.³⁸

A second discursive element which came to be embedded in the Turkish nationalist discourse in this period was related to demographic fears caused by intensified Muslim/Turkish emigration from the island. The flow of emigration from Cyprus to Turkey, mainly for economic reasons (as a result of successive droughts and the Great Depression in particular) but also on ideological/nationalist motives, began in the aftermath of the First World War and continued at varying intensities until the Second World War. It was also facilitated by the decision of the Turkish government after the 'Lausanne Agreement'³⁹ in 1923 to extend citizenship rights to those Turkish-Cypriots who wished to settle in Turkey. This was a cause of great concern for some Turkish nationalists alarmed by the prospects of a numerically diminished Turkish community in the face of *enosis*; some even argued that emigration, by weakening Turkish presence on the island, ultimately served Greek-Cypriot national aims (Nevzat, 2005). In any case, many continued to migrate to Turkey in subsequent years, further fuelling Turkish-Cypriot demographic anxieties.⁴⁰

³⁸ By this time the nationalist leadership had put in place a policy of self-imposed economic segregation on part of the Turkish community (09 July 1958). This was followed by the creation of a separate Turkish-Cypriot Chamber of Commerce (*Kıbrıs Türk Ticaret Odası*) on 18 October 1958 chiefly aimed at organising Turkish businessmen and mobilizing support to facilitate what became known as the 'Buy Turkish' (*Türk'ten Türk'e*) campaign (An, 2006: 233).

³⁹ The 1923 Treaty of Lausanne, signed between Turkey on one side and the Allies (Britain, France, Italy, Japan, Greece, Romania and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes) established the boundaries of the modern Turkish state, removing Turkish claims to its Arab provinces and upholding the British possession of Cyprus.

⁴⁰ An article published in July 1957, in *Halkın Sesi*, entitled 'Population of Cyprus and the Office of National Statistics' reflected such anxieties. In it, *Halkın Sesi* argued that the population figures of a 1947 Census giving the total number of Turkish-Cypriots as 92,642 was simply false since the number surely was 'above the 120,000 mark' though failing to substantiate this assertion (An, 2006: 228). Another article published in *Hursoz* shortly after tried to back such claims that the census data was inaccurate on the grounds that only those Turkish-Cypriots who had in their possession valid identification documents were counted (An, 2006: 229).

Yet another factor which did worry Turkish nationalists was the possibility of Greece (and later, Cyprus) becoming communist especially following the break out of the Greek Civil War in 1946. As Nevzat (2005) has noted, this was an alarming prospect for a community with a religious-conservative leadership since Cyprus also had a small but well-organised communist movement. First institutionalised under the banner of the Communist Party of Cyprus (KKK, or *Koumounistiko Komma Kyprou*), the pan-Cypriot communist movement was manifestly pro-independence and championed the idea of an independent, socialist Cyprus that would eventually join the ‘Balkan Communist Federation’ (Peristianis, 2008). In this sense, the movement was also anti-national; it thus took a stand against *enosis* which it considered ‘a goal promoted by bourgeoisie nationalist politicians, supported by the capitalist class of mainland Greece’ (Peristianis, 2008: 148). Whilst such radical ideas did initially stoke up anti-communist anger on part of the British and the Greek Orthodox Church and fear on part of the Muslim/Turkish-Cypriot community, the latter was further agitated when the Communist movement dropped its commitment to independence and began siding with the idea of *enosis*. Furthermore, as Plutis Servas who had served as the leader of both KKK and AKEL recognised, latter’s decision in 1946 to use the slogan ‘Self-government – Enosis’ would inevitably alienate many Turkish-Cypriots from the movement (1999: 119).

Faced with such prospects of imminent *enosis*, Turkish-Cypriot nationalists began organising politically.⁴¹ In the 1940s when Greek nationalist agitation was nearing its peak,

⁴¹ First, in 1943, the ‘Cyprus Turkish Minority’s Association’ (*Kıbrıs Adası Türk Azınlıklar Kurumu*, or KATAK) was established. Among the leading members of KATAK were political rivals Dr Kuchuk and Necati Özkan. Özkan was later side-lined by a clique and in 1945 he left KATAK to later organise the *Istiklal* Party. Dr Kuchuk also parted ways with KATAK to establish the ‘Cyprus Turkish National Union Party’ (*Kıbrıs Türk Milli Birlik Partisi*). By 1947, the ‘National Union Party’ declared its preference for British rule in order to protect the Turkish community from ‘Greek

Turkish nationalism strengthened in response. About that time Turkish-Cypriots began to be mobilized *en masse* in demonstrations to express opposition to *enosis*.⁴² This period also marked the direct involvement of the Turkish government in organizing the nationalists in Cyprus. The 'Cyprus is Turkish' party was first to appear on the scene and was established with the help of a Turkish undercover assignee Hikmet Bil (Kızılyürek, 2002). Turkey also provided financial and logistical aid for the organisation of a Turkish-Cypriot underground organisation *Volkan*, which would later be replaced by the paramilitary 'Turkish Resistance Organisation' or the TMT (*Türk Mukavemet Teşkilatı*).⁴³

The TMT existed as the Turkish counterpart of EOKA (National Organisation of Cypriot Fighters or *Ethniki Organosis Kyprion Agoniston*). As Attalides (1979: 48) put it succinctly, it was 'just as nationalist and anti-communist but not anti-British'. Through a toxic combination of propaganda, intimidation and terror⁴⁴, TMT served as a critical instrument that would prop and

atrocities' faced by other Turkish populations who now lived under Greek 'occupation' (and, under perpetual fear) and asserted that it would strongly oppose any efforts to introduce self-government. It also added that if the British left Cyprus the island had to be retorted back to Turkey (Kuchuk, 2010: 322). In July 1955, 'Cyprus is Turkish' (*Kıbrıs Türktür Partisi*) party was established. Two years later, on 26 May 1957, the party proclaimed itself the sole representative of the Turkish community and adopted the policy of *taksim*, i.e. territorial separation, as 'the only viable solution to the Cyprus issue' (Kuchuk, 2010: 379).

⁴² See also appendix 2; from one such anti-*enosis* rally, a telegram was sent to the Turkish Prime Minister, Hasan Saka, saying: 'Fifteen thousand Turks [total number of those said to have attended the rally] unanimously declared their refusal to bow to Greek demands for self-rule and ultimately union of Cyprus with Greece. They believe that self-rule or *enosis* will bring about the annihilation of Turkish minority' (cited in Attalides, 1979: 46).

⁴³ In an interview he gave in 1971, Dr Kuchuk who founded the party would also stress that it was in 1955 that the Turkish-Cypriot community began organising politically: 'Although the nucleus of the first Turkish-Cypriot political party was organised in 1942, it was not until 1955 that the Turkish-Cypriot community became politically active. Within the next three years, a community political structure was developed as result not only of effort of Turkish-Cypriot leaders to oppose *enosis*, but also of encouragement from British and Turkish officials who were seeking to safeguard their countries' strategic interests' (cited in Attalides, 1979: 46).

⁴⁴ As An describes: 'in its first proclamation, on November 2, 1957, TMT gave the first command to the Turkish-Cypriots concerning total obedience to the orders of the organisation and announced the following: in this struggle there may be – though we do not wish to believe such a thing – traitors. In such a case their extermination will be

sustain the hegemony of *Turkishness* during this time. In this sense, it was also the TMT leadership that would deliver the fatal blow to efforts aimed at constructing an overarching *Cypriotness* discourse by pronouncing the Cypriot communist movement ‘the archenemy of the Turkish nation’.⁴⁵

While the TMT used nationalist propaganda, intimidation and violence to soon hold control of the Turkish-Cypriot community, it was also greatly assisted by the inter-communal strife which broke out with the beginning of the Greek-Cypriot armed struggle for *enosis*. When violence escalated in December 1963,⁴⁶ Turkish-Cypriot fears were reinforced and a large majority of the Turkish-Cypriot population retreated into barricaded ethnic enclaves.⁴⁷ The so-called ‘Enclave Period’ saw the island *de facto* partitioned into Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot areas — each with its own polity and social structure.⁴⁸ The government of the Republic, now led

unavoidable’ (cited in Yennaris, 2003: 125). Hikmet Afif Mapolar, a prominent Turkish-Cypriot journalist also recalled in his memoirs that many Turkish-Cypriots fearing for their lives had been forced to place ads on newspapers to denounce any participation in left-wing activity and declare their alliance and devotion to Turkish nationalism and TMT leadership (Mapolar, 2002).

⁴⁵ TMT’s rhetoric also indicated that Turkish-Cypriot participation in bi-communal, left-wing activities was rendered tantamount to treason, punishable by death. In the following years, nationalist attacks on Turkish-Cypriot trade unionists and AKEL members would cut-off the few remaining Turkish-Cypriot links with this movement. By the end of TMT’s anti-communist campaign, the bi-communal workers’ movement was totally dismantled. Ordinary Turkish-Cypriots engaged in other bi-communal activities were also intimidated by TMT militants for committing ‘treason’.

⁴⁶ In November 1963, the Vice President of the Republic, Dr Kuchuk was presented with the infamous ‘Thirteen Points’, proposals tabled by President Makarios for wide-ranging constitutional changes to overcome the political gridlock over key legislation on municipalities and taxation. These proposals included the scrapping of veto powers for both the President and Vice President, abolition of separate municipalities and the modification of the ratio of Greeks to Turks in the civil service (3:1) with a population ratio (Morag, 2004: 618). The Turkish-Cypriot leadership regarded the proposals as an attempt to strip-away their communal rights and rejected them outright.

⁴⁷ As Hatay and Bryant has noted, the first conflict-related displacement took place in 1958 with most inhabitants returning to their homes when independence was declared in 1960. By mid-1960s however, some 90 percent of the Turkish-Cypriot population lived in these enclaves (2011: 634).

⁴⁸ During the ‘Enclave Period’, Turkish-Cypriot leadership promptly set up a self-governing entity, or a ‘state within a state’ to meet the needs of the displaced and organise other aspects of the enclave life. A ‘General Council’ was established to oversee the administration of the new entity, though its role was quickly overshadowed by TMT’s paramilitary mechanisms. On 27 December 1967, the enclaved areas were declared to be the ‘Cyprus Temporary

solely by the Greek-Cypriot community imposed an embargo on the ethnic enclaves and suspended its own jurisdiction beyond the areas under its effective control. This, in effect, would increase Turkish-Cypriot dependence on mainland Turkish assistance for its long-term viability. Indeed, Turkey's financial aid officially started in 1964, initially to pay public-sector salaries (including salaries of those civil servants who had been employed by the RoC before December 1963 (see, Hatay 2005) but intensified in the following years to wholly sustain and prop-up the Turkish-Cypriot economy (see, Chapter 4).

Needless to say, Turkish-Cypriot enclavement also contributed significantly to the further deterioration of relations between the two communities. During this period, most Turkish-Cypriots had no contact with Greek-Cypriots and *vice versa* which allowed each side to consolidate their own conflict narratives.⁴⁹ For the Turkish-Cypriot community, the unique conditions of their enclaved lives also led to an amplification of national unity. Many Turkish-Cypriots came to believe that they were targeted by Greek-Cypriots indiscriminately, and it was because of mortal fear they were crammed into camps, forced to live under 'economic siege' and came to depend on mainland Turkish military and economic tutelage. In other words, their enclaved lives were determined by the fact of their *Turkishness*, perceived as an endangered

Turkish Administration' (*Kıbrıs Geçici Türk Yönetimi*). This was set up with the aim of bringing together legislative, administrative and judicial functions of the Turkish-Cypriot entity 'under one roof'. The new entity also adopted a self-styled enclave law, the so-called 'fundamental rules' (*temel kurallar*) which provided for the administration to exercise exclusive jurisdiction over enclave residents; available online at TRNC Supreme Electoral Council website, <http://ysk.mahkemeler.net/>

⁴⁹ A ceasefire was declared in 1968 which saw the opening of the barricades surrounding the enclaves. As Hatay and Bryant (2011) have noted, this was met with little enthusiasm on the part of Turkish-Cypriots however, and even though the lifting of the restrictions allowed those Turkish-Cypriots living in the enclaves to travel for work, or return to their abandoned homes, negligible numbers made that choice.

condition of survival. And with the authorities constantly reinforcing the belief that *enosis* continued to pose an existential threat, Turkish nationalist discourse based on the articulation of demonised Greeks and primordial *Turkishness* (which conceived the Turkish community in Cyprus as an organic part of the greater, mainland Turkish nation) prevailed. In effect, all forms of political opposition towards the leadership was discouraged on the basis of national unity and with reference to an existential threat.⁵⁰ This, in turn, would consolidate the political hegemony of the nationalist leadership that dominated Turkish-Cypriot affairs until the very end of the twentieth century.

This section has outlined the historic legacy of Turkish nationalism in the hegemonic elevation of *Turkishness* which dominated the official narratives in northern Cyprus until recently. As the discussion above highlighted, religious affinity remained the primary marker of identity until it was replaced by a *Turkishness* discourse that was largely exported but also domestically instigated, to a large extent, in response to Greek-Cypriot nationalist aspirations or *enosis*. Also discerned above was that the version of *Turkishness* that began taking root in Cyprus from the early 1920s onwards conceived not a *sui generis* identity but rather a notion of belonging to the greater Turkish nation. The *Turkishness* discourse remained prevalent after 1974 when the island was partitioned as a result of the Turkish military intervention and dominated official conceptions of identity for much of the Turkish-Cypriot administration's history. As such, it is relevant for

⁵⁰ Those who were seen as a serious threat to leadership's *taksim* and 'Buy Turkish' policies were simply murdered as was the tragic case of two young lawyers Ayhan Hikmet and Muzaffer Gürkan. For a detailed account of the events leading to their murder, see Attalides (1979: 164)

investigating the impact of immigration-settlement from Turkey on conceptions of identity in the Turkish-Cypriot community in the subsequent chapters (4, 5 and 6). In addition, the period presented here marks the beginnings of Turkish-Cypriot dependence on mainland Turkey for political/military and economic support. This dependence (which is discussed at length later on) is much contested and plays an important role in conceptualising collective identity in tandem with the immigration and the citizenship status of Turkish settlers.

3.3. Turkish-Cypriot conceptions of identity after partition: ‘A Turk comes, another Turk goes’?

First launched in July 1974, chiefly in reaction to a coup attempt orchestrated by the Junta in Greece to overthrow President Makarios, and again in August that year to ‘restore peace’, the Turkish military intervention consolidated the physical separation of the two communities. As a result of the military action, Turkish-Cypriots who had lived outside the ethnic enclaves until then left their homes and moved north while the vast majority of Greek-Cypriots and other Cypriot communities in the north (Armenian and Latin communities in particular) were forced to relocate to south for the Greek-Cypriot controlled territories. On 13 February 1975, the ‘Cyprus Turkish Administration’ (*Otonom Kıbrıs Türk Yönetimi*) was upgraded to a ‘Turkish Federated State of Cyprus’ (*Kıbrıs Türk Federe Devleti*). In parallel, the remaining 45,000 Turkish-Cypriots who still lived in the Greek-Cypriot controlled areas were transferred by the United Nations (UN) forces to the Turkish-Cypriot controlled areas. By 1977, almost all Greek-Cypriots and members of other Cypriot communities, apart from the Greek-Cypriot inhabitants of one village in the Karpas

(*Karpaz* or *Karpasia*) peninsula and some Maronites from the village of Kormakitis (*Koruçam*), were also transferred to the south.

For Turkish-Cypriot nationalists, Turkey's military intervention, what their official discourse called the 'Peace Operation' had finally settled the 'Cyprus problem'. This period also saw intensified efforts to build and shape the Turkish-Cypriot community economically and culturally along the lines of Turkish nationalism. As part of the so-called 'Turkification' efforts, all geographical names were also renamed in Turkish and nationalist monuments were erected to signify *Turkishness* (Killoran, 2000). Economically, the large proportion of the island's economic structure (factories, warehouses, hotels, etc.) left behind by the Greek-Cypriots, were now under Turkish-Cypriot control.⁵¹ Arguably, a major challenge Turkish-Cypriot authorities faced with regards to utilising this economic potential in order to kick-start their economy was an acute shortage of low-skilled workers to be employed in agriculture, construction and light-manufacturing. A 'settler recruitment programme' was thus launched by 1975 which facilitated the arrival into Northern Cyprus of settler families from Turkey. Turkish-Cypriot authorities at the time argued that these seasonal and low-skilled 'migrant workers' were crucial in order to fill the labour shortages and to build a viable economy. Such economic calculations notwithstanding, the ongoing immigration from mainland Turkey has since converged with the citizenship status of the newcomers to constitute a central crux of identity politics in the Turkish-Cypriot community.

⁵¹ For a comprehensive review of the impact of the partition on the island's economy, see Strong, 1999

The so-called 'settlement programme' (1975-1983) was initiated in close coordination with Turkey⁵² and offered assisted settlement and instant citizenship rights to a number of groups including Turkish farming communities with limited access to arable land, the victims of the 1975 flood and to those who wished to settle in Cyprus voluntarily (Hatay, 2007). In order to recruit volunteers, local radios in Turkey run public ads and *muhtars* were assigned to publicise details in their villages (*Gündem.net*, 2011). Once their applications for settlement were approved by the regional Turkish-Cypriot consulates, settler families were then issued with passports (one passport per family) and given a date for their transfer to the port of Mersin from where they travelled to northern Cyprus by ferryboats (*Gündem.net*, 2011). Upon their arrival, the settler families were first accommodated in empty schools, hostels and in other available lodges (some belonging to what soon became the Eastern Mediterranean University) in Famagusta until they were allocated Greek-Cypriot houses (*Gündem.net*, 2011). As Hatay (2007) has also noted, these houses were distributed among the Turkish families by the lot. In a similar fashion, farmland was also distributed on the basis of the number of persons in each household.⁵³ On the whole however, their distribution was conducted in a rather *ad hoc* fashion. Consequently, as Birand described: 'While those villagers from [Turkey's] woodland regions were allocated coastal

⁵² While available information on how this initial policy was formulated is scant, the information there is at present suggests that details on policy and strategy were enclosed by the Turkish-Cypriot leadership in a classified despatch, to Ankara in May 1975. According to Birand (1990), a report entitled '(Immigration and Worker Authorisation) Regulations on Turkish workers to be recruited for the purposes of alleviating labour shortages in the Turkish area(s) of Cyprus, No.60, Classification: Secret' was prepared by the 'Cyprus Coordination Committee' (*Kıbrıs Eşgüdüm Kurulu*) headed by a Turkish civil servant, Ziya Müezzinoğlu, in close coordination with Rauf Denktash, the Turkish Embassy in Cyprus and authorities in Ankara.

⁵³ Accordingly, those households with five or more people were allocated between 100 and 150 *donums* (1 *donum* = 1000msq). For each extra child there on, there was a ten percent increment not to exceed 50 percent of the original land allocation. For more details, see also Morvaridi (1993).

settlements, traditional fishing communities of the Black Sea region, who might had never seen an orange fruit until then [!], were endowed with robust citrus groves' (1990: 86).

What became evident almost from the outset furthermore, was that a large majority of the settler families came from rural and conservative backgrounds. The socio-economic profile of the settlers would soon constitute the cultural axis of the *Cypriotness* discourse in the context of ethnic cleavage between the 'educated', 'modern' and 'secular' Turkish-Cypriots and 'religious', 'backward' and 'illiterate' settlers from Turkey (this is elaborated further in the subsequent chapters). From the start, those Turkish nationals especially from rural backgrounds and attributed 'non-assimilable' cultural characteristics (religiosity, appearance, language, etc.) were framed as 'undesirables' (Ladbury, 1977: 317). And before long, all were positioned within the nativist discourses as threatening others who disturbed a 'harmonious' but also 'culturally superior' society by their otherness and presence.

Yet, far from representing a unitary group and in stark contrast to what is widely assumed within nativist discourses on both sides of the island, Turkish settlers displayed a range of ethnic, economic and political outlooks. In other words, there were settlers of *Alevite*, *Laz* as well as Kurdish ethnicity from all economic backgrounds hence some naturally more privileged than others; this socio-political diversity was also displayed in another group of settlers consisting of war veterans and martyrs'⁵⁴ families. Accordingly, they adopted different political affiliations (see section 5.3 in Chapter 5). Nevertheless, an important factor that has largely overshadowed such

⁵⁴ Martyr refers here to those Turkish servicemen who lost their lives during the 1974 military intervention.

diversity in the past, hence consolidating the aforementioned nativist beliefs (see also below), was the voting patterns that traditionally reflected an overwhelming support in favour of nationalist politicians. This would, in turn, transform the citizenship status of Turkish settlers into a political battleground beginning with the first general elections settlers took part in 1981. In the 1981 presidential elections, settlers casted their vote overwhelmingly in favour of Rauf Denktash who came out on top vote with 70 percent of the vote with such settler hamlets of *Karpaz (or Karpasia)* and *Maras (or Varosha)* recording almost 90 percent of his support (Hatay, 2005). From then on, naturalised Turkish settlers were largely conceived as a homogenous pool of voters that invariably supported the nationalist status quo and the Turkish tutelage over it (see below).

The period of facilitated migration initiated with the 1974-5 'settler recruitment programme' was discontinued by late 1980s when a new citizenship statute tied citizenship to a minimum one-year residency. In addition, new rules were introduced to administer border controls and regulate the issuing of work permits. New legislation also removed automatic access of newcomers to the housing register. According to the Turkish-Cypriot 'Home Office' data, a total of 21,851 citizenships were offered to Turkish nationals as part of the 'settlement programme' between 1974 and 1981.⁵⁵ On 15 November 1983, the Turkish-Cypriot Parliament ratified the 'Declaration for Independence' proclaiming the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. Amidst domestic tension (see section 4.1 in Chapter 4) and international condemnation, the

⁵⁵ Hatay (2005); It should also be noted that this number does not show the total number of settlers who had arrived through settlement policies since citizenship was given upon application and some settlers simply did not apply. In addition, out of those who did opt out of 'TRNC' citizenship, some returned back to Turkey after a short period.

constitution of the new entity was approved on 5 May 1985 by 70 percent of the votes. A month later, staunch-nationalist Rauf Denktaş became the first President of the new state endorsed with 70.2 percent of the votes. Then in the parliamentary elections held on 23 June 1985, the ‘National Unity Party’ (*Ulusal Birlik Partisi*, or the UBP) secured 24 of the 50 seats. Spearheaded by Denktaş, the UBP promoted a nationalist agenda aimed at developing ever-closer ties with Turkey (see Chapter 4). Remarkably, a new ‘ethnic party’, YDP (‘New Birth Party’ or *Yeni Doğuş Partisi*) managed to get almost 9 percent of the votes and secured four seats.⁵⁶ These elections were once again dominated by allegations of Turkish interference that was now a defining feature of the opposition’s rhetoric – in this context, intimately related issues of the (growing) number of Turkish settlers and their citizenship status also began taking centre stage and receiving substantial press coverage (discussed at length in Chapter 6).

In one particularly fiery editorial, the leftist *Yenidüzen* newspaper asserted that migration both from Cyprus outwards and into it (from Turkey in particular) was a serious threat for the Turkish-Cypriot community (*Yenidüzen*, 1986). The editorial claimed that while Turkish-Cypriot emigration was not itself a novel phenomenon, the ‘demographic balance’ that had been in place before 1974 between ‘those who left’ and the ‘natives’ who replaced them was drastically altered. In fact, the ‘educated’ Turkish-Cypriots who had been migrating to other countries such as Australia, the United Kingdom and Canada, the editorial argued, were disproportionately

⁵⁶ It is important to note that the political mobilisation of the Turkish settlers dates earlier. The first ethnic party, the Turkish Unity Party or the TBP (*Türk Birlik Partisi*) was founded in 1978 by Ismail Tezer, a retired Turkish army officer who had settled in Cyprus after 1974. TBP was the first settler party as such, appealing primarily to the settler constituency. In 1981 parliamentary elections, it polled 5.5 percent of the vote thus securing one seat in the assembly. The ‘New Birth’ was established essentially as an umbrella party which absorbed the earlier TBP. As Hatay (2005) has pointed out, the primary factor that had triggered the creation of the alliance was the introduction of an 8 percent threshold in the parliamentary elections.

replaced with growing numbers of Turkish immigrants: 'Scores of people arriving to northern part of Cyprus [from Turkey] as "tourists" are not going back' (*Yenidüzen*, 1986). Other than the 'tourists who never returned back' and several thousand unauthorised workers who were naturalised in a matter of several months, the newspaper also claimed that many Turkish nationals who served their national service on the island were also settling (hence acquiring citizenship) following completion. Most remarkably, the article warned that the northern part of Cyprus was in danger of losing its 'Cypriot character' and that Turkish immigrants, arriving in numbers far supplanting those Turkish-Cypriot émigrés, would soon become numerically superior (*Yenidüzen*, 1986). Put differently, *Yenidüzen* indicated that Turkish immigration put native Turkish-Cypriots under risk of losing their cultural identity and becoming a minority. In a rather bold fashion, the newspaper insisted that Turkey halts the continuous influx of its nationals into the island if the latter wanted to demonstrate to the rest of the world that it was not engaged in a covert act of 'colonisation' (*vilayetlestirme*).

Other 'everyday' accounts also indicated that large-scale immigration had created resentment among ordinary Turkish-Cypriots toward Turkish nationals. According to a Turkish military officer who had served during the military intervention in 1974 and returned back when he was reassigned a decade later: 'Much water had gone under the bridge, there was little left unchanged. It was 'us' who had brought about much of the change. The genuine respect and affection shown to a Turkish general [...] during and after the 'Operation' wasn't really there anymore. In fact, you were now greeted with groaning, grumpy faces. The most upsetting was the situation of those Turkish immigrant families who had settled in Cyprus. Turkish-Cypriots

were treating our people as second-class citizens just like the Priest [President Makarios] had treated them. Such discrimination was visible everywhere. It was nothing less than [ethnic] segregation' (Çilingir, 1997: 124).

The official, nationalist view, on the other hand, considered the arrival of Turkish migrants as no such threat, especially in terms of the 'Turkish-Cypriot' identity. This was, to a large extent, due to the particular conception of identity based on a primordial notion of *Turkishness* that had guided official/nationalist narratives. Cultivated in the years preceding the partition of the island (see section 3.2 in Chapter 3), the prevailing identity discourse conceived the Turkish-Cypriot community as an extension of the 'greater Turkish nation' with no *sui generis* identity. From this perspective, the nationalist rhetoric made no ethnic or cultural distinction between Turkish-Cypriots and Turks of mainland origin. In this sense, Denktash's oft-cited formulation on identity is particularly revealing: 'I am a child of Anatolia. I am a Turk in its truest sense, and my roots are in Central Asia. With my culture, my language, my history and my whole persona, I am a Turk [...] I have a state and a motherland. Such notions as 'Cypriot culture', 'Cypriot-Turk', 'Cypriot-Greek', 'common Republic' are all nonsense [...] Cypriot-Turk and Cypriot-Greek simply don't exist and neither do Cypriots [...] In fact, the only true inhabitant of Cyprus is the Cyprus donkey' (*Kıbrıs*, 2000).

Within this discourse moreover, the Turkish-Cypriot community was articulated as a 'continuity' that was first established with the Ottoman conquest/invasion of 1571 (Calotychos, 1998; Bryant, 2004). In nationalist mythology, it was the 'blood' shed by the ancestors in the

conquest of Cyprus by the Ottomans but also by the 'martyrs' during the inter-communal fighting (1963-1974 period) that ultimately legitimised Turkish-Cypriot presence and gave them the right to make a claim on the land (Bryant, 2004). Such references to 'land' and the 'blood' of the Turkish martyrs within the Turkish nationalist mythology, conceived Cyprus as an 'offspring' of the Turkish nation (Killoran, 1998; Bryant, 2004). Furthermore, this conception of the national family (with reference to the matrimony of 'blood' and 'land') plays a dual role not only in designating Turkish immigrants and settlers as 'ethnic kins' of a lineal descent, or 'our brothers' (*kardeşlerimiz*) but also in constructing the contested 'statehood' of northern Cyprus with reference to the Turkish state. In this respect, official discourses refer to 'TRNC' as the 'infant-land' or 'baby-land' (*yavruvatan*), in need of protection and nurturing for its survival from the 'motherland' Turkey in the context of a pervasive insecurity. Indeed, nationalist narratives not only constantly reproduce the violent past, with the 1960-1974 period as the bloodiest time in the Turkish Cypriot history, but also seek continued Turkish protection to survive in the face of an existential threat posed by the 'unchanging Greek-Cypriot aspirations of *enosis*'.

Such nationalist conceptions have nonetheless been challenged by alternative notions of belonging that gradually began to appear from the 1980s onwards in intellectual circles, left-leaning trade unions and political parties (see Chapters 4 and 5). These rather subversive conceptualisations of identity emphasised an ethnically distinct Turkish-Cypriot community characterised by an overarching notion of *Cypriotness*. In a political vein, they also carried references to the precarious positioning of the Turkish-Cypriot community 'between a rock and a hard place' and rejected the zero-sum prospect of minority status with regards to Greek-

Cypriots or that of cultural assimilation in relation to Turkey. More radical versions of the *Cypriotness* discourse later developed elaborate conceptions of a Cypriot national identity, in the form of an autochthonous narrative which now referred to Cyprus as the 'motherland' and emphasised the commonalities with Greek-Cypriots in history and culture. (Ali, 1988: 64) These all meant a revival of *Cypriotness* in cultural terms, to construct and promote a common Cypriot heritage, art and folklore (see for example, Hatay and Bryant, 2011). In parallel, there were renewed efforts with the beginning of the 1990s to reconnect with the South in the context of bi-communal activities with Greek-Cypriot groups (see section 5.2 in Chapter 5). Perhaps more remarkably, such nativist conceptions were also cultivated with reference to immigration from mainland Turkey, conceived as a threat to such distinct cultural/ethnic identity. Whether because of a 'cultural concern' in relation to the withering away of 'Cypriot consciousness' and the eroding of Turkish-Cypriot identity or as a political threat seen in this sense as endangering the Turkish-Cypriot autonomy (see below, Chapter 4 but also section 5.2 in Chapter 5), immigration from mainland Turkey and the citizenship status of Turkish nationals soon became inextricably linked to debates on identity.

The growing international attention on Turkish immigration into northern Cyprus from late 1980s onwards would also maintain the issue on the political agenda. For example, communiquees from the Commonwealth Heads of Government (Vancouver 1987, Kuala Lumpur 1989 and Harare 1991) contained explicit references to the need for 'a speedy withdrawal of all Turkish troops and settlers from Cyprus' (Cuco, 1992: par.114). A similar position was also expressed at various ministerial meetings of the non-aligned countries (New York 1987, Belgrade

1989 and Algiers 1990), which likewise called for the immediate withdrawal of the 'occupying forces' and 'settlers'. The European Parliament, in a resolution adopted in May 1988 on the situation on Cyprus, was also in favour of establishing a 'precise timetable for the withdrawal of the Turkish troops and settlers' (Cuco, 1992). Last but not least, in 1992, at the request of the Council of Europe (CoE) the Spanish parliamentarian Alfonso Cuco prepared a comprehensive report on the 'Structure of the Cypriot Communities' ('Cuco Report' thereafter) which was endorsed by the Council of Europe in a resolution on 7 October 1992 (No. 1197), recommending the Turkish-Cypriot authorities to conduct (together with European observers) a census in the northern part of the island. In addition, both the Republic of Cyprus and the Turkish-Cypriot administration were requested to keep the numbers of new arrivals under strict control. Turkey was also invited to register at its embassy in Nicosia all Turkish citizens residing and arriving in Cyprus (CoE, 1992b). It was against this backdrop that other international developments, especially those pertaining to Cyprus's EU accession that had been lurking in the background would soon introduce a new factor that would not only have significant repercussions for the unresolved Cyprus conflict in general but also a more intriguing effect on the much-politicised conceptions of Turkish-Cypriot identity and the framing of settlers within it.

This section has presented the historical juncture in which alternative conceptions of collective identity gradually emerged within the context of an unrecognised state dominated by a monolithic leadership. In the aftermath of the Turkish military intervention in 1974, the nationalist leadership consolidated its authority over the Turkish-Cypriot community that now lived in the ethnically homogenous, northern part of the island. It was precisely within this

context that the arrival of Turkish immigrants/settlers into northern Cyprus, initially as part of a 'settlement programme' launched in 1975, became a major cleavage of the Turkish-Cypriot politics and sociality. While settlers displayed a range of ethnic, social and political outlooks, they were immediately cast aside in an orientalist manner (Said, 1995), as 'backward' and culturally 'non-assimilable'. Perhaps more remarkably, they were also seen as a homogenous constituency that invariably supported the nationalist status quo and the Turkish tutelage over the domestic affairs of the Turkish-Cypriot community. Alternative notions of belonging that began challenging the dominant, nationalist conceptions of collective-identity based on primordial *Turkishness* from late 1980s onwards, would articulate these claims together with an appeal to the insecurity of the Turkish-Cypriot community as somewhat of an 'endangered minority'. In other words, such a commitment to the indigenous character of the Turkish-Cypriot identity, often (though not exclusively) within the framework of an overarching *Cypriotness* discourse was constructed against a 'threat' that conceived Turkish settlers/immigrants and their naturalisation as part of the assimilationist policies of Turkey to ultimately undermine the distinct Turkish-Cypriot identity and its long-term autonomy.

3.4. The EU and collective identity in northern Cyprus (1995-2013)

Cyprus-EU relations, that is the relationship of the Greek-Cypriot controlled Republic of Cyprus with the European Union, was first initiated in the context of an association agreement in

1972.⁵⁷ The agreement provided for a customs union which was fully implemented by the late 1980s. It was with the application of Cyprus to join the European Community (EC) on 4 July 1990 that what could be described as largely an economic relationship until then would spill onto the political realms of a very complex dispute. For the RoC, there were clear economic, social and political benefits to be attained from EU membership. Perhaps more importantly, the prospects of joining the EU were also conceived, in the context of the 'Cyprus problem', as a 'catalyst' that could facilitate a settlement by offering incentives to convince the intransigent Turkish-Cypriot leadership. While the decision of the European Council in 1994 to include Cyprus in the next round of enlargement and the initiation of the accession process which then followed would not live up to such promise of reunifying the island, the prospects of EU membership had a profound impact, not least, on the Turkish-Cypriot community that was later left on the 'margins' once a divided Cyprus became an EU member in May 2004.

As indicated above, Cyprus's accession process was an exclusively Greek-Cypriot affair. The then Turkish-Cypriot leadership led by President Denktash was hostile to the idea of Cyprus joining the EU and did not take part at any stage of the accession negotiations. In line with its long-term goal of international recognition for the TRNC, the Turkish-Cypriot side also rejected any claims that the Republic of Cyprus could pursue accession talks on behalf of the whole island. In this respect, the Turkish-Cypriot side during this time questioned the legality of the RoC application with reference to the 'Treaty of Guarantee' annexed to the 1960 Constitution,

⁵⁷ It is important to underline that the Turkish-Cypriot community has taken no part in the governing of the Republic of Cyprus since 1974.

prohibiting Cyprus from union with a third-state (or an organisation, the Turkish side stipulated) of which Turkey, as the 'guarantor' of its constitutional integrity, was not a member (Treaty of Guarantee, 1960). On the whole, the Turkish-Cypriot leadership asserted that Cyprus could and should join the EU only if a deal could be struck to solve the 'Cyprus problem' and only after Turkey itself became a full member.

Such claims were nonetheless dismissed by the EU which endorsed Cyprus's application on behalf of the whole island by formally accepting it in 1993 but tying membership to the solution of the 'Cyprus problem' (European Council, 1993). This strategy was later abandoned in favour of a more direct approach towards Turkish-Cypriot and Turkish intransigence when the 1995 Corfu Summit decided for Cyprus to be included in the next round of enlargement regardless of a solution being reached ahead of the date of accession. That year, the European Court of Justice (ECJ) also took a decision in the infamous *Anastasiou* case (C-432/92) which effectively excluded Turkish-Cypriot exports from the European Union market by disallowing movement certificates issued by the Turkish-Cypriot authorities.⁵⁸ Given that the EU, and the United Kingdom in particular was TRNC's largest export market, this ruling was a substantial blow to the Turkish-Cypriot economy.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Up until 1994, the European Community traded with northern Cyprus despite international non-recognition of the TRNC. In particular, the UK and Ireland imported Turkish-Cypriot goods under preferential treatment by appealing to Article 5 of the 1972 EC-Cyprus Association Agreement, which stated that the Community would not discriminate between the nationals or companies of Cyprus. With the *Anastasiou* case, although the ECJ did not impose a formal embargo, it effectively closed the doors of the European markets to goods originating from northern Cyprus; for a detailed discussion of the case and its legal implications, see Talmon (2001).

⁵⁹ At the time of the judgement, 74 percent of Turkish-Cypriot exports were directed to the EU and only 14 percent went to Turkey. In 1999, Turkish-Cypriot exports to the EU fell to 35 percent while exports to Turkey rose to 48 percent (Brewin, 2000: 196-9).

In response to the somewhat 'boosted' status of Cyprus's EU application and to the ECJ verdict, the Turkish-Cypriot side initially reacted with fury and immediately revoked from the TRNC's constitution the commitment to a future federation and declared itself in favour of integration with Turkey. On 28 December 1995, Turkey and the TRNC signed a joint declaration reasserting that accession negotiations should be initiated with the EU only after a final settlement safeguarding Turkish-Cypriot sovereignty had been reached and that federal Cyprus and Turkey should only join the EU simultaneously (Joint Declaration, 1995). This was followed by another joint statement on 20 January 1997 claiming that structural cooperation and harmonisation of Cyprus with the EU would be followed by similar action to accelerate the integration process between the TRNC and Turkey (Joint Declaration, 1997). On 6 August 1997, an Association Agreement was signed which provided the framework for: 'determining the measures to be taken with the aim of achieving partial integration [...] in the economic and financial fields and in matters of security, defence and foreign affairs on the basis of association' (1997: par. 2). A further retaliation came after the Luxembourg Summit (December 1997) when the Turkish-Turkish-Cypriot leadership demanded that the future talks between Greek and Turkish-Cypriots be conducted on a state-by-state basis.⁶⁰

There was nonetheless a brief period of optimism by the end of that decade when the 'EU factor' appeared as a significant catalyst in the UN efforts geared-up towards reaching a federal solution ahead of Cyprus's accession. This was largely due to the European Council's decision at Helsinki Summit in December 1999 to accord Turkey with formal candidate status. The greater

⁶⁰ For a comprehensive overview of Cyprus talks under the aegis of the UN, see Tocci (2004).

optimism in Turkey-EU relations, culminated in the context of Greco-Turkish rapprochement following the so-called 'earthquake diplomacy'⁶¹ paved the way for a fresh round of proximity talks in Nicosia. In 1999, the UN Security Council called for the launching of Cyprus 'proximity talks', and between December 1999 and November 2000 five rounds were held under UN auspices (Tocci, 2004). Such optimism was nonetheless short-lived when it became clear however that UN efforts to convince the sides to engage in direct talks was futile and in December 2000, the Turkish-Cypriot side unilaterally abandoned the proximity talks, plunging the negotiations into deadlock.

During this time, the nationalist elites in power continued to view the EU with suspicion if not as a threat. The merits of EU membership at that time was seen primarily through an economic lens, largely evidenced in the EU's engagement almost exclusively with the Turkish-Cypriot business circles and the Turkish-Cypriot Chamber of Commerce (KTTO) in particular. But such economic incentives were regarded as 'bribery' and the leadership continued to warn of an international plot to lure the Turkish-Cypriots into compromising on their security and identity. The nationalist parties UBP and the DP also repeatedly claimed that EU membership would inevitably eliminate the bi-zonal and bi-communal character of a settlement and that it would sever vital Turkish-Cypriot links with Turkey (see section 4.3 in Chapter 4). Hence, the dominant view in northern Cyprus was that EU membership could take place only after a settlement and/or after Turkey's accession.

⁶¹ This was initiated in the context of the successive earthquakes that hit both countries in August-September 1999 leading to a significant thaw in bilateral relations (see *Le Monde*, 2000).

This was about to change however, when a devastating banking crisis hit northern Cyprus in early 2000 involving 30,000 depositors.⁶² Daily public protests, civil discontent and the possibility of state bankruptcy dominated the headlines for the larger part of that year and culminated in the spectacular occupation of the Turkish-Cypriot Parliament by the protesters. It was during this time that the appeal of the EU began to gain hold amongst the public that became disillusioned with the corrupt status quo. The unregulated and unchecked banking sector together with the dubious lending practices of some banks which led to the banking crisis, also exposed in this sense what many saw as the fundamental flaw of an unrecognised regime which remained outside of accepted norms and rules such as accountability, democracy and the rule of law. Indeed, as Lacher and Kaymak put it, 'the status quo was no longer able to contain the fact that the overall project of statehood failed in its quest for external as well as internal legitimacy'. The banking crisis left its mark on popular attitudes toward the political elite and intensified the prevalent fears related to the viability of the Turkish-Cypriot community and its well-defined identity as a self-governing entity in northern Cyprus. At the same time, it also had a significant effect on attitudes toward Turkey. As indicated earlier, international isolations which left the Turkish-Cypriot community outside the international community also meant the latter had no choice except to rely on Turkish assistance which (more often than not) came with strings attached (see below). This had, in turn, led to a growing sense among many that far from democratically governing themselves, they were being controlled by Turkey and its 'puppet

⁶² This was triggered largely in response to the banking crisis in Turkey in late 2000 and the collapse of the Turkish Lira during the 2001 Turkish financial crisis (see, Yeldan, 2008). During this period (2000-2002), ten commercial banks were forced to suspend their operations by the Turkish-Cypriot authorities (see Günsel, 2006).

regime' in Cyprus (this is explored further in subsequent chapters). It was also within this context that immigration from Turkey and the large-scale naturalisation of Turkish immigrants increasingly came to be seen as a threat not only in terms of cultural identity but also political autonomy. In this ferment of rage, the tide began to turn in favour of the pro-settlement and pro-EU opposition and by 2002 EU accession was no longer viewed as a threat but as the ultimate precondition of the community's 'survival'.

Drastic changes during this time in Turkish-Cypriot attitudes were also critically linked to other external developments, not least to those happening in Turkey. In November 2002, elections in Turkey saw the rise to the power of the AKP (*Adalet ve Kalkinma Partisi*, or 'Justice and Development Party') headed by Recep Tayyip Erdogan. The AKP's victory signalled a radical shift in Turkish policy towards Cyprus favouring a federal solution to the 'Cyprus Problem' in line with its own EU-related aspirations. Perhaps more remarkably, its absolute majority in the Turkish Parliament indicated that the AKP was in a position to undertake such radical policy changes on 'national issues' like Cyprus. On the tide of AKP's victory but also bolstered by the publication of a comprehensive UN Plan (the 'Annan Plan' hereafter) envisaging imminent entry into the European Union, Turkish-Cypriot opposition began to mobilise against the nationalist regime in a series of spectacular demonstrations.⁶³

⁶³ It is estimated that between November 2002 and January 2003, between 45,000-70,000 Turkish-Cypriots (from a community of less than half a million) attended these pro-settlement and pro-EU rallies.

The 'Annan Plan', with its thousands of pages of draft federal laws (inspired by the 1977-79 'High Level Agreements', the 1992 Set of Ideas and the 1960 Constitution) and international agreements and treaties, represented the most comprehensive blueprint by the UN to bridge the gaps and settle the decades-old 'Cyprus Problem'. In essence, the fundamental provisions of the Plan formulated a 'loose federation' with two constituent states, called for gradual demilitarisation of the island, allowed for the return of a large number of refugees through territorial adjustment and included guidelines for the settlement of the notorious 'property issue'. It also contained specific provisions over the number of naturalised TRNC nationals of Turkish origin who would be granted federal citizenship, thus bringing the settler issue, for the first time, on the negotiating table.⁶⁴

From the outset, the Plan ratcheted up fiery rhetoric from the nationalist camp against such dangers of 'diluted sovereignty', 'economic subjugation' (by the more prosperous Greek-Cypriot community) and a 'numerically weakened'⁶⁵ Turkish-Cypriot community. But above all, the nationalists claimed, Turkish-Cypriot membership of the EU preceding Turkey's own membership was tantamount to 'backdoor *enosis*' which threatened the very Turkish presence in Cyprus, and in which Turkish-Cypriots would ultimately become a 'defenceless minority'

⁶⁴ Whilst the Plan did not engage with the legal status of Turkish settlers, it nonetheless introduced a number of provisions to deal with the issue through the interpretation of a general 'citizenship provision'. According to Article 3 of the said law, the Plan allowed for any person who held Cypriot citizenship on 31 December 1963 together with their spouses and descendants (the great majority of native Turkish-Cypriots fall in this category) to be considered citizens of the new Republic. In addition, each side was asked to prepare a list of up to 45,000 persons (for the T-C side, this would consist of settlers and their descendants) who would also be granted federal citizenship (UN, 2004: Appendix F, par.4)

⁶⁵ This would be caused by a supposedly accelerated outflow of Turkish-Cypriots to wealthier member states with the lifting of travel restrictions upon entry into the EU.

(discussed at length in Chapter 4). For the opposition forces also concerned about the integrity of the Turkish-Cypriot identity not because of *enosis* but because of the status quo, a solution to the Cyprus Problem and the simultaneous EU membership was similarly conceived in existential terms, inextricably linked to the long-term survival of the Turkish-Cypriot community. The Turkish-Cypriot opposition believed that EU membership (tied to a solution) would end their economic ostracisation hence the reliance on Turkish finance. EU membership would also curtail the interference of Ankara in Turkish-Cypriot affairs by fortifying the latter's autonomy within a federal sovereignty and stem not only the outflow of 'native' Turkish-Cypriots but also the much-controversial influx of Turkish immigrants and their wholesale naturalisation.⁶⁶ In this respect, the prospects of EU membership represented a social imaginary, incorporating a number of social demands such as (international) 'recognition', 'autonomy', 'democracy', 'freedom' and 'peace'. Large segments of the Turkish-Cypriot community would soon be mobilised in spectacular rallies in support of EU membership by the more vocal anti-establishment and pro-settlement Turkish-Cypriot opposition and civil society (see below, Chapters 4 and 5).

In the meantime, the partial lifting of the restrictions on the freedom of movement across the island by the Turkish-Cypriot side in April 2003 further put the issue of Turkish-Cypriot identity under the spotlight (see Chapter 6). The partial lifting of the border restrictions meant that Turkish-Cypriots could now acquire passports issued by the RoC and exercise their citizenship rights by seeking employment and accessing healthcare in the south. Perhaps more

⁶⁶ Indeed, the Annan Plan did contain specific provisions to limit the immigration of Turkish nationals, for a transitional period of up to 19 years or until Turkey becomes an EU member, with explicit reference to the protection of 'identity' (UN, 2004: Art.3, par.5)

importantly, with the imminent accession of Cyprus into the European Union the following year, a Cypriot passport for Turkish-Cypriots meant European citizenship rights beyond Cyprus. In a similar vein, the opening of the long-closed borders also laid bare another tangle of the identity debate. In stark contrast to the overall 'positive' atmosphere and enthusiasm that was reported of Greek and Turkish-Cypriots in their thousands rushing to the borders to visit their old homes, simply stroll to the 'other side' or indeed apply for a passport, naturalised TRNC citizens (i.e. settlers) including their children but also the children of Turkish-Cypriots married to Turkish nationals were denied the right to travel. For naturalised TRNC citizens and second (or even third) generation Turkish-Cypriots of Turkish origin, the opening-up of the borders meant that their citizenship status was thrown further in limbo, also raising questions about who belonged to the Turkish-Cypriot community and who did not (see section 5.3 in Chapter 5).

On 24 April 2004, simultaneous referenda were held on both sides of the island in which voters were asked to approve the final text of the 'Annan Plan' to reunify the island on the eve of EU accession. Despite much anticipation, whilst 65 percent of the voters in the north approved the Plan, it was rejected by an overwhelming 76 percent of the voters in the south. In any case, the failure of the 'Annan Plan' in the referenda did not derail the plans to admit a divided island and Cyprus joined the EU together with Malta and 8 other CEEC countries on 01 May 2004. While the Republic became a member of the European Union on behalf of the whole island, the application of EU law (or the *acquis communautaire*) was suspended in the territory that fell 'outside the effective control of the RoC' (Treaty of Accession, 2003: prot.10). As such, the collective advantages and institutional privileges of EU membership for the Turkish-Cypriot

community was 'put on the shelf'. While the suspension of the *acquis* did not have any bearing on individual rights and entitlements as EU citizens outside northern Cyprus, Turkish-Cypriots as members of a territorially-defined community were somewhat left on the 'margins' of the European Union.

Rather remarkably however, there was initial optimism in the north despite such peculiar positioning of the latter in the wake of the referenda. This was, to an important extent, due to the fundamental change of attitude on the part of the international community in general and the EU in particular towards the Turkish-Cypriot community in the face of the overwhelming desire to settle the 'Cyprus Problem' and join the EU. As such, the Turkish-Cypriot leadership was no longer considered a stumbling-block in reunification efforts. The 'yes' vote was also a clear affirmation of the aspiration of the community to end the paralysing ostracisation of their community but also to safeguard their distinct identity by joining the European Union (see Chapter 4, 5 and 6). Though disappointed with the Greek-Cypriot 'no', there was now a discernible expectation in the north that the 'yes' vote would translate into tangible benefits and most importantly the lifting of international isolations. Without a doubt, expectations were also raised in the immediate aftermath of the referenda by various international actors in echoing the Turkish-Cypriot position that it would be unjust to leave the community 'out in the cold' and that they stood to be 'rewarded (for citations, see Chapter 6).

As it soon became all too clear however, the Turkish-Cypriot 'yes' vote would not be a 'game-changer' and the isolations remained *in situ*. This, in turn, meant that the institutional

engagement of the EU took a 'bureaucratic character' ⁶⁷ against the increasing disillusionment on the part of the Turkish-Cypriot community. More importantly, the inability of the 'EU camp' to fulfil its promise to 'integrate northern Cyprus into the European mainstream' has resulted in a dislocatory experience which led to a crucial discursive shift in the earlier oppositional, pro-EU discourse to radically transform and reorganise around the issue of Turkish settlers and opposition against the 'assimilationist' immigration-settlement policies purportedly engineered by the AKP government in Turkey. This crucial shift in the trajectory of identity politics within the Turkish-Cypriot community in the post-referendum period is elaborated further in the empirical chapters (4, 5 and 6) of this study.

Though led solely by the Greek-Cypriot leadership, Cyprus's membership application for the European Union and the accession process which then ensued had a profound impact on the domestic politics of the Turkish-Cypriot community. Bolstered with the publication of the 'Annan Plan', the period of anticipated EU integration leading to simultaneous referenda in April 2004 was marked by a political upheaval. Indeed, it would be hard to imagine the unprecedented public rallies, the massive swing to the opposition at the parliamentary elections in December 2003 (see below, Chapter 4) and ultimately the Turkish-Cypriot referendum results without the EU conditionality. Most importantly, the EU during this time became a key signifier of the

⁶⁷ For a detailed discussion of the EU engagement with the Turkish-Cypriot community in the post-referendum period, see Kyris (2015).

discussions on Turkish-Cypriot identity in which the two sides (pro-unification forces vs. nationalists) competed with each other to articulate within their competing visions of political community and the notion of belonging attached to it.

With the accession of Cyprus into the European Union and despite pledges to end their isolation and to 'bring them in from the cold', the Turkish-Cypriot community was left on the margins of the EU. In this sense, the accession of a still-divided Cyprus did not diminish the EU's overall importance but altered the privileged position of the EU within Turkish-Cypriot conceptions of collective identity, a consequence mainly due to the latter's lack of self-realisation (and largely bureaucratic realisation) rebuked by a disillusioned Turkish-Cypriot community. Put differently, the unsuccessful attempt to integrate the Turkish-Cypriot community into the European mainstream obstructed the continuity of the common 'social imaginary' that was represented by the 'EU camp' and led to a new reconfiguration of the pre-existing elements articulated within the oppositional *Cypriotness* discourse in which immigration-related antagonisms took centre stage. Before the study turns on to substantiate these claims in more detail in the empirical chapters that follow, the next section reflects on the reoccurring themes outlined above.

3.5. Conclusion

This chapter provided a historical account of competing identity claims in the Turkish-Cypriot community. It discussed the specific historical juncture at the beginning of the twentieth

century which elevated *Turkishness* as a hegemonic identity discourse by accounting for the spread of Turkish nationalism (see section 3.2 in this chapter). Key elements of the nationalist discourse which came to signify and entrench Turkish identity during that time were also highlighted throughout. This is particularly relevant for the hypothesis outlined in the previous chapter:

Hypothesis 1: *Given the local history and in the context of the Cyprus conflict, Turkish-Cypriot identity was cultivated and subsumed within a hegemonic notion of Turkishness that did not distinguish between Turkish-Cypriots and Turkish settlers.*

This was then followed with a discussion of other, subversive conceptions of collective identity which began to emerge in the unique post-partition context characterised by non-recognition and critical perceptions of Turkey to challenge the predominant conceptions of *Turkishness* (see section 3.3 in this chapter). An overarching theme of this section was immigration-settlement from mainland Turkey which became a contentious issue in relation to nativist perceptions of identity in that period, formulated in the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: *In the context of Cyprus's accession into the EU and the anticipated Turkish-Cypriot integration into the European mainstream, Turkish settlers came to be perceived as a threat to Turkish-Cypriot identity.*

In this respect, the next section (3.4) then focused on the period initiated with Cyprus's membership application for the EU and its eventual accession in 2004 also accounting for parallel developments, particularly the publication of the 'Annan Plan'. The final section then discussed the post-accession period marked by the discursive shift in the trajectory of Turkish-Cypriot identity politics that saw settler antagonisms taking centre stage, formulated in Hypothesis 3:

Hypothesis 3: *With the failure of the 'Annan Plan', the pro-EU Cypriotness discourse is disorientated and settler antagonisms take centre-stage*

A further aim of the chapter was to present the dominant contexts that act in tandem with settler antagonisms in the discursive construction of the Turkish-Cypriot identity under investigation. In the first place, it is crucial to underline that there is no singular identity concept that defines 'Turkish-Cypriotness' (see 'theoretical framework' in Chapter 2). Rather, multiple, subversive discourses compete with each other by articulating antagonistic notions of the political community and belonging attached to it. Traditionally, these have been broadly organised under the forms of *Turkishness* and more recent assertions of *Cypriotness* (see sections 3.2 and 3.3 in this chapter). In the empirical chapters that follow, these narratives are delineated further in view of revealing the impact of immigration-settlement from mainland Turkey on their dispersion but also modification. Alternative interpretations that similarly articulate immigration-settlement within their notion of belonging but do not particularly fit the predominant categories are also discussed especially in the context of the civil-society (Chapter 5).

The persistence of the 'Cyprus problem' is an important thread that unravels in relation to identity. The *Turkishness* discourse that is characterised by loyalty towards statehood (i.e. the TRNC) and preference for ever-closer ties with Turkey is largely incompatible with efforts to find a federal solution to the 'Cyprus problem' or with the notion of political community that such a solution implies. Reunification of the island based on some form of federal governance, on the other hand, involves commitment and loyalty to bi-communal and conciliatory conceptions of belonging often articulated with reference to the overarching notion of *Cypriotness*. More recently, from the late 1990s onwards, the prospects of EU integration resulted in the emergence of a new element which has become a bone of contention between the two rival identity narratives, with the *Cypriotness* narrative displaying overwhelming support for a federal solution in itself but also to join the EU versus the euro-sceptic *Turkishness* discourse willing to compromise on EU membership in ethno-nationalist terms, prioritising statehood. Subsequent chapters look at ways in which the EU has penetrated/modified these identity narratives articulated by various actors that have aligned themselves with these camps.

Another focal aspect of the identity debate in northern Cyprus is the international non-recognition of the Turkish-Cypriot governing structures and their ostracisation by the international community. Apart from Turkey, neither the Republic of Cyprus nor the international community recognises the TRNC. In fact, it is considered an illegal entity by international bodies such as the UN. The non-recognition of the Turkish-Cypriot statehood together with the crippling ostracisation of that community (going far beyond international diplomacy as the subsequent chapters will elaborate) has played a critical role in galvanising support for alternative political

projects such as reunification and EU membership that would ensure the viability of the Turkish-Cypriot identity and self-governance. The enduring status of the Turkish-Cypriot spatiality as an unrecognised state in the post-referendum period also had important bearings for how the EU was interpreted by the local actors and on the discursive shift which led to a reconfiguration in respective identity discourses since the accession of Cyprus into the EU in 2004.

In a similar vein, bilateral relations with Turkey also present another important context (or a 'discursive structure') in which debates on identity in the Turkish-Cypriot community take place. While the Turkish-Cypriot community has historically maintained strong links with Turkey, especially during the colonial period when such links were regarded as 'existential', their international non-recognition has had the effect of driving them closer to Turkey more than some would wish to see so. It is also in this context that immigration from Turkey and the naturalisation of Turkish immigrants now constitute one of the central aspects of identity in northern Cyprus with 'native' but also more recent Turkish-Cypriots taking divergent positions on collective identity and what it means to be 'Turkish' or a 'Turkish-Cypriot' (see section 5.3 in Chapter 5). The interplay between these contextual factors in narrating competing versions of Turkish-Cypriotness as well as the ways in which immigration-settlement has been instrumentalised within these discourses articulated at the domestic level (political parties, civil society and the print media) is investigated in line with the main research hypotheses in the subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER 4. PARTY POLITICAL DISCOURSES ON IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP

4.1. Introduction

4.2. Turkish-Cypriot political parties: An Overview

4.3. The framing of immigration and citizenship on the eve of the (anticipated) EU accession

4.4. Identity politics in the post-2004 period

4.5. The impact of immigration across Turkish-Cypriot political party narratives (1995-2013)

4.6. Conclusion

4.1. Introduction

This chapter analyses how and to what extent the mainstream political parties in northern Cyprus have articulated the experience of immigration from Turkey within wider discourses on identity. In other words, it places the presence of populations from Turkey at the heart of party politics in northern Cyprus and tries to account for continuity and change in the extent to which immigration and other closely related issues, most notably the citizenship status of Turkish immigrants are represented and instrumentalised within established party-political discourses. While diverse conceptualisations of immigration/settlement are the most significant in this process, they are delineated here also in tandem with other contextual elements that constitute the ‘shared repertoire’ of collective identity discourses in the Turkish-Cypriot community (see section 3.4 in Chapter 3). Specific attention is thus paid to attitudes toward the EU as well as the centrality of the Cyprus issue and the bilateral relations with Turkey within different identity discourses, wherein concepts such as ‘isolations’, ‘solution’, ‘statehood’, ‘EU integration’ and ‘(Turkish) tutelage’ are also explored throughout.

The chapter is divided into four sections. The first section (4.2) sets the scene by introducing the main political parties in northern Cyprus and the central themes of their narratives on identity. In the next two sections (4.3 and 4.4) the impact of Turkish immigration-settlement on their identity rhetoric is analysed diachronically across two distinct time periods distinguished by Cyprus's accession into the EU i.e. pre-2004 and post-2004 era respectively. For the sake of analytical clarity, party discourses are presented largely in the context of Turkish-Cypriot legislative elections that fall within the main timeframe of this study. Section 4.5 provides a summarizing account which highlights the continuity and change in the framing of immigration-settlement within multiple identity discourses until recently. The final section (4.6) links the empirical findings to the conceptual framework developed earlier in Chapter 2 and addresses the working hypotheses.

4.2. Turkish-Cypriot Political Parties: An Overview

The institutional development of Turkish-Cypriot politics can be traced back to the first half of the twentieth century when Turkish-Cypriot intra-elite competition intensified partly in response to the *enosis* campaign led by nationalists in the Greek-Cypriot community (see section 3.2 in Chapter 3). During this time, Turkish-Cypriot political elites competed with each other for positions in the central and local administrative mechanisms but also began organising politically in their own nationalist platforms (see sections 3.2 and 3.3 in Chapter 3). Much of the basic

alignments of the Turkish-Cypriot political elite in this period were maintained when Cyprus gained independence in August 1960.⁶⁸

When the bi-communal partnership collapsed in December 1963 following the outbreak of inter-communal violence, Turkish-Cypriots abandoned their positions in the government and in civil service; many civilians also retreated into ethnic enclaves and began living under a separate authority.⁶⁹ The impact of the Turkish-Cypriot enclavement for the domestic politics of that community were profound. In effect, all forms of political opposition towards the monolithic Turkish-Cypriot leadership was deflected on the basis of 'national unity' and with reference to an existential threat (see 3.3 in Chapter 3). Rather paradoxically perhaps, it was only with the ultimate, *de facto* division of the island in 1974 into Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot areas that a multiparty system would be introduced in the unrecognised Turkish-Cypriot polity (Kaymak, 2009: 234).

In 1975, as a prelude to self-styled independence, a 'Turkish Federated State of Cyprus's (*Kıbrıs Türk Federe Devleti*) was declared with parliamentary elections scheduled a year later, in 1976. At the same time, a 'constitutional assembly' (*Kurucu Meclis*) was set up with the task of

⁶⁸ The new constitution of the Republic provided for separate lists for the two communities to elect their own representatives for the Assembly and for the segregated legislative chambers responsible for communal matters including education, culture, religious matters, etc. Article 62, 93 and 94 respectively; Constitution of the Republic of Cyprus (1960).

⁶⁹ It is important to note again the conflicting views on this point. Turkish-Cypriot side maintains that they were effectively excluded from the government and that the continuing mortal threat as well as the blockade of the enclaves by the Greek-Cypriots left them with no choice but to set up their own administrative structures within the enclaves. The Greek-Cypriot contention is that since 1963 'Turkish-Cypriots wilfully abstain from their duties', Loucaides in Dodd (1992: 38).

drafting a constitution for the new statelet. Remarkably, the assembly consisted of a considerable number of critics who played an important role not only in the shaping of the constitution but also of the Turkish-Cypriot politics as a whole later on, with the emergence of organised opposition groups. The 'Republican Turkish Party' (CTP) was established several years earlier, in 1970 under the difficult conditions of enclavement dominated by nationalist politics in opposition to the monolithic Turkish-Cypriot leadership headed by Dr Fazil Kuchuk and later, by Rauf Denktash (see below). The now-defunct 'Populist Party' (HP) was the next to appear (4 August 1975) and was shortly followed by the 'National Unity Party' (UBP, 11 October 1975) founded by Denktash though as the President of the TFSC he no longer led.⁷⁰ A splinter party, 'Communal Liberation Party' (TKP) was set up a year later (18 March 1976) by a group of schoolteachers and dissident TMT veterans who departed from the HP shortly before the general elections (see below).

While all four political parties were successful in securing seats in the Assembly, it was Denktash's UBP that nonetheless came out with a clear victory.⁷¹ From then on, the UBP would go on to dominate the political affairs of the Turkish-Cypriot community with an impressive electoral history of obtaining clear majority in six general elections since 1976 (see below).

⁷⁰ Nejat Konuk succeeded Denktash in 1976 as the new leader of the UBP.

⁷¹The UBP became the first party with 53.7% of the votes and secured 30 seats out of the total 40 followed by TKP 20.2% with; the CTP 12.9%, and the HP 11.7%; see Fig.4 below.

'National Unity Party' (Ulusal Birlik Partisi, UBP)

If the nationalist Turkish-Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash was the mastermind behind the notorious *taksim* policy which ultimately led to partition and the 'Declaration of Independence' in 1983 (though arguably with the blessing of the Turkish government and military alike) his 'National Unity Party' (the UBP hereinafter) was the main political platform for his nationalist ideas that dominated politics of the Turkish-Cypriot community for the greater part of the administration's history. As such, the UBP has invariably and ferociously championed independent statehood in the form of 'TRNC' which it had assisted Denktash in its conception (UBP, 1998). In this context, the Party is a staunch advocate of 'ever-closer' links with Turkey, conceived not only in geo-strategic terms that denotes the latter clear political/military rights in relation to Cyprus, but also in nationalist-mythological terms as the 'motherland' that the TRNC (as the so-called 'infant-land' or *yavruvatan* in Turkish) and the 'Turks of Cyprus' depends for its security and well-being (see below).

Within this 'motherland/infant-land' narrative moreover, identity is conceived not in *sui generis* terms but as a form of ethnic/local variation in which *Turkishness* takes pride of place and signifies belonging to the larger Turkish nation. As the party programme states: 'The Turkish-Cypriot people are an indivisible part of the Turkish nation. We share Turkish history, culture, language, religion and scientific heritage' (UBP, 1998, Art.8). The 'Cyprus Problem' is also defined within this identitarian vein as a conflict between that of *Turkishness* versus the grand ideology

of Hellenism (interview no.1). The UBP has consistently argued that the Turkish military intervention in 1974 did in fact, bring with it peace and stability to Cyprus by ultimately resolving the 'Cyprus conflict' that was incited by the Greek-Cypriots and threatened the very Turkish existence in Cyprus (interview no.1). In line with much of the official narratives, the UBP has also argued that the 'Turkish-Cypriot people'⁷² whose right to self-determination was endorsed by the 1960 Constitution that had established the independent Cyprus was effectively 'thrown-out' of this partnership Republic by means of violence (interview no.2).

The UBP's ethno-nationalist narrative further links the controversial issue of immigration-settlement from mainland Turkey onto the 'Cyprus Problem' and its resolution (Fig. 6). In this sense, the Party does not differentiate between a Turkish national and a Turkish-Cypriot (considered here as 'ethnic-kins') but also emphasises the importance of having a large Turkish-Cypriot population in order to safeguard Turkish-Cypriot rights within any future settlement that would introduce demographically-based consociational arrangements (interview no.1 and no.2). As it will be elaborated further below, immigration into northern Cyprus is also favoured in neo-liberal economic terms, not only as 'cheap labour' that fills the gaps in the labour market but also as 'human stock' that is needed for the growth of the Turkish-Cypriot economy (interview no.1 and no.2).

⁷² Such references to the 'Turkish-Cypriot people' or 'Turks of Cyprus's in the nationalist narrative (favoured by the UBP) are semantically important as they denote an exclusionary national status vis-à-vis the Greek-Cypriots while maintaining a hierarchy of *Turkishness*; the term 'community' on the other hand is often used to signify commitment to the bi-communal character and tradition of Cyprus.

Figure 6. Turkish-Cypriot party positions

Name	In-group	Out-group	Position(s) on immigration-settlement
<p>National Union Party (UBP) (Right, conservative)</p> <p>Key personalities: Derviş Eroğlu (Leader, 1983-2005, 2008-2010)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - favour <i>Turkishness</i> - 'Turkish-Cypriotness' not a distinct identity but an ethnic/local variation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Greek-Cypriots ('bastions of Hellenism', 'existential threat') - The EU (pro-Greek) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ethnic kinship ties - economic arguments ('much-needed workforce', 'immigration as economic benefit') - demographic arguments re. the 'Cyprus Problem'
<p>Democratic Party (DP) (Right, conservative)</p> <p>Key personalities: Serdar Denktaş (Leader, 1992-current)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - favour <i>Turkishness</i> - 'Turkish-Cypriotness' not a distinct identity but an ethnic/local variation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Greek-Cypriots ('bastions of Hellenism', 'existential threat') - The EU (pro-Greek) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ethnic kinship ties, 'civic' arguments - economic arguments ('much-needed workforce', 'immigration as economic benefit') - demographic arguments re. the 'Cyprus Problem'
<p>Republican Turkish Party (CTP) (Centre-left, liberal)</p> <p>Key personalities: Özker Özgür (Leader, 1976-1996); Mehmet Ali Talat (Leader, 1996-2005)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Civil/cultural conceptions of <i>Cypriotness, sui-generis</i> - antagonises <i>Turkishness</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Turkish immigrants, settlers - Turkey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - form of cultural assimilation & electoral manipulation - consolidates 'Turkish hegemony'
<p>Communal Democracy Party (TDP)⁷³ (Centre-left, liberal)</p> <p>Key personalities: Mustafa Akıncı (Leader: 1987-2001, 2003-2007)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Civil/cultural conceptions of <i>Cypriotness, sui-generis</i> - antagonises <i>Turkishness</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Turkish immigrants, settlers - Turkey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - form of cultural assimilation & electoral manipulation - consolidates 'Turkish hegemony'

⁷³ The Communal Democracy Party (*Toplumcu Demokrasi Partisi* or the TDP) was set up in 2009 to replace the earlier TKP and BDH.

'Democratic Party' (Demokrat Parti, DP)

The 'Democratic Party' (DP hereinafter) was founded in 1992 against the collapse of the grand political fellowship between President Denktash and the UBP. More specifically, the internal wrangling for power within the party, between somewhat 'moderate' Denktash supporters (led by Hakkı Atun but also the President's son, Serdar Denktash) and those that had gathered around its charismatic (and arguably more nationalist) new leader Derviş Eroğlu, led to the former breaking away from it to set up the Democratic Party (DP).⁷⁴ The party, spearheaded by President Denktash himself (and led by his son, Serdar Denktash, since 1996) came to attract those liberals that no longer felt comfortable with the hawkish line of Eroğlu (see below). Also by taking full advantage of Denktash Sr.'s personal prestige, the DP soon became a significant rival for the UBP within right-wing politics. Ideologically, the party shares a number of common positions with its rival UBP, most visibly in its commitment to the 'TRNC'.⁷⁵ The DP's narrative on the 'Cyprus Conflict' also overlaps with that of the UBP's, defined in identitarian terms as the struggle to uphold *Turkishness* against Greek nationalism and British colonialism (DP, 1998).

Nonetheless, the DP's rhetoric on 'Turkish-Cypriotness' also displays a number of important divergences when compared with its ideological counterpart. Most importantly, for the DP, 'Turkish-Cypriotness' implies a *sui generis* identity based on a distinct Turkish-Cypriot

⁷⁴ For a detailed discussion of the friction between Denktash and Eroğlu which ultimately led to the emergence of the Democratic Party, see Dodd (1992) but also Sonan (2014).

⁷⁵ As noted above, the party was largely masterminded by President Denktash and has retained strong patrimonial ties with the latter who had been the staunchest advocate of Turkish-Cypriot statehood; see also, DP (1998).

culture and above all, statehood (interview no.3). In this vein, from the mid-1990s onward, the party began to argue the case for the so-called ‘Turkish-Cypriot nationalism’ as a form of civic nationalism in which the Turkish-Cypriot state (TRNC) represents the Turkish-Cypriot community whose membership is regulated by a combination of citizenship ties and active citizenry (interview no.3). This particular conception of ‘Turkish-Cypriotness’ also links the controversial presence of Turkish settlers onto the civic-national ideas of citizenship. In this sense, ‘regardless of their formal citizenship status’ any person ‘who consider themselves Turkish-Cypriot, subscribe to TRNC’s political creed and to its shared set of values and practices’ are, for the DP, members of the Turkish-Cypriot community (interview no.4).

‘Republican Turkish Party’ (Cumhuriyetçi Türk Partisi, CTP)

The ‘Republican Turkish Party’ (CTP)⁷⁶ was founded in 1970 by a group of moderates led by Ahmet Mithat Berberoğlu. While the party did not espouse any radical policies at the time, the fact that it posed a challenge to Denktash’s authority allowed the party to project an image of dissent.⁷⁷ Indeed, Denktash frequently accused the party of passing on information to the Greek-Cypriots and Berberoğlu himself was implicitly accused of being a ‘traitor’.⁷⁸ The CTP would move further left of the ideological spectrum in the 1980s when a group of Marxist

⁷⁶ In 2003, the CTP expanded its name to “Republican Turkish Party – United Forces [Cumhuriyetçi Türk Partisi – Birleşik Güçler]” in a bid to appeal to a wider constituency (see below). For consistency, the CTP acronym is used hereinafter.

⁷⁷ In fact, as Kizilyurek (2002) notes, the party defined itself as nationalist and ‘Kemalist’.

⁷⁸ Berberoğlu was the only candidate to stand against Denktash in the 1973 elections but stood down at the last minute after allegedly being threatened with death by the Turkish Embassy. For a detailed account of the events that surrounded Berberoğlu candidacy, see Attalides (2003)

university students would take over the party leadership upon their return from higher education in Turkey. During this time, the party professed socialism with a more vocal, anti-imperialist discourse and a clear orientation towards the Soviet Union.⁷⁹

The CTP also came to be defined by its association with the Greek-Cypriot communists, organised under AKEL.⁸⁰ Together with AKEL, it argued strongly for a new partnership with the Greek-Cypriot community in a bi-zonal, federal state (Hastürer, 2005). In this sense, the party narrated the 'Cyprus Problem' in somewhat more reconciliatory terms as a conflict instigated by imperial powers in close cooperation with nationalists on both sides. It was also during this time that it became highly critical of President Denktash and his self-styled Turkish nationalism that not only championed integration with 'motherland Turkey' but also denied the Turkish-Cypriot community of a distinct collective identity (interview no.5). From then on, the party became a firm supporter of federal reunification that was largely regarded as the only means to ultimately end the Turkish nationalist hegemony and uphold the distinct identity of the Turkish-Cypriot community.

It was also within this context that immigration from mainland Turkey that had begun in the aftermath of the Turkish military intervention in 1974 came to be seen as part of a wider 'imperialist strategy' to consolidate Turkish influence in Cyprus (see below). From the late 1980s onwards, led by the charismatic leader Özker Özgür, the CTP became a vocal critic of President

⁷⁹ Beratlı (2009); for a discussion of the party's Soviet orientation see also Ismail (2005).

⁸⁰ For a critical assessment of the CTP's relationship with AKEL, see Özgür (2002).

Denktash, the nationalist UBP but also the so-called ‘BEY regime’⁸¹ dubbed to signify the protectoral regime ruled behind the scenes by the TMT leadership⁸² and through the regular meddling of the Turkish embassy⁸³; the party also came to be a fervent opponent of ‘the transfer of population from mainland Turkey’ and the granting of citizenship status to Turkish nationals that it claimed, undermined Turkish-Cypriot political autonomy and threatened its cultural identity (see below, section 4.3 in Chapter 4).

Furthermore, with the end of the Cold War and from the mid-1990s onwards the CTP began to couple its firm commitment to a federal settlement with a robust support for EU membership which was included in its programme for the first time in 1990 (CTP, 2011). At the turn of the century and with the EU accession for Cyprus fast approaching, the party came to play a critical role in the unprecedented and spectacular mobilisation of the Turkish-Cypriot community in favour of reunification and EU membership. It was also during this time that the party also rebranded itself to attract wider support not only from the civil society but from the large ‘settler’ constituency. The Party’s rhetoric was modified to represent a more-inclusive notion of ‘Turkish-Cypriotness’ in which identity was articulated together with citizenship ties and with reference to human rights. Earlier concerns with relation to immigration and the

⁸¹ *Bayraktar ve Elçilik Yonetimi*; The acronym was widely used to describe the tight grip of the TMT leadership [*Bayraktar*] and the Turkish Embassy [*Elçilik*] on Turkish-Cypriot affairs.

⁸² *Bayraktar* (a standard-bearer in English) was the codename given to the military commander appointed by Turkey to head the Turkish-Cypriot paramilitary organisation TMT; the opposition frequently claimed that while officially defunct, the TMT hierarchy had remained in the post-partition period to maintain the nationalist grip on the Turkish-Cypriot community.

⁸³ So much was the influence of Turkish embassy in internal politics even after the partition in 1974 that as one former Turkish ambassador recalled ‘the number two in the Turkish embassy used to attend all cabinet meetings, act like a second prime minister and later in the day report to the ambassador’ (İnanç, 2007: 100).

withering away of the Turkish-Cypriot identity were also downplayed, until recently (see below, section 4.4 in this chapter) when the Party begun re-asserting a visibly securitised notion of identity not only in relation to the citizenship status of Turkish immigrants/settlers but also in the context of bilateral relations with Turkey.

'Communal Democracy Party' (Toplumcu Demokrasi Partisi, TDP)

The 'Communal Democracy Party' (the TDP hereinafter) was established in 2007 and has replaced the two social democratic parties, the BDH and its predecessor, the TKP.⁸⁴ The TKP was set up first in 1976 by a group of TMT veterans led by Alpay Durduran who departed from the 'Populist Party' (HP) which they founded with another group of teachers from the Teachers' Union (KTÖS) shortly before the 1981 general elections. What made the TKP a strong contender was its high-profile deputies from TMT background (like Nalbantoğlu and Bozkurt) as well as the young and dynamic civil society representatives, most notably from the oppositional KTÖS.⁸⁵ The TKP, which identified itself as 'democratic left' increased its support during the 1990s especially in Nicosia largely thanks to its new charismatic leader, Mustafa Akıncı who served three terms as

⁸⁴ BDH: 'Peace and Democracy Movement' [*Barış ve Demokrasi Hareketi*]; TKP: 'Communal Liberation Party' [*Toplumcu Kurtuluş Partisi*]

⁸⁵ As one of the founding members, recalls, TKP came into being when an initial attempt to unite under the banner of the CTP failed and the six members of the parliamentary opposition (known as the 'libertarians' or *özgürlükçüler* in Turkish) which had resigned from the HP decided to establish a new party (Azgın, 2012) ; KTÖS' association with the TKP and its politics is elaborated further in the following chapter

mayor of Nicosia and became known for his reconciliatory efforts together with his Greek-Cypriot counterpart, Lellos Demetriades.⁸⁶

The TDP, like its predecessors, is a left-leaning party and defines itself as social democratic (TDP, 2013). To this end, it has championed reunification efforts in Cyprus to create a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation and fully supports EU membership. The TDP is also a consistent advocate of ‘Turkish-Cypriotness’ which emphasises the ‘indigenous’, ‘autonomous’, and above all, the ‘Cypriot’ element of such belonging (interview no. 7). This is articulated together with a vocal stance against direct Turkish interference in domestic Turkish-Cypriot affairs as well as other implicit yet systematic attempts engineered by Ankara to arguably undermine Turkish-Cypriot culture (interview no.8). In this sense, the Party has fervently opposed the Turkish immigration into northern Cyprus, the large-scale naturalisation of Turkish nationals and more recently the introduction of controversial policies on religious education in northern Cyprus that is claimed to be part of a larger ‘social-engineering’ agenda of the AKP government in Turkey to ultimately assimilate Turkish-Cypriot identity and impose political Islam in northern Cyprus (see below). While the TDP’s electoral success to date remains limited (see Figures 7 and 8 below), it has nonetheless secured representation at every legislative election since its original founding in 1976.

⁸⁶ The two mayors despite much opposition from the political leaderships on both sides, worked together with the UN and other international organisations on joint projects including upgrading the sewage system but also agreeing on a ‘Master Plan’ for a unified Nicosia (Akinci, 2010).

Outside the mainstream party-politics lie a number of smaller political parties that do not have parliamentary representation.⁸⁷ Indeed, others have noted (Sozen, 2009; Kaymak, 2010) there is a clear tendency towards the mainstream or the centre in Turkish-Cypriot party politics. In any case, on the left of the political spectrum are the 'New Cyprus Party' (or the YKP) that had replaced the earlier *Yurtsever Birlik Hareketi* (the YBH), and the 'United Cyprus Party' (the BKP led by İzzet İzcan) which split from it. These two pro-EU and pro-reunification parties are vocal critics of the Turkish presence in northern Cyprus and subscribe to socialist ideas. To the extreme right is the 'National Justice Party' (*Milliyetçi Adalet Partisi*, or MAP), which is defined by an ultra-nationalist discourse and has naturally favoured ever-closer ties with Turkey. Apart from the YKP which boycotts parliamentary elections since the late 1990s, these minor parties have traditionally received very small numbers of votes, thus failing to secure representation at the Parliament.

⁸⁷ These parties are not part of the investigation undertaken in this study.

Figure 7. Turkish-Cypriot parliamentary elections (1976-2013)⁸⁸

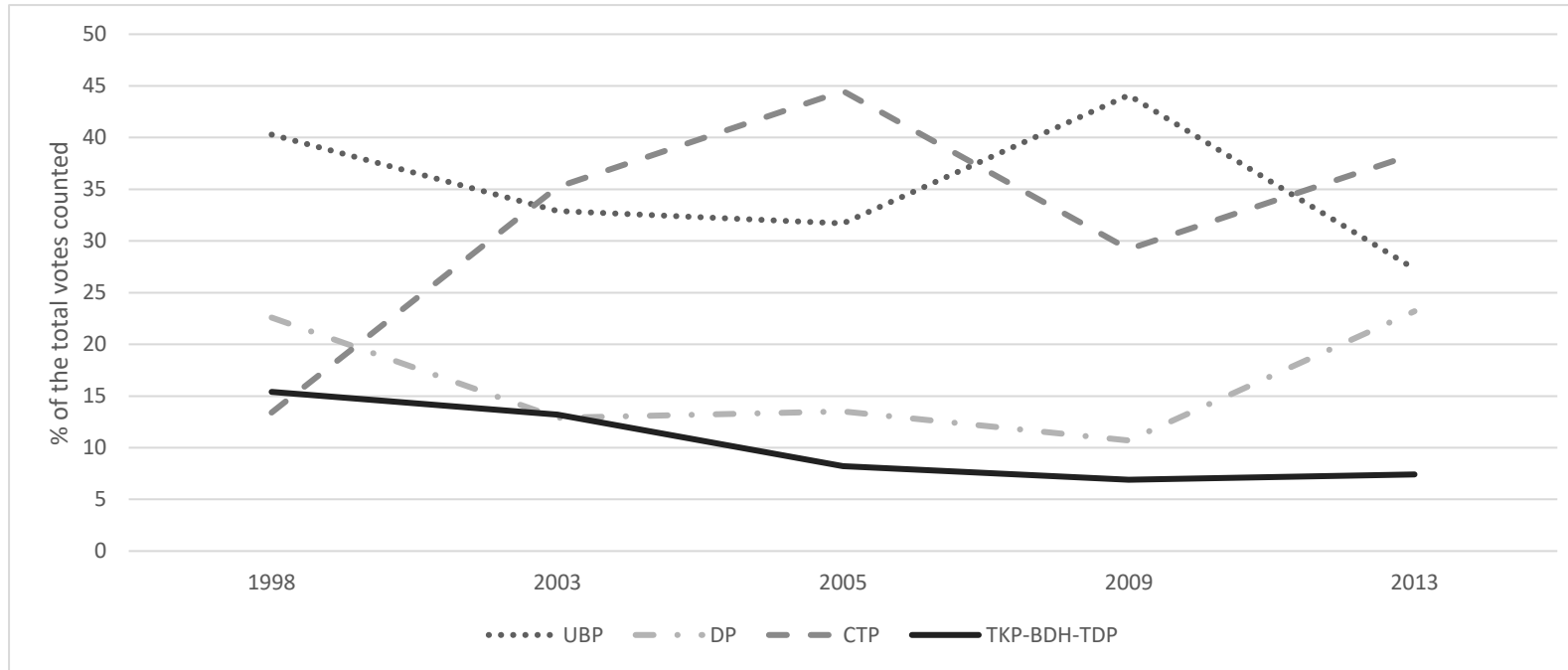
	1976		1981		1985		1990		1993		1998		2003		2005		2009		2013	
	Seats	%	Seats	%	Seats	%	Seats	%	Seats	%	Seats	%	Seats	%	Seats	%	Seats	%	Seats	%
CTP	2	12.9	6	15.1	12	21.4			13	24.2	6	13.4	19	35.2	24	44.5	15	29.2	21	38.4
TKP	6	20.2	13	28.5	10	15.8			16	13.3	7	15.4			-	2.4				
UBP	30	53.7	18	42.5	24	36.7	34	54.7	?	29.8	24	40.3	18	32.9	19	31.7	26	44.1	14	27.3
DP									5	29.2	13	22.6	7	12.9	6	13.5	5	10.7	12	23.2
DHP	2	11.7	2	8.1	?	7.4														
TBP			1	5.5																
TDP⁸⁹																	2	6.9	3	7.4
YDP					4	8.8														
BDH													6	13.2	1	5.8				
CABP															-	1.97				
KAP															-	0.6				
YP															-	1.6				
DMP⁹⁰							16	44.5												
MAP															-	0.5				
ORP																	2	6.2		
BKP																	-	2.4	-	3.1
HISP																	-	0.5		
Other		1.5		0.7		12.6		0.8		3.5		8.3								0.6

⁸⁸ Left-wing parties who have aligned themselves with the oppositional *Cypriotness* camp are presented in lighter colours; UBP and DP (presented in darker colours) are the mainstream right-wing parties favouring Turkish nationalism; all election results available online at the 'TRNC Supreme Electoral Council' website: www.ysk.mahkemeler.net [Last accessed 10/09/14]

⁸⁹ The Communal Democracy Party (*Toplumcu Demokrasi Partisi* or the TDP) was set up in 2009 to replace the earlier TKP and BDH.

⁹⁰ The DMP was set up in 1990 as an electoral alliance between the CTP, TKP and the now defunct YDP.

Figure. 8 Electoral performance of the mainstream parties over the selected timeframe (1995-2013)



4.3. The framing of immigration and citizenship on the eve of the (anticipated) EU accession

For most part of the pre-1995 period, the political agendas in northern Cyprus were dominated by domestic disputes relating little to international developments or the settlement of the 'Cyprus Problem'; in the 1980s, land distribution and rehousing policies in what came to be known as the 'refugee issue' dominated the political debates and set the electoral platforms as thousands of Turkish-Cypriot refugees who had left their homes in the south, fled into the Turkish-controlled areas.⁹¹ Among other internal disputes during this time was the introduction of Turkish Lira (TL) in 1983 to replace the Cyprus Pounds (CYP) as prime currency. While the pound, in real exchange terms, was almost sixty times higher than the Turkish Lira (1 CYP=60 TL), Turkish-Cypriot banks were allowed to depreciate the value of the pound by almost as much as 50 percent (1 CYP = 36 TL) resulting in many Turkish-Cypriots who had Cyprus Pounds accounts losing half of their assets overnight.⁹²

As the UBP became particularly vulnerable on these issues following its poor electoral performance in 1981⁹³, the Party together with President Denktash stepped up its rhetoric against the left by exploiting the 'national cause'⁹⁴ and declaring any disapproval of the official

⁹¹ For an extensive account of the Turkish-Cypriot refugee experience, see Bryant (2012).

⁹² Figures cited in Mehmetcik (2008).

⁹³ These economic and social issues would turn voters away from the ruling UBP in 1981 general elections; its share of the votes declined from 53 percent in 1976 to only 40 percent in 1981 whilst the left (the CTP and the TKP) which fought a campaign based on the charges of impotence of the government in tackling the 'refugee issue', and of nepotism, secured almost 44 percent of the votes.

⁹⁴ Or *milli dava* in Turkish, a nationalist reference to the 'Cyprus Problem' and the upholding of Turkish-Cypriot state, or the TRNC.

positions on the Cyprus issue an act of national sacrilege; indeed, both the CTP and the TKP frequently came under heavy attack with such accusations during this time and were simply labelled 'traitors' when they expressed discontent or challenged the Turkish nationalist hegemony (*Milliyet*: 1985a, 1985b).

Yet, it was also during this period that a new cleavage began to make a bold appearance in political debates that would provide the left with an opportunity to challenge the establishment. Following the leadership change which saw Özker Özgür becoming the new chairman of the Party in 1976, the CTP was the first to take the centre-stage in voicing radical views on Turkish immigration and the naturalisation of Turkish settlers by the Turkish-Cypriot leadership. The CTP's arguments, under Özgür, explicitly linked immigration from mainland Turkey and the granting of citizenship rights to Turkish settlers onto wider debates on identity and societal security. In a more political vein, for Özgür and the CTP which he led, the granting of citizenship status to Turkish nationals amounted to the manipulation of electoral demography in favour of President Denktash and the ruling UBP in order to consolidate Turkish tutelage in Turkish-Cypriot affairs.

The settler controversy would first blow up on the eve of the leadership elections in 1985 when the CTP candidate Özgür openly accused Denktash, during live broadcast, of buying out voters and 'importing' additional ones from mainland Turkey (*Ortam*, 1985). As Özgür recounted a year later in an interview published in the Party's mouthpiece *Yenidüzen* newspaper: 'the size of the electorate, in the period between the [constitutional] referendum and the parliamentary

elections [48 days], had gone up by 4,000. These 4,000 people did not suddenly fall from the sky. They were brought in from Turkey for this purpose [...] they are actually implanted voters' (*Yenidüzen*, 1986b). As Özker continued: 'those who were imported from Turkey [...] got off the ferryboats [...] and were able to vote just by using their Turkish national ID cards' (*Yenidüzen*, 1986b). On the same day, another high-ranking CTP official, Ferdi Soyer (who would later become the vice-president of the party and serve a term as Prime Minister) was also calling for a halt to what he described as an 'invasion' by the 'so-called tourists [...] with a passport and merely [some pocket money] coming here to find work [...] for rock-bottom wages [...] and taking jobs away [...] from our young people' (Soyer, 1986). His article, penned mainly as a reaction to the rape of an 8-year-old boy by a Turkish national, argued that it was now time to solve this 'cancerous problem of unauthorised workers' entering the country on tourist visas, which not only meant lack of jobs for the local people but an ultimate social meltdown.⁹⁵

From the late-1980s onwards, growing international attention would also maintain the issue of Turkish migration on the political agenda (see also section 3.2 in Chapter 3). In 1992, the so-called 'Cuco Report' was published by the Council of Europe urging the Turkish-Cypriot and Turkish authorities to limit the new arrivals and to conduct a 'viable census'. The Cuco Report also provided an account of the divergent Turkish and Greek-Cypriot positions on Turkish settlers. The 'Republican Turkish Party' (CTP), for its part, argued in Cuco's report that Turkish immigration into northern Cyprus had begun on the pretext of economic necessity but "drastically altered"

⁹⁵ Fast-track 'tourist' visas are granted to Turkish nationals who then can stay up to 90 days in northern Cyprus though without any rights to hold employment or use 'public funds'. It is claimed that many then overstay their visas and take-up jobs as unauthorised workers.

the Turkish-Cypriot cultural identity. The report also quoted the CTP chairman, Ferdi Soyer, for claiming that large-scale naturalisation of Turkish immigrants would take place almost invariably before elections and that such arbitrary naturalisations was the main reason behind the CTP's decision to boycott the Parliament after the elections in 1990.⁹⁶ In relation to the 'Cyprus problem', the CTP also claimed that Turkish immigration into northern Cyprus was yet another obstacle to brokering a peace deal (Cuco, 1992).

Another opposition heavyweight and the leader of the social-democratic TKP at the time, Mustafa Akıncı, also reiterated similar claims in the 'Cuco report'. Akıncı argued that the new wave of immigration which began in the aftermath of the 'settler recruitment programme' (see section 3.3 in Chapter 3) had caused a drop in local wages for the 'indigenous' Turkish Cypriots which meant that young Turkish-Cypriots were now forced to emigrate into other countries at worrying numbers in search of better economic prospects. Akıncı also argued that an earlier decision of the authorities to lift the passport requirement for Turkish nationals while travelling to northern Cyprus (see section 3.3 in Chapter 3) would further accelerate the 'transfer of population' from mainland Turkey. Indeed, such prospects of 'being swamped' by Turkish immigrants deeply troubled the TKP and the CTP who both believed that this would only further undermine Turkish-Cypriot autonomy but also endanger their cultural identity.

⁹⁶ In 1990, the CTP entered the elections together with the TKP and the YDP under the 'Democratic Struggle Party' (DMP) largely as a response to a controversial change in the electoral system that was designed arguably to exclude smaller parties from the Turkish-Cypriot assembly, *Kıbrıs Postası*, 1990a; both the CTP and the TKP then refused to take up their seats at the end of the elections claiming that the elections were not only undemocratic but also rigged. Their allegations were later backed by a Parliamentary Committee set up to direct the inquiry, for the full report see KKTC (1997), pp. 195-8.

It was against this backdrop that Cyprus's EU membership process would soon act as a new dynamic and have an intriguing effect on how the Turkish-Cypriot political parties conceived immigration-settlement from Turkey and mobilized collective identity in the Turkish-Cypriot community in particular.

From the start, the Turkish-Cypriot left overwhelmingly supported EU membership for Turkish-Cypriots in a reunited, federal Cyprus.⁹⁷ This support was primarily based on the belief that EU membership would bring about the international recognition of the community and foster economic growth, thus stemming the worrisome flight of Turkish-Cypriots from the island. An additional subtext, more remarkably, was that the latter would safeguard the Turkish-Cypriot community and its 'authentic' identity against political and demographic assimilation from Turkey. Put differently, the Turkish-Cypriot opposition believed that EU membership would end northern Cyprus's economic reliance on Turkey, curtail the interference of Ankara in Turkish-Cypriot affairs (by fortifying the latter's autonomy within a federal sovereignty) and stem not only the outflow of 'native' Turkish-Cypriots but also the much-resented influx of Turkish immigrants and their 'wholesale' naturalisation. These latent worries however, were progressively contained within the oppositional articulation of demands for greater democracy and peace that EU membership came to signify.⁹⁸

⁹⁷ *Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly* (1994); see also *Le Monde* (1998)

⁹⁸ This is further elaborated in section 4.5 in this chapter.

The right-wing parties (the DP and the UBP), on the other hand, aligned themselves with the official line of President Denktash and the Turkish government, opposing vehemently towards any such moves by the EU to extend membership to the Republic of Cyprus which the Turkish-Cypriot side considered 'illegal' (Joint Declaration, 1995). Both DP and the UBP also retaliated by adapting a bolder nationalist rhetoric, claiming that EU membership would only create renewed conditions for *enosis* (see section 3.2 in Chapter 3). Indeed, as Diez (2002: 146) noted, when the EU membership entered into the political agenda in the 1990s, it was portrayed 'as an existential threat to the Turkish-Cypriot community's identity'.

The impact of the EU on oppositional discourses began to appear in the run up to the legislative elections in 1998. Indeed, the 'Cyprus issue' dominated the election campaigns of the Turkish-Cypriot political parties, reflecting to a large extent international developments in relation to the country's EU accession (see section 3.4 in Chapter 3). While the CTP's Party Programme clearly stated that 'the inflow of foreigners hinders the shaping of a Turkish Cypriot will and threatens their existence' (1998: 13), the 'settler issue' was largely omitted from electoral debates. The CTP under its new leader Mehmet Ali Talat⁹⁹ emphasised instead that Cyprus's EU membership process had indirectly imposed a timetable for the peace negotiations which could be turned into an opportunity for both sides to reach a settlement. The CTP also continued to stress that settling the 'Cyprus problem' had an existential importance for the

⁹⁹ Following a fierce leadership battle between Özker Özgür and Mehmet Ali Talat, the 1996 (extraordinary) Party Congress announced Talat as the new CTP leader. A year later, the party organised another historic conference and replaced its infamous manifesto clause "mass party of the proletariat" with the title "socialist". These developments would culminate in the dramatic exile of Özgür from the party in 1998. Özgür went on to set up the 'Patriotic Union Movement' with İzzet İzcan the same year.

Turkish-Cypriot community to overcome the 'structural problems' such as the struggling economy and to halt the drastic shrinking of its population through Turkish-Cypriot emigration.¹⁰⁰ For its part, the social-democratic TKP also warned during this time that EU membership of a still-divided Cyprus would dramatically escalate the scale of Turkish-Cypriot emigration from the island (*Kıbrıs*, 1997). It also continued to argue that Turkish-Cypriots were now 'outnumbered' as a result of the outflow of Turkish Cypriots and the influx of Turkish immigrants who now replaced them. Rather paradoxically however, and in a similar strategy to that of the CTP's, immigration-settlement did not feature prominently in TKP's electoral campaign either. Instead, the party chose to make 'sovereign statehood' its campaign focus reflected in its slogan, 'We will succeed together [*Birlikte başaracağız*]'.¹⁰¹

Nationalist parties like the UBP and the DP, for their part, also largely omitted immigration-related matters from their rhetoric.¹⁰² The UBP maintained its hawkish rhetoric on

¹⁰⁰ Talat speech from the 1997 Conference 'Geleceğimiz Çözüm ve AB'dedir [Our future lies in a solution and EU Membership]' in *Halkın Sesi* (1997a).

¹⁰¹ Throughout its campaign, the party lamented that not enough effort was expended by either the Turkish-Cypriot authorities or Turkey to acquire international recognition for the TRNC. In this vein, the TKP argued for 'a stronger TRNC' that could act independently of Turkey together with a separate currency. As Akıncı put it: 'The currency we use is one of the most important indicators of the level of integration. We've been using the Turkish Lira [TL] in the past twenty-one years. We declared the KTFD [Turkish-Cypriot Federated State], then we proclaimed the KKTC [Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus] in the name of sovereign statehood. But somehow we've not managed act in the name of our sovereignty. We continue to rely on the TL [...] and on Turkish funds. Not a single step has been taken to uphold the sovereign identity of the TRNC' (Akıncı, 1995); nonetheless, the party maintained a pro-solution stance in 1998 elections favouring a bizonal and bicomunal federation based on political equality" (*Kıbrıs*, 10 November 1998) adding however, that Turkish-Cypriots had an alternative in the form of TRNC should the Greek-Cypriots fail to compromise (*Cyprus PIO*, 1998).

¹⁰² Domestically, the UBP focused instead on the economic problems which they promised to tackle with financial assistance from Turkey. In particular, the party emphasised its pro-Ankara credentials in implying that it was in a more favourable position to secure much-needed Turkish aid to facilitate economic recovery; it also attacked the CTP for its mishandling of the economy and with charges of incompetency whilst in government (1994–96). Indeed, as Hatay (2005: 37) notes: 'the CTP had been constantly accused of a lack of efficiency, partisanship and lack of

the ‘Cyprus problem’ and EU membership while clearly espousing closer integration with Turkey. Indeed, as Kızılyürek notes, Eroğlu during this time ‘became even more hawkish than Denktash and vehemently opposed not only the federal solution but also the Cypriot negotiations’ (Kızılyürek, 2012: 178). While echoing much of President Denktash’s nationalist rhetoric on the Cyprus issue, the DP also omitted immigration and the citizenship status of Turkish nationals from its electoral rhetoric (DP, 1998).

In the following years, the ‘Cyprus problem’ and the EU accession process would continue to dominate the political agendas. More remarkably, the unravelling of the ‘government crisis’¹⁰³ shortly followed by a ‘banking crisis’¹⁰⁴ would cause an unprecedented explosion of anger in the Turkish-Cypriot community and galvanise into the remarkable social movement organised around reunification and EU membership.¹⁰⁵ In the ferment of rage, the opposition CTP and TKP joined forces with other initiatives organised by the oppositional civil society (see section 5.2 in Chapter 5) and framed the twin political and financial crises in terms of the wholesale failure of

knowledge in how to run a state during its first stint in government. Most of the reforms the CTP had promised to carry out were not realized, or else failed during implementation’.

¹⁰³ The ‘government crisis’ was sparked when the Deputy Prime Minister Akıncı called for a constitutional amendment to bring the local police force under the jurisdiction of the interior ministry rather than the Turkish-Cypriot armed forces, run by a Turkish general who is appointed by Ankara. The Turkish general and then head of the armed forces responded by publicly accusing Akıncı of ‘treason’ (The Economist, 2000a) The tensions continued to run high when several journalists from the left-wing *Avrupa* newspaper who had written in support of Akıncı were detained on charges of espionage (*Hurriyet Daily News*, 2000a)

¹⁰⁴ For a detailed account of the ‘banking crisis’ which hit northern Cyprus in early 2000, see Sonan (2007). As Sonan notes, critical here was also the role of the Turkish government in Ankara. The Bülent Ecevit government in Turkey (1999-2002), in a radical departure from its earlier financial aid packages, tied the release of the much-needed rescue funds to the endorsement of an IMF-style austerity package. The tactical manoeuvring by Ankara to also frame the banking crisis in political terms as the ultimate failure of the ruling UBP in order to side-line Derviş Eroğlu and ensure another victory for Denktash would further fuel the public furore (see also section 6.3 in Chapter 6). The aid package was vehemently rejected in the Assembly by the opposition parties CTP and TKP with many MPs denouncing the stringent austerity measures in the package as the seeds of the community’s economic destruction.

¹⁰⁵ Lacher and Kaymak (2005); Ramm (2006); Yucel and Rustemli (2006), *op.cit.*

the status quo within a pro-solution and pro-EU discourse to mobilise against the nationalist UBP-Denktaş leadership. They ratcheted up the pressure on the establishment by holding general strikes, public rallies (see section 5.2 in Chapter 5, in particular) and even occupying the Parliament building for a brief period.¹⁰⁶

In the run up to the elections in 2003, the CTP continued to emphasise its overarching commitment to a federal solution and EU membership¹⁰⁷, once again muting its earlier appeal to Turkish immigration in its official campaign rhetoric. Underpinning such change at the discursive level was the introduction of the EU into party's rhetoric as a 'nodal point' (see 2.3 in Chapter 2) to articulate in tandem with other elements its vision of the political community and the collective identity attached to it (this is elaborated in detail below, see also 4.5 and 4.6 in Chapter 4). In this context, the newly adopted party manifesto emphasised that the development and prosperity of the Turkish-Cypriot community was inextricably linked to the adoption of EU norms and values (CTP, 2003). In addition, the party decided to modernise and re-brand itself in its bid for electoral success. To this end, a new manifesto was adopted together with a new prefix – United Forces (*Birleşik Güçler*), to enable the party embrace its allies from the civil society on a

¹⁰⁶ "Hurriyet Daily News (2000c); With the bailout plans in disarray, in June 2000, Turkish-Cypriot authorities finally defaulted on their payment of public sector salaries, pensions as well as the payment of compensation to depositors, causing unprecedented acrimony against the political establishment. Similar to those scenes which ensued in the aftermath of the recent EU bail-out protests held in the southern part of the island in 2013 scores of Turkish-Cypriot depositors and their supporters demonstrated outside the assembly in July 2000 with abuse (and eggs!) being hurled at politicians widely blamed for the financial meltdown and the ensuing austerity measures many believed would devastate the Turkish-Cypriot community. The tension reached its peak when a group of protesters and trade union representatives broke the police barricade and entered into the assembly building. The brief but spectacular occupation of the Parliament ended when the police reacted with tear gas and swooped on dozens of protesters; Hurriyet Daily News (2000b)

¹⁰⁷As the party famously declared: 'A solution is at our doorstep, Europe is at our doorstep; the CTP [...], will fully push this door open and unite with the World and Europe', *Cyprus Mail* (2003a)

non-membership basis.¹⁰⁸

A clear indication of the CTP's discursive shift towards emphasising a more inclusive political community with an overarching reference to the EU was also evident in renewed efforts to form alliances with politicians and civil society organisations of Turkish mainland background. To this end, Nuri Çevikel, an academic and the founder of the now defunct 'TRNC Migrants Association' (*KKTC Göçmenler Derneği*) was approached. As the head of that association, Çevikel had spoken in the Turkish media as a staunch supporter of a Cyprus settlement based on the Annan Plan. He was also anti-establishment.¹⁰⁹ Çevikel was later approached to join the Republican Turkish Party in 2003 and subsequently elected as an MP for Famagusta in December.¹¹⁰

For its part, the TKP formed an alliance with the smaller leftist parties and transformed itself into the 'Peace and Democracy Movement' (BDH). The BDH's manifesto was also marked by a clear emphasis on the importance of EU membership for the future prospects of the Turkish-Cypriot community. It made an explicit link between EU membership and Turkish-Cypriot

¹⁰⁸The party's new name, approved at the party conference in November 2003, was intended to highlight that it now transcended the classical left-right dichotomy but also that it was 'united' in solidarity and thus stronger to strive towards 'a new Cyprus' and the defining goal of EU membership (interview no.6)

¹⁰⁹ As he described in an interview: 'We have been exploited for the last 29 years. We have been used and abused by the authorities [...] those who got into power with our support [if allowed] will exploit us again [during the elections] before throwing us back into the dustbin. As TRNC citizens of Turkish origin, we don't want to be exploited anymore. All we ask for is the observation of basic human rights and for the authorities to ensure that the rule of law is upheld' (Çevikel, 2003)

¹¹⁰ By the time the new CTP-DP coalition government sworn in by early 2004, he was at odds with the party's leadership. He eventually resigned from the CTP in May 2004 and sat a full-term as an Independent MP. He later set up the 'New Party' (*Yeni Parti*) in 2005 but this party failed to secure enough votes to reach the 5 percent threshold for a parliamentary seat. He later retired from politics altogether and returned to his academic career.

identity, claiming that: '[A solution to the Cyprus problem and subsequent EU membership] is essential to ensure Turkish-Cypriot self-rule and for the Turkish-Cypriot community's survival on the island in upholding its well-defined identity' (BDH, 2003). Once again, explicit anxieties related to immigration were largely downplayed in official campaign rhetorics.

Nevertheless, the ongoing naturalisation of Turkish immigrants in the run up to December's elections would maintain the issue of immigration-settlement on the political agenda. Indeed, while the introduction of the EU into CTP's identity discourse would serve to articulate a more inclusive notion of belonging on the basis of citizenship status at a rhetorical level, it would fall short of a complete overhaul of the Party's particularly securitised conception of citizenship in which the latter is chiefly associated with the autonomy of the ethno-culturally defined Turkish-Cypriot community.

At the heart of the citizenship dispute during this time was the fear of the Turkish-Cypriot opposition that their chances of ousting the nationalist leadership at December's elections were being undermined by the large-scale granting of citizenship rights to Turkish immigrants (*AFP*, 2003) In other words, Turkish settlers who had been given citizenship by the UBP-DP coalition government, the opposition feared, would seemingly oppose the 'Annan Plan' and torpedo Turkish-Cypriot prospects of joining the EU. To this end, in March 2003, the CTP set in motion a 'citizenship-stripping' battle by applying for a Supreme Court order to overturn 1600 citizenships granted since the last local elections held in June 2002. In parallel, the BDH (that now replaced TKP) sent a letter to the Council of Europe and asked for swift implementation of a recently

adopted resolution following the publication of another report on the demographic situation in northern Cyprus.¹¹¹ In October, the BDH submitted another application to the Supreme Court against the Ministry of Interior for an order to strike out all citizenships granted after 12 March 2003.¹¹²

Although there are no available figures on the numbers of settlers with 'TRNC' citizenship to establish with certainty the extent of the settler influence on the outcome of the elections in 2003, the poll results at the end of the race nonetheless showed that many had indeed supported the opposition, as some did indeed expect.¹¹³ The poll results also showed that the Turkish-Cypriot electorate was, for the first time, virtually split down the middle (*Kathimerini*, 2003b). The CTP emerged as the first party, winning 19 seats out of 50. BDH that ran on a slightly more radical platform came third and secured 6 seats. The right-wing parties collectively won the remainder 25 seats in the Assembly (see Fig.7).

¹¹¹ Laakso Report (named after the Finish Rapporteur Jaakko Laakso), officially entitled the 'Colonisation of Turkish settlers of the occupied part of Cyprus' was a radical departure from its predecessors. From the outset, the Report's title itself was a source of controversy, resulting in Turkish-Cypriot authorities' and politicians' refusal to be interviewed. Throughout the report, much in line with the official Greek-Cypriot discourse on the issue, Laakso argued that the Turkish-Cypriot policy of naturalisation constituted 'hidden colonisation' and that indigenous Turkish-Cypriots (87,000 in total by 2001, the Report claimed) were now outnumbered by 115,000 Turkish settlers who had been arriving into northern Cyprus since 1974. Laakso's findings were adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly of the CoE the same year which urged the Turkish-Cypriot authorities to immediately conduct a 'reliable census'. Endorsement of the Laakso Report was extensively covered by the Turkish-Cypriot newspapers and further fuelled the debates on Turkish immigrants and their citizenship rights (see Chapter 6).

¹¹² *Kıbrıs*, 2003b; For their part, government officials downplayed the number of naturalisations and brushed aside allegations of any wrong-doing (*Kıbrıs*, 2003a). In addition, PM Eroğlu argued that his 'National Unity Party' (UBP) did not need new citizens for electoral support since his party was already supported by the majority of the electorate (*Kıbrıs*, 2003c).

¹¹³ For some estimates, see *Kathimerini* (in English), 2003a; this was suggested earlier by the chairman of the Immigrants' Association in an interview with the *Cyprus Weekly* (2003)

On the international front, the temporary deadlock in the peace talks ended when the rather 'precarious'¹¹⁴ coalition government, formed in January 2004 between the pro-Annan and pro-EU CTP and the nationalist (and sceptical of the 'Annan Plan') the DP decided to return to the negotiating table (*Kıbrıs*, 2004a). This was swiftly endorsed by Ankara, followed by assurances of Turkey's own commitment to a 'rapid settlement' (*AFP*, 2004). Talks were once again resumed in Nicosia and the process culminated in the submission of the Plan to simultaneous referenda in May 2004.

4.4. Identity politics in the post-2004 period

While the 'Annan Plan' failed to secure the approval of both communities to resolve the long-standing 'Cyprus Problem'¹¹⁵, it nonetheless signified an important victory for the CTP, the BDH and others¹¹⁶ who had campaigned for a 'yes' vote and ousted their nationalist leadership along the way.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁴ This was in violation of the protocol CTP signed with the BDH and the CABP in which the parties declared that they would refuse to enter a coalition with either the DP or the UBP (*Cyprus Mail*, 2003); according to some observers, the coalition government was instigated by Ankara, in Cyprus Action Network (2004)

¹¹⁵ In a turnout of almost 90 percent, 64 percent of the Turkish-Cypriot electorate voted in favour of reunification but the Plan was rejected by a remarkable majority of 75 percent in the Greek-Cypriot community; for many, the 'Annan Plan' was doomed to failure when the socialist AKEL, the largest Greek-Cypriot political party announced its opposition on the basis that it lacked necessary guarantees from the UN Security Council on post-reunification security; *The Guardian* (2004); for a more detailed analysis of the Greek-Cypriot 'no' vote at the societal level, see also Lordos (2005).

¹¹⁶ Left-leaning BKP ('United Cyprus Party') and YKP ('New Cyprus Party'); but also CABP ('Solution and EU Party') set up by a group of liberal businessmen that had previously led the Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce.

¹¹⁷ In 2005, the nationalist DP was voted out of the office as the centre-left CTP increased its votes at the early elections (to 44.5 percent from 38 percent in 2003) and formed a coalition government with the newly-created 'Independence and Reform Party' (the ORP hereinafter). In the same year, staunch nationalist and the veteran Turkish-Cypriot leader, Rauf Denktaş was also replaced by the CTP leader Mehmet Ali Talat. The presidential elections were held on 17 April 2005, Talat won 55 percent of the votes and the UBP candidate Eroğlu, endorsed by Denktaş, came second with 23 percent; *The Guardian* (2005a)

To some extent, the 'Cyprus problem' continued to dominate the discussions in the post-referendum period, though with less intensity. The UBP despite its rejection of the UN Plan, continued to make references to it throughout the 2005 electoral campaign. Perhaps more remarkably, the Party adopted a somewhat milder tone which supported a compromise solution. This was mainly conceived as a move towards rekindling the Party's relationship with Turkey that had come under particular strain during the referendum period when it led a 'no' campaign despite the clear support of the Turkish government in favour of the 'Annan Plan'.¹¹⁸ In the run up to the election, the UBP continued to express support for the resumption of the peace negotiations and for a solution that would be reached on 'Turkish-Cypriot terms' but also emphasising that Turkish-Cypriots had an alternative in the form of TRNC should there be no progress.¹¹⁹ Earlier slandering of the 'Annan Plan' and the EU as existential threats were also largely omitted from the party's rhetoric.

As it is elaborated further below (section 4.5 in this chapter), such discursive shifts were also facilitated to an important extent by the inability of the 'EU Project' that could consolidate the oppositional *Cypriotness* discourse. Indeed, as it is elaborated below, the dislocatory experience of the aborted reunification which left the Turkish-Cypriot community on the margins of the EU would gradually diminish the prominence of the latter as an oppositional narrative and lead to a reconfiguration of the partisan identity discourses, organised once again around the

¹¹⁸As such, Eroğlu would claim: '[...] we said "no" to it [the 'Annan Plan'] because the changes we'd asked were not made. This is now a new era. Our search for a solution in Cyprus continues. It was our duty towards the people to inform them of the content of the Plan. Nonetheless, it was a "yes" vote backed by 65 percent [of the electorate]. We respect the decision of the [Turkish-Cypriot] people' (*Yenisafak*, 2005).

¹¹⁹ Indeed, this was articulated during the 2005 electoral campaign with the slogan 'You are not without an alternative', see also Sozen, 2005.

issues of immigration from Turkey and the citizenship status of Turkish nationals. Moreover, the dislocation also meant that 'EU integration' which was progressively articulated within the oppositional *Cypriotness* discourse soon became an equally integral part of the right-wing rhetoric. As such, the DP, which remained in the third place, also moved towards a somewhat moderate position.¹²⁰ In the 2005 election campaign, the DP did not shy from instrumentalising the EU within its political rhetoric and used the slogan 'Yes to DP will integrate the Turkish Cypriots with the world', which was eerily similar to the CTP/BG slogan during the 2004 referendum: 'A Yes will connect Turkish Cypriots to the world' (also cited in Sozen, 2005: 469).

While immigration related anxieties would gradually take over the political agenda in the coming years (see below), there was yet considerable optimism in northern Cyprus in the immediate aftermath of the April referendum and in the run up to the elections in 2005 that despite the failure of the 'Annan Plan', the Turkish-Cypriot commitment to reunification and EU membership would ease the Turkish-Cypriot ostracisation and that the international community would act to bring the Turkish-Cypriot community 'in from the cold'.¹²¹ Such perceptions would serve well the CTP whose strategy during this time involved seeking domestic legitimacy with reference to the seemingly improving international image of the Turkish-Cypriot community. The pledge of 'integration' thus became a focal point of the Party's discourse and the Party did not

¹²⁰ The party frequently appealed to the electorate on grounds of 'pragmatism' it claimed to have displayed in the run up to the 2004 referendum, focusing not only on the merits but also the flaws and weaknesses of the 'Annan Plan'. It also capitalised on its referendum decision to allow a free vote which seemingly demonstrated its 'honest' efforts to explain both the pros and the cons of the Plan that other parties allegedly failed in doing so (*Milliyet*, 2004).

¹²¹ For various statements see section 3.5 in Chapter 3.

shy from making the bold claim that it was due to its policies that the Turkish-Cypriot profile was being raised globally.¹²² In this sense, the CTP's EU rhetoric during this time also came to signify a notion of legitimacy for the Turkish-Cypriot identity articulated in terms of the somewhat improving external relations of the Turkish-Cypriot administration.¹²³ CTP's campaign slogan 'We have a pledge, to Europe and to Cyprus [*Sozumuz Var, Avrupa'ya, Kibris'a*]' also underscored the pledge of 'full integration' which promised to improve the living conditions of the Turkish-Cypriot community by overcoming international isolation (*Kibris*, 2005b). Other issues that had been traditionally salient in the Party identity rhetoric, immigration and citizenship in particular, remained muffled and overshadowed by the Party's emphasis on EU integration.¹²⁴

For its part, the moderate BDH campaigned along similar lines with a renewed commitment to a solution on the basis of the 'Annan Plan' and subsequent EU membership. Nonetheless, the BDH was the only party that began to openly articulate fresh identity related anxieties in this period. For the Party, the new period marked by the rejection of the 'Annan Plan' and the accession of a still-divided Cyprus into the EU brought with it the danger of further marginalisation of the Turkish-Cypriot community, threatening its very identity (*Cyprus PIO*, 2005b). Indeed, the BDH during this time suggested a number of radical steps including a

¹²² *Kibris*, 2005c; Several high-profile meetings held between the PM Talat and the likes of EU Commission President Barosso and the US Secretary of State Colin Powell also served to articulate the notion of a 'global leader' that could facilitate the integration of the Turkish-Cypriot community into the international community, *Cyprus PIO* (2005a) but also Hastürer (2004a).

¹²³ This is elaborated further in Section 4.5 in this chapter.

¹²⁴ And it was a strategy that would prove largely successful. At the end of the electoral race, the CTP won 45 percent of the votes in the legislative elections (Fig.4) and its leader Mehmet Ali Talat was later elected as the second President of the TRNC taking 55 percent of the vote.

‘normalization process’ whereby Turkish-Cypriots would reassume their governmental positions in the Republic of Cyprus but also the unilateral adoption of the ‘Annan Plan’ by the Turkish-Cypriot authorities together with a series of confident-building measures to facilitate a new round of negotiations.¹²⁵ As the Party would declare in a joint statement with a group of NGOs a year later, in 2005: ‘We are being pushed to the position where there is no characteristic of a community, even with no minority rights within a unitary Cypriot State’ (BDH, 2006).

Indeed, the BDH was not without reason to worry about the marginal position of the Turkish-Cypriot community in the post-referendum period. The accession of a still-divided Cyprus had changed the parameters of the Cyprus conflict in the sense that it had placed the Turkish-Cypriot community between a rock and a hard place: the Greek-Cypriot leadership under hardliner Tassos Papadopoulos (2003-2008) on the one hand, and a somewhat reluctant Turkey on the other. Despite UN intervention in 2006 which brokered a ‘set of principles’ aimed at re-launching the talks, no substantive negotiations were held (CRS Report of Congress, 2007). Disappointment would also quickly set in when the much anticipated ‘Direct Trade Regulations’ that had been formulated by the EU to ease trade restrictions on northern Cyprus was torpedoed

¹²⁵ *Cyprus PIO*, 2005c; In this regard, the BDH’s rhetoric conceived the Turkish-Cypriot identity with reference to the collective rights based on the consociational arrangements enshrined in the 1960 Constitution. This was a radical departure from the party’s earlier arguments in the context of the ‘Annan Plan’ in which the provisions of the 1960 Constitution were depicted as ‘minority rights’ that would be enforced on the Turkish-Cypriots by the Greek-Cypriot controlled RoC should there be no solution to the Cyprus Problem; indeed, soon after the referenda, the BDH leader Akıncı claimed that ‘if Turkey recognizes the Republic of Cyprus [with this situation], then Turkish Cypriots will have minority status falling back of the 1960 rights(*Cyprus PIO*, 2004). In the post-referendum period, however, the same rights were articulated as ‘communal rights’ that came to construe a political identity for the Turkish-Cypriot community that was now put at risk of further “deterioration” by the lingering Cyprus Problem and the ongoing dwindling of its population (*Cyprus PIO*, 2005c).

by Greek-Cypriot opposition in Brussels.¹²⁶ Similarly, new regulations that had been adopted a year earlier, in 2004 which aimed at liberalizing the movement of goods and persons across the Green-Line were also watered-down.¹²⁷

Under these conditions, Turkish-Cypriot politics was gradually marked by ambiguity but also disdain towards the EU. The CTP, still in government, continued professing commitment to a federal solution based on the UN blueprint and consequent EU membership but this was articulated together with a 'robust assertion of Turkish-Cypriot interests' that chimed not only with the general anti-Greek sentiment but with the nationalist rhetoric of the UBP (also in Kaymak, 2008). Although the Party also introduced a number of changes aimed at reconciliation,¹²⁸ such progressive changes were largely overshadowed by the overall disillusionment which had begun marking that period. Although the election of AKEL's leader Dimitris Christofias as the new President of the RoC in 2008 would reignite hopes of a new momentum¹²⁹, there was little progress on the negotiating table also indicating that no tangible results would be produced by the time for the forthcoming Turkish-Cypriot elections the following year. As a result, the Cyprus issue was downplayed by virtually all of the four political parties in 2009, focusing instead on domestic politics.

¹²⁶ For a detailed discussion, see Faustmann (2011, pp.156-159); for the initial Turkish-Cypriot reaction to the adoption of the regulations see also, *Financial Times* (2004).

¹²⁷ See Faustmann (2011); for a discussion of the 'Green Line Regulations'; see Gokcekus, O. et al. (2012).

¹²⁸ Most remarkably, history textbooks were written to this end to promote a less biased, less nationalist view of history and a more inclusionary notion of collective identity based on shared cultural heritage; see Vural and Ozuyanik (2008); for a comparative analysis see also Papadakis (2008).

¹²⁹ After all, both Talat and Christofias were from socialist backgrounds and their parties had long championed the idea of a federal Cyprus, see also *Euractiv* (2008).

Accordingly, the stagnating Turkish-Cypriot economy became a central focus of the electoral campaigns. The centre-left CTP tried hard to defend its performance at the office by emphasising the growth the Turkish-Cypriot economy went through in the immediate aftermath of the referendum.¹³⁰ It also centred its rhetoric on a rather ambiguous notion of ‘progress’ which seemed to imply that the reverse meant rolling the UBP — the sole culprit of all ills — back into the office.¹³¹ The party also continued to promise to ‘push the EU door fully open’ and promote the full integration of the Turkish-Cypriot community into the EU (*Kıbrıs*, 2009a). More remarkably, such rhetoric promoting EU integration (in the absence of a solution) while elusive in practice, involved the articulation of the EU within a ‘reformist’ narrative in the context of implementing the self-induced EU harmonisation programme, that is voluntary adoption of European policies and directives into the Turkish-Cypriot legislative framework. Immigration related issues, on the other hand, remained largely omitted from the party’s electoral rhetoric.

The TDP which had replaced the earlier BDH in 2007 also maintained its pro-EU orientation and its commitment to reunification. In contrast to the CTP however, it articulated a more vocal identity discourse by adopting the rather ambiguous ‘we are from here’ narrative for

¹³⁰ The referendum on the Annan Plan was followed by a massive construction boom in northern Cyprus, closely related to the unresolved status of the property issue and an interpretation of the ‘Annan Plan’ that substantial investment on Greek-Cypriot land would enable entitlement to receive the title deed once the original owner would be paid the value of the land alone. The construction boom would fuel an unprecedented economic growth of the Turkish-Cypriot economy; in 2003 and in 2005, growth rates of 11.4 and 10.6 percent were recorded, and the GDP per capita almost doubled in the same period, reaching USD11,837 in 2006, World Bank (2007); subsequent lawsuits brought by Greek-Cypriot refugees to reclaim land however, would lead to a near-collapse of the construction sector and its effects would converge with the global financial crisis to lead to a drastic downturn in economic growth from 2009 onwards.

¹³¹ Such return implied undoing the ‘progress’ claimed to have been achieved by the CTP government whether internationally in terms recovering the image of the Turkish-Cypriot community or in northern Cyprus, by ending the crippling nepotism of the ‘old guard’, *Kıbrıs* (2014a).

its electoral campaign. The party claimed to be the “only real option” for the Turkish-Cypriot community that would, among others, stop uncontrolled Turkish immigration, reassert Turkish-Cypriot autonomy and safeguard the community’s referendum pledge (*Kıbrıs Postası*, 2009a). This narrative also included autochthonous undertones which appealed to ‘ordinary’ Turkish-Cypriots by promising them that BDH’s policies would ensure ordinary Turkish-Cypriots ‘could raise their children and grow old in their homeland’ (*Kıbrıs Postası*, 2009a). While the TDP’s narrative did not explicitly differentiate between naturalised Turkish immigrants/settlers and ‘native’ Turkish-Cypriots, the overwhelming emphasis on the ‘native’ with often banal references to ‘local’ and ‘authentic’ appealed to a securitised *Cypriotness* sentiment underpinned by the existential threat that was arguably posed by the perpetual influx of mainland Turks.

For their part, the DP and the UBP continued to pay occasional lip-service to EU membership but attacked the CTP for failing to realise its mandate to overcome the international isolations on northern Cyprus. Most notably, the UBP also reintroduced its traditional rhetoric on identity and on Turkish settlers during these elections which was framed in explicitly Turkish nationalist terms. To this end, the Party claimed that there was no distinct cultural or national identity in Cyprus but that *Turkishness* was the common thread: ‘We all know our true origin, we all know where we came from. We all came from motherland Turkey. So it doesn’t matter whether one is from Famagusta, Adana, Turkey or Cyprus for that matter; we are all kneaded out of the same dough [Turkish proverb]’ (*Kıbrıs*, 2009d).

The Democratic Party, in comparison, maintained a more moderate stance on

reunification. In its 2009 manifesto, the party claimed that it supported a bi-communal and bi-zonal solution based on political equality that would also maintain Turkish guarantees (DP, 2009). Yet, it did not mince its words on the EU in general and its 'biased relationship' with the Greek-Cypriot leadership in particular. Throughout its campaign, the DP ranted about the 'unfulfilled EU promises' and accused the latter of surrendering to Greek-Cypriot interests who aimed at settling a score with Turkey by torpedoing its EU accession process (*Kıbrıs Postası*, 2009b). It also framed Turkish-Cypriot relations with the EU in the context of these 'unfulfilled promises', relating in general to the lifting of isolations but more specifically the 'Direct Trade Regulations' that had been blocked by a Greek-Cypriot veto.

It is generally understood that the legislative elections held in 2009 reflected the overall dissatisfaction with the CTP's performance domestically but also a clear disillusionment with such promises of international and European integration and a rebuke of the EU by the majority of the Turkish-Cypriot electorate for its disappointing performance in mitigating the crippling isolations on their community.¹³² As posited above, the disappointment would set to gradually diminish the prominence of the EU as an oppositional narrative and lead to a reconfiguration of the partisan identity discourses organised once again around the issue of immigration and the naturalisation

¹³² *BBC News* (2010a); The National Unity Party (UBP) came out with a clear victory from the 2009 legislative elections by winning 44 percent of the vote. The CTP, on the other hand, suffered a major defeat winning only 29 percent of the vote from 44 percent in the previous elections in 2005. DP's support also dropped from 13 percent in 2005 to under 11 percent in 2009 (see Fig.8). Social-democratic TDP won 7 percent of the votes which translated to 2 seats in the Turkish-Cypriot assembly. CTP would receive a further blow in 2010 when Mehmet Ali Talat lost the presidential race to UBP's Derviş Eroğlu in the first round (*BBC News*, 2010b)

of Turkish settlers. The key issue which facilitated the discursive shift was the austerity measures orchestrated by Ankara. As noted previously in Chapter 3, Turkish-Cypriot economy is buoyed by financial help from mainland Turkey (TRNC State Planning Organisation, 2007). In this somewhat IMF-style relationship, Turkish-Cypriot macroeconomic policy is also formulated and directed by Turkey in the form of bilateral economic protocols. The latest protocol was signed in December 2012 and included controversial austerity measures envisaging a drastic reduction in the size of the public sector but also the privatisation of key Turkish-Cypriot assets including electricity, telecommunications and harbours.¹³³ The Turkish-Cypriot left, including opposition parties the CTP and the TDP but also trade unions (see Chapter 5) opposed the protocol from the outset and claimed that the Protocol was a mere pretext to facilitate the transfer of strategic state-owned assets to the so-called Islamic 'green capital' (*yeşil sermaye*) in Turkey that has aligned itself with the ruling AKP. Perhaps more importantly, such austerity measures were also articulated together with prevalent fears related to losing of Turkish-Cypriot identity. In this sense, privatisation of public assets was seen as threatening Turkish-Cypriot autonomy by further consolidating Ankara's control in its domestic affairs. To this end, 'Communal Survival' rallies were held in 2011 and 2012 which saw thousands of Turkish-Cypriots taking to the streets to reassert their Turkish-Cypriot identity, protest against Turkish-imposed austerity measures and tell Ankara to keep its 'hands-off the Turkish-Cypriot community' (*Kathimerini*, 2011, *Deutsche Welle*, 2011, *sendika.org*, 2011).

¹³³ The Protocol stipulated that the Turkish-Cypriot government had agreed to implement the bilateral economic programme entitled "Towards a Sustainable Economy 2013-2015" in order to reduce its balance deficit to 315 ml Turkish Lira(TL); controversial policy measures included the privatisation of the harbours and the electricity authority (Articles 5.2.4.2.1 and 5.2.5.2 respectively) and market liberalisation in telecommunications; (5.2.4.2.3), TRNC Prime Minister's Office (2013).

The centre-left CTP instrumentalised on the anti-austerity sentiment by adopting a more assertive rhetoric on identity in general and bilateral relations with mainland Turkey, in particular. To this end, the notion of tutelage (*vesayet*) appeared frequently in the party's campaign narratives (*Kıbrıs Postası*, 2013f; *Yenidüzen*, 2013a). This was articulated together with a renewed emphasis on Turkish-Cypriot identity that was conceived once again within an explicitly securitised framework (Chapters 2 and 3). In this sense, Turkish-Cypriot identity was defined in 'existential' terms as the fundamental stumbling block of the political community and its autonomy that was threatened by Turkey — not only through its positioning within an asymmetrical relationship that 'excluded mutual respect' but also through the large-scale naturalisation of Turkish nationals that altered the domestic political balance, further consolidating Turkish domination and tutelage on Turkish-Cypriot affairs. The party thus once again began asserting that identity was 'the main concern of the Turkish-Cypriot community' and that Turkish-Cypriots feared of losing their identity but also of not being able 'to reflect their own political will on the ballot box' (*Kıbrıs Postası*, 2013f). The CTP began claiming that the native population risked being a minority in the face of perpetual migration from Turkey and that it would end such concerns by introducing a new citizenship policy (CTP, 2013). The new and certainly stricter citizenship policy would end the controversial procedure of granting discretionary citizenship through the Council of Ministers but also the automatic eligibility for *jus soli* citizenship, allowing foreign nationals to be considered for TRNC citizenship only after ten years of uninterrupted residency in northern Cyprus and within a quota that would be based on the demographic rate of natural increase. As such, the new policy reserved the right to refuse citizenships even if all necessary residency conditions were met. The CTP also promised new

measures that would suspend voting rights for new citizens until the consecutive legislative elections following the granting of their citizenship. The party's rhetoric on the EU, on the other hand, was 'toned down' and depoliticised to fit within a 'reformist' narrative that championed pro-active EU convergence i.e. voluntary harmonization of Turkish-Cypriot legislative framework with the EU *acquis communautaire*.¹³⁴

For its part, the social-democratic TDP also adopted a similar narrative of 'change and transformation' (Kıbrıs Postası, 2013c, 2013h). Its manifesto for the elections 'It's time [for change] (*Zamanı geldi*, in Turkish)' was also dominated by domestic issues and included a number of policy positions on the economy, health, local government, education and the environment (TDP, 2013). TDP opposed all privatisations envisaged in the economic protocol signed with Turkey, and emphasised its commitment to creating a 'viable and self-sufficient' Turkish-Cypriot economy based on social justice in which ultimate authority and autonomy would rest on the Turkish-Cypriot community (TDP, 2013). TDP also continued to articulate its well-known concerns on demographic change by accusing the UBP government for distributing citizenships in return for electoral gain but also linking mounting crime rates and pressures on health and education services to rising numbers (Kıbrıs Postası, 2013b). The Party also heavily attacked the CTP for maintaining a lax citizenship regime during previous government (Kıbrıs Postası, 2013c). While the party remained committed to finding a solution to the 'Cyprus Problem' based on federalism and simultaneous EU membership, these issues featured relatively

¹³⁴ In this vein, the party argued that serious reforms based on EU norms were urgently needed to address the wide-ranging structural problems of the Turkish-Cypriot state, but also to foster democratic governance, accountability, and a viable (read 'less-dependent') Turkish-Cypriot economy (Kıbrıs Postası, 2013d)

little in its electoral campaign.

The centre-right DP entered 2013 elections with a new name: 'Democratic Party-National Forces' (*Demokrat Parti-Ulusal Gucler*). The rebranded party largely maintained its ideological position on the Cyprus Problem and bilateral relations with Turkey by emphasising its commitment to TRNC which, for the DP, was the ultimate embodiment of Turkish-Cypriot political equality (*Kıbrıs Postası*, 2013e). It was also within this framework of state sovereignty that the DP continued support a solution to the 'Cyprus Problem' which would safeguard and endorse the Turkish-Cypriot state and 'its flag'. In this sense, statehood for the DP was also the defining feature of an all-inclusive Turkish-Cypriot identity that did not discriminate between naturalised citizens or 'indigenous' Turkish-Cypriots in the national struggle 'to forever uphold the Turkish-Cypriot State' as not only they all had 'common roots' in Anatolia but they now represented 'a unified, national community through citizenship bonds' (*Kıbrıs Postası*, 2013g). While the 'Democratic Party' also devised a number of policy positions on 'everyday', domestic issues and published them in its blueprint entitled the 'The Future of TRNC in 50 Questions' to complement the party manifesto (DP, 2013), its rhetoric on Turkish-Cypriot identity articulated through the notions of 'statehood' and 'civic citizenship' developed in relation to Turkish settlers took pride of place in campaign discourses during the 2013 elections (*Kıbrıs Postası*, 2013a).

The 'National Unity Party', on the other hand, never really recovered from the internal wrangling that saw the party split down the middle and the resignation of a dissident group of

MPs that also brought about the collapse of the government.¹³⁵ In any case, the UBP's electoral campaign highlighted that it fully supported the controversial economic protocol in order to foster 'prosperity'. In addition, the party publicly defended its position on the ongoing naturalisation of Turkish nationals in the run up to the elections by claiming that espousing a larger population was indeed a government policy that reflected the interests of the country in defence and economic matters (*Kıbrıs*, 2013). It also did not deviate from its nationalist position on the 'national issue' but the EU related matters were, to a large extent, muted during the electoral campaign.

At the end of the electoral race, the centre-left CTP won the most votes and enough seats to set up a coalition together with the DP.¹³⁶ The CTP's electoral gains are likely due to its vocal opposition to the austerity measures that caused widespread outcry earlier but also in parallel to a growing anti-Turkish and anti-immigration sentiment. This was also evident in the way the party instrumentalised such sentiment by adopting a 'no tutelage / free-will' (*vesayet değil, özgür irade*) narrative and the decision to take a tougher stance on immigration and citizenship when compared to previous years. Similarly, the DP's eleventh-hour declaration that it opposed

¹³⁵ The most recent legislative elections in northern Cyprus were held on 28 July 2013, a year earlier than expected following the collapse of the UBP government as a result of a 'no-confidence vote' brought forward by the opposition parties CTP, DP and the TDP. Perhaps more remarkably, the 'no confidence' vote was also supported by eight UBP dissidents. The internal wrangling for power within the UBP that had begun brewing earlier in 2012 blew up in the run up to the leadership challenge which saw the party split down the middle. When the leadership contest that was held for the second time (following a District Court Decision which declared the first round void) confirmed PM Irsen Kuchuk as the new head, 8 MPs that had challenged his leadership previously - on accusations of corruption and nepotism - resigned from the party and joined the 'Democratic Party'. This was the greatest split the Party had experienced since 1992 when a similar splinter group of 9 MPs had resigned from the party and went ahead to establish the DP (see section 4.2 in this chapter).

¹³⁶ It won 38 percent of the votes and 21 seats (out of 50), a significant increase on its poor performance in the 2009 elections when it managed to get only 29 percent of the total votes (see Table 1).

Turkey's privatisation plans may explain the boost in its support which doubled since 2009.¹³⁷ It is also interesting to note the impressive performance of the DP in such settler strongholds like Iskele and Famagusta winning 30 percent and 26 percent of the votes respectively (YSK, 2013). This may be due to Party's all-inclusive rhetoric on Turkish-Cypriot identity based on civic citizenship. The TDP also did relatively well by winning 7 percent of the vote and in return, securing an extra seat (that increased its seats to three) in the Turkish-Cypriot assembly. Perhaps more remarkably, for the purposes of this study, the 2013 legislative elections were dominated once again by domestic issues relating very little to the resolution of the Cyprus conflict or the issue of EU integration (see also *Al Jazeera*, 2013). Instead, the popular narratives on Turkish-Cypriot identity and on immigration-settlement from mainland Turkey returned back to the agenda and took centre stage. The section that follows discusses the implications of this finding in assessing the overall impact of immigration-settlement on political party conceptions of collective identity in northern Cyprus.

4.5. The impact of immigration across the political party narratives (1995-2013)

As discussed in detail in the previous chapter (section 3.3 in Chapter 3) and elaborated further above, the aftermath of the Turkish military intervention in 1974 saw the buttressing of the hegemonic *Turkishness* discourse which represented a new perception of order and security based on statehood and overarching Turkish identity. Turkish-Cypriot identity was effectively

¹³⁷ DP (2013b); the DP received barely 11 percent of the votes in 2009. It's share of the vote in 2013 was over 23 percent (see Figure 8).

subsumed under this representation as a form of ethnic/local variation in which *Turkishness* took pride of place. The UBP as the most formidable nationalist party in northern Cyprus with an impressive electoral record in the pre-accession period (see Figures 7 and 8) invariably defined its notion of collective identity within this nationalist discourse as being an ‘indivisible part of the greater Turkish nation’. In this sense, the party did not differentiate in ethnic or cultural terms a Turkish-Cypriot from a Turkish national and the relationship between the two was characterised within the nationalist narrative with the bond of ethnic kinship.

Another right-wing party, the DP has also framed its conception of collective identity along similar nationalist lines. Although expressed through different strategies, the DP’s narrative prioritises *Turkishness* by articulating it in a rather ambiguous notion of civic nationalism. In this sense, the ‘Turkish-Cypriot nationalism’ the party promotes is a form of civic nationalism in which the Turkish-Cypriot state (TRNC) represents the national community (i.e. the ‘Turkish Cypriot people’) in which membership is signified with the concept of ‘active citizenship’.¹³⁸ The attempt to frame the controversial migration of Turkish nationals into northern Cyprus and their naturalisation onto this particular notion of civic citizenship has nonetheless sustained the nationalist principle of upholding *Turkishness* which erases the implied dividing line between the traditional notion of Turkish nationalism and the supposedly civic virtues of Turkish-Cypriot nationalism which the DP subscribes to. This is clearly manifest in the party’s efforts to utilise ethno-national myths such as common descent which claims that all Turkish-Cypriots had

¹³⁸In the party’s own definition, ‘regardless of their formal citizenship status’ any person ‘who consider themselves Turkish-Cypriot, subscribe to TRNC’s political creed and to its shared set of values and practices’ are, for the DP, members of the Turkish-Cypriot community (interview no.4).

'common roots in Anatolia' in combination with other civic references (such as 'active citizenship') to sovereign statehood. This is an important finding since it highlights the deployment and articulation of a range of civic and ethnic elements within the hegemonic *Turkishness* discourse. From this perspective, the DP's narrative can be regarded as an extension of a hegemonic project in constructing and stabilising a form of collective-identity by articulating as many available elements (i.e. 'floating signifiers', such as 'active'/civic citizenship, 'common descent', etc.) as possible (Howarth et al., 2000: 15). This assertion is also in line with the hypothesis posited in Chapter 2 and elaborated within the historical context in Chapter 3 that:

Hypothesis 1: *Given the local history and in the context of the Cyprus conflict, Turkish-Cypriot identity was cultivated and subsumed within a hegemonic notion of Turkishness that did not distinguish between Turkish-Cypriots and Turkish settlers.*

As noted earlier in Chapter 2, the theory of discourse that is utilised in this study, based loosely on the poststructuralist Discourse Theory (DT), is predicated on the ultimate impossibility of a discursive closure, a condition that makes articulatory practices and political agency possible. Hegemonic practices therefore presuppose a context marked by antagonisms, and the availability of elements ('floating signifiers') that can be articulated by opposing political projects (Howarth et al., 2000: 15). Indeed, it was precisely within this context that the settler cleavage began to make a bold appearance in political debates from the 1980s onwards and provided the anti-establishment left with an opportunity to challenge the hegemony of the *Turkishness* discourse with an alternative notion of belonging which emphasised a distinct 'Cypriot' character.

Such a commitment to the indigenous character of the Turkish-Cypriot identity, often (though not exclusively, see below) within the framework of an overarching *Cypriotness* discourse was constructed against a ‘threat’ that conceived immigration-settlement from mainland Turkey as part of Ankara’s assimilationist project to ultimately undermine the distinct Turkish-Cypriot identity and its long-term autonomy.

The CTP together with the social-democratic TKP explicitly linked immigration from Turkey and granting of citizenship status to Turkish settlers onto wider debates on identity, societal security and political autonomy. They argued that the new wave of immigration which began in the aftermath of the ‘settlement programme’ (see section 3.3 in Chapter 3) had undesirable effects on the Turkish-Cypriot economy (causing a drop in local wages for the ‘native’ Turkish Cypriots) but also blamed immigration from Turkey for instigating the flight of Turkish-Cypriots onto other countries in search of better economic prospects. Above all, these parties argued that the lax immigration regime amounted to a ‘population transfer’ from Turkey that would in the long-term undermine Turkish-Cypriot autonomy but also endanger the ‘authentic’ Turkish-Cypriot identity through large-scale naturalisations.

Such ‘speech-acts’ (Buzan and Wæver, 2013) employed by the opposition parties, would construct a securitised discourse in which the presence of populations from Turkey were treated as an existential threat to the presumed ‘authority’, ‘authenticity’ and the ‘ways of living’ of the Turkish-Cypriot community. Within this discourse, moreover, Turkish ‘settlers’ were seen as a homogenous constituency that invariably supported the nationalist status quo and the Turkish

tutelage over Turkish-Cypriot affairs. Such claims were also articulated with an appeal to autonomy and a political project that would safeguard it.

It was also during this time, in the early 1990s, that Cyprus's EU accession process gradually came to be viewed by the Turkish-Cypriot left as a political project that could enhance their community's security and consolidate its ethno-cultural Turkish-Cypriot identity. They sought to attain this goal by creating a 'social imaginary' (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001) through discourse whereby they embedded the Turkish-Cypriot community in the global political consciousness as members of the international community but also a stronger collectivity (the European Union) beyond the control of Turkey. As such, the EU soon became a central element of the collective identity discourses invoked by political actors on the left of the political spectrum and played a critical role in galvanising support against the nationalist hegemony by legitimising the alternative conceptions of belonging, or *Cypriotness*, articulated by the opposition parties CTP and BDH (later, TDP).

In this context, the Turkish-Cypriot left (CTP and TKP-BDH) overwhelmingly supported EU membership for Turkish-Cypriots in the run up to the referendum in 2004 that would allow a reunified, federal Cyprus to join the EU (see section 4.2 in this chapter). The economic lure of EU membership was important to the extent that it would stem the worrisome decline of the Turkish-Cypriot community numerically through emigration. But above all, such integration meant an endorsement of the Turkish-Cypriot community internationally and a recognition of its well-defined identity. In this political vein, the EU was framed within a popular struggle against

the Denktash-UBP establishment and came to signify such political notions of ‘democracy’, ‘peace’ and ‘freedom’ and ultimately the upholding of ‘Turkish-Cypriotness’ that had been undermined by the nationalist policies of the Turkish-Cypriot regime not least through the large-scale naturalisation of Turkish nationals.

While the pro-EU rhetoric would, to a large extent, overshadow the immigration-related issues in the run up to the 2004 referendum as it became the focal point of identity narratives, the ongoing naturalisations on the eve of Cyprus accession into the EU would once again put the issue under spotlight as the Turkish-Cypriot left engaged in a citizenship-stripping battle in fear that Turkish settlers who had been given citizenship status by the UBP-DP coalition government would subsequently oppose the ‘Annan Plan’ and torpedo Turkish-Cypriot prospects of joining the EU (see 4.3 in this chapter). In sum, these findings confirm the hypothesis posited in Chapter 2:

Hypothesis 2: *In the context of Cyprus’s accession into the EU and the anticipated Turkish-Cypriot integration into the European mainstream, Turkish settlers came to be perceived as a threat to Turkish-Cypriot identity.*

The impact of the EU in seemingly transforming oppositional identity narratives began to decrease, however, once Cyprus was admitted to the EU as a divided island. The peculiar and rather ‘marginal’ positioning of the Turkish-Cypriot community within the post-accession context (see section 3.4 in Chapter 3) has meant that the ‘EU project’ was unable to consolidate itself

into a viable social, and perhaps a more inclusive imaginary. Instead, the *Cypriotness* discourse that brought together large segments of the Turkish-Cypriot society under the EU banner and led simultaneously a political sea-change in the run up to Cyprus's accession became progressively disorientated. Such a dislocation can similarly be explained by the inability of the 'EU project' to integrate the Turkish-Cypriot community into the European mainstream which obstructed the continuity of the common 'social imaginary' and thwarted the emergence of a stable hegemonic formation in Turkish-Cypriot politics during this period. Moreover, the dislocatory experience of the aborted EU-membership has led to a new reconfiguration of the pre-existing elements articulated within the oppositional *Cypriotness* discourse in which immigration/settler related antagonisms took centre stage. This argument was hypothesised in Chapter 2:

Hypothesis 3: *With the failure of the 'Annan Plan', the pro-EU Cypriotness discourse is disorientated and settler antagonisms take centre-stage*

While CTP remained committed towards reunification, its strategy during this time involved articulating its EU-related aspirations with reference to the ongoing isolations over the Turkish-Cypriot community; in this sense the EU became a focal point of the party's identity discourse to the extent that it sought international legitimacy to embed the Turkish-Cypriot community in the global political consciousness as a distinct collectivity with the moral upper-hand in the Cyprus imbroglio. Yet, in the years following Cyprus's EU accession, the lack of tangible benefits for the Turkish-Cypriot community that would emanate from EU integration led to the reconceptualisation of the latter once again, rather 'toned down' and depoliticised to fit

within a 'reformist' narrative that championed pro-active EU convergence for the TRNC, that is voluntary harmonization of Turkish-Cypriot (or, the "TRNC") legislative framework with the EU *acquis communautaire*. While this emphasis on EU integration in the immediate aftermath of the referendum temporarily surpassed existential anxieties related to the presence of Turkish settlers, immigration from mainland Turkey would return to the agenda once again following the party's defeat in 2009 and in the run up to the 2013 elections.

For its part, the TDP also instrumentalised the EU in championing its own version of 'Turkish-Cypriotness' which emphasised the 'autonomous' and the 'indigenous' element of such belonging. The normative value of the EU was articulated within this discourse in terms of 'democracy' and 'human rights' and with a vocal stance against direct Turkish interference in domestic Turkish-Cypriot affairs. In this sense, the party saw Cyprus's reunification and EU membership as part of a wider goal of consolidating democracy in the Turkish-Cypriot community. While EU-related aspirations also overshadowed TDP's anti-immigration, anti-settlement rhetoric in the run up to the referendum, the TDP was the only mainstream political party that maintained explicit identity concerns during much of the post-referendum period. Unlike the CTP which muted its earlier emphasis on immigration-settlement, the TDP continued its call to stop uncontrolled Turkish immigration and reassert Turkish-Cypriot autonomy. This may also explain the limited appeal of the party and its rather poor electoral performance.

In any case, an important indication that the aborted solution to the 'Cyprus Problem' had a profound impact on the pro-EU *Cypriotness* discourse, was the *displacement* it caused when

the 'EU integration' which was progressively articulated in oppositional *Cypriotness* discourse soon became an equally integral part of the right-wing rhetoric on identity. The DP began paying lip-service to EU membership and emphasising the merits of its legal framework while it ranted about the 'unfulfilled EU promises' and accused the latter of surrendering to Greek-Cypriot interests in maintaining the isolations over the Turkish-Cypriot state or the TRNC. The UBP in the post-accession period also continued to invariably and ferociously champion independent Turkish-Cypriot statehood; while the party did tune down its earlier intransigent rhetoric, it continued to claim that the unrecognised status of the TRNC as an 'unjust treatment of the Turkish-Cypriot people' by the EU and the latter's denial of the Turkish-Cypriot identity.

Turning onto the second part of the hypothesis posited above (*hyp.3*), this period has also seen a significantly more vocal anti-Turkish rhetoric on the part of the *Cypriotness* camp that surpassed its distinct pro-EU stance. To this end, the centre-left CTP drew on the anti-austerity sentiment from 2009 onwards by adopting a more assertive rhetoric on Turkish-Cypriot identity in general and the bilateral relations with mainland Turkey in particular. Such notions of domination (*tahakkum*) and tutelage (*vesayet*) appeared frequently in party's campaign narratives. This was articulated together with a renewed emphasis on Turkish-Cypriot identity which was conceived once again within an explicitly securitised framework and in relation to immigration from mainland Turkey (see Chapters 2 and 3). In this sense, Turkish-Cypriot identity was defined in 'existential' terms, not only through its positioning within an asymmetrical relationship with Turkey but also through the large-scale naturalisation of Turkish nationals that altered the domestic political balance, further consolidating Turkish domination and tutelage on

Turkish-Cypriot affairs. Identity thus once again became a key focus of the party articulated in securitised terms as the fear of losing cultural identity but also 'autonomy', of not being able to reflect own political will on the ballot box. In line with much of the insights garnered from the immigration literature discussed in Chapter 2, the CTP's securitised discourse also consisted of tougher measures on immigration and a stricter citizenship policy.

For its part, the social-democratic TDP also continued to articulate its well-known concerns on demographic change by accusing the UBP government of distributing citizenships in return for electoral gain but also linking mounting crime rates and pressures on health and education services to rising numbers. The party also heavily attacked the CTP for presumably maintaining a lax citizenship regime during previous government. While TDP remained committed to finding a solution to the 'Cyprus Problem' based on federalism and simultaneous EU membership, these issues were overshadowed by the settler-related anxieties that took centre-stage in this period.

4.6. Conclusion

This chapter has examined the representation of immigration and the citizenship status of Turkish nationals in party-political discourses of collective identity in the period 1995-2013. The issue as it stood in the mid-1990s was characterised by the left within a securitised discourse of collective identity in which the presence of populations from Turkey were treated as an existential threat to the presumed 'authority' as well as the 'authenticity' of the Turkish-Cypriot

community. The securitised *Cypriotness* discourse regarded Turkish settlers as a homogenous constituency that invariably supported the nationalist status quo and the Turkish tutelage over Turkish-Cypriot affairs. The right, on the other hand, which has conceived its version of identity along nationalist lines, has traditionally articulated the 'settler issue' largely within this nationalist *Turkishness* discourse thus appealing to a number of ethno-national myths such as common descent in combination with other civic references to sovereign statehood.

The introduction of the 'EU' into the political agendas of the Turkish-Cypriot community from the mid-1990s onwards had an important effect in the representation of the 'settler issue' especially by the left in the sense that it was largely downplayed within a new 'imaginary' in which EU membership came to signify. As the EU became the focal aspect of identity narratives, immigration related worries were largely muted or omitted altogether from the left-wing rhetoric. There was also a discursive shift toward a more positive reorientation to immigration and the citizenship rights of Turkish settlers from early 2000s onwards. This was only a partial discursive shift however as the settler issue continued to lurk in the background as evidenced in the citizenship-stripping cases brought by the opposition on the eve of Cyprus's EU accession.

It was further argued that the partial nature of this discursive shift and the absence of a complete paradigm shift in terms of the continuities over how the settler issue was presented by the left-wing parties, can be explained by the structural and historical features of the settler issue (particularly its linkage to the bilateral relations with Turkey) as well as the contingent nature of the 'window of opportunity' represented by EU membership that was made available. Indeed,

the impact of the EU in seemingly transforming oppositional identity narratives began to diminish once Cyprus was admitted to the EU as a divided island. The peculiar and rather 'marginal' positioning of the Turkish-Cypriot community within the post-accession context meant that the 'EU project' was unable to consolidate itself into a viable social, and perhaps a more inclusive imaginary in relation to the 'settler question'. In this case, this was evidenced by the reintroduction of the immigration-related anxieties into oppositional rhetoric from mid-2000s onwards to, in effect, take centre stage in organising *Cypriotness* centred identity discourses in the post-referendum period.

CHAPTER 5: TURKISH-CYPRIOT CIVIL-SOCIETY AND THE 'SETTLER DEBATE'

5.1. Introduction

5.2. Civil Society in northern Cyprus: An overview

5.3. Nationalist Responses

5.4. 'This Country is ours': Trade unions and the immigration-settlement debate

5.5. Immigrant Civil Society Organisations (ICSOs)

5.6. Radical Perspectives

5.7. The impact of immigration across the Turkish-Cypriot civil society (1995-2013)

5.8. Conclusion

5.1. Introduction

This chapter examines the civil society responses to the experience of immigration from Turkey with a particular focus on the framing of the issue within wider discourses on Turkish-Cypriot identity. Civil society is understood here as the associational space for political contestation that is outside of state or market structures (Habermas, 1991 but also Fleming, 2000). In northern Cyprus, this means trade unions, associations but also smaller activist groups and grass-roots organisations. In line with the conceptual framework of the thesis provided earlier (2.5), this chapter discusses the identity politics of civil society in northern Cyprus by accounting for continuity and change in the extent to which 'settlers', immigration and other closely related issues, most notably the citizenship status of Turkish nationals are represented and instrumentalised within identity narratives. As such, it presents a highly politicised space, coloured with the history and politics of Cyprus in which multiple actors compete and strive for influence. Once again, diverse and competing conceptualisations of 'immigration' and 'citizenship' produced and/or articulated by the civil society actors selected as part of the

research are delineated here in tandem with other contextual (discursive) elements such as ‘solution [to the Cyprus Problem], ‘statehood’, ‘EU integration’ and ‘(Turkish) tutelage/assimilation’ wherein multiple interpretations of the ‘Cyprus problem’ and Turkish-Cypriot relations with Turkey are also explored throughout.

The chapter is divided into seven sections. The first section (5.2) sets the scene by providing a brief overview of the development of the Turkish-Cypriot civil society and outlining its defining features. The remainder of the chapter is then organised around a typology of civil society based on the organisational identity of the NGOs in order to focus on different actors in assessing the impact of Turkish immigration-settlement on civil society narratives; section 5.3 and 5.4 thus examine conceptions of immigration and identity espoused by the nationalist ‘fighters’ associations’ and look at the immigration debate at the trade union level respectively, followed by a discussion of the responses from ‘immigrant community organisations’ (ICOs) themselves (5.5). Section 5.6 accounts for alternative conceptualisations of immigration-settlement offered by those grass-root organisations who subscribe to other critical, counter-cultural perspectives. The final section (5.7) links the empirical findings of the preceding sections to the conceptual framework developed earlier in Chapter 2 and addresses the working hypotheses. As with the rest of the thesis, the discourses are presented diachronically across the main timeframe of this study beginning with the launch of Cyprus’s EU accession process in 1995 until 2013.

5.2. Civil society in northern Cyprus: An Overview

Civil society organisations existed in the Turkish-Cypriot community long before the partition of the island in 1974. As noted previously (2.2), during the British colonial period Turkish-Cypriot groups organised successfully both to fend off *enosis* but also to propagate Turkish nationalism based on the policy of *taksim*. In a more radical vein, the bi-communal labour movement also attracted Turkish-Cypriots in its struggle for workers' rights under the communist party umbrella (and its close associate, PEO) though the involvement of Turkish-Cypriots in this movement was thwarted by historical and political factors, not least the repressive and violent policies of the nationalist Turkish-Cypriot leadership (2.2). In this sense, an important aspect of the Turkish-Cypriot civil society, as Gurel and Demetriou also suggest, has been its enduring relationship to nationalism, ethnic identification and more specifically with the 'Cyprus Problem' (Demetriou and Gurel, 2008).

As others have also noted, the impact of the 'Cyprus Problem' on the formation and the development of civil society on the island (and within the Turkish-Cypriot community in particular) has been profound (Lonnqvist, 2008; Gillespie et al., 2011; Reed, 2013). Even though most Turkish-Cypriot civil society organisations do not hold explicit party political agendas, political and ideological outlooks are in many cases at the core of their organisational identity. At the same time, the liberal conception of civil society as a metaphor for pluralism and accountability is a relatively new notion in the Cypriot political lexicon (Demetriou and Gurel,

2008). In this sense, many civil society actors in the north in particular, have not refrained from forging close alliances with political parties and blurring the organisational boundaries through cross-sectional membership and activism. Indeed, the post-1974 period has seen the Turkish-Cypriot civil society divide along ideological lines with the left-leaning civil society actors critical of the nationalist leadership and of the partition on the one hand and the traditionally privileged nationalist groups aligning themselves with the hardliner policies of the Turkish-Cypriot leadership on the other (Fig.9)

Indeed, the latter group did not deviate from the official discourse of the nationalist leadership and the political elite which dominated the Turkish-Cypriot political scene until the early 2000s (see sections 3.3 and 3.4 in Chapter 3). Within it, the 'Cyprus Problem' was framed as the Turkish-Cypriot 'oppression' at the hands of the Greek-Cypriot majority; the Turkish military intervention that ensued following a coup attempt against President Makarios in 1974 was seen in this context as the 'liberation' of the Turkish-Cypriot community which put an end to 'Greek atrocities' and settled the Cyprus Problem by bringing about bizonality in which Turkish-Cypriots could now lead 'peaceful' lives in the safety of their own state, away from Greek hegemony. As the new statelet that was established in the immediate aftermath of the partition began to organise the new political, economic and social space for the Turkish-Cypriot community, these groups who had aligned themselves with the nationalist leadership often enjoyed privileged interaction within the newly created but largely state-dominated structures.

Figure 9. Typology of the Turkish-Cypriot civil society

Actor Type	In-group	Out-group	Position(s) on immigration-settlement
Fighters' Associations (‘TMT Association’, ‘Marty’s Association’)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - favour <i>Turkishness</i> - ‘Turkish-Cypriotness’ not a distinct identity but an ethnic/local variation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Greek-Cypriots (‘bastions of Hellenism’, ‘existential threat’) - The EU (pro-Greek) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ethnic kinship ties - economic arguments (‘much-needed workforce’, ‘immigration as economic benefit’) - demographic arguments re. the ‘Cyprus Problem’
Trade Unions (KTAMS, KTÖS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Civil/cultural conceptions of <i>Cypriotness, sui-generis</i> - antagonises <i>Turkishness</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Turkish immigrants, settlers - Turkey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - form of cultural assimilation & electoral manipulation - consolidates ‘Turkish hegemony’
Critical Perspectives (FEMA, <i>Baraka</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Post-national forms of identification (class, gender) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Highly critical of Turkey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emphasise solidarity with ‘immigrants’/ ‘settlers’ - Ambiguous over citizenship status
ICSOs (<i>Pir Sultan Abdal</i> , ‘Hataylılar Association’)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Highly diverse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Competing positions on Turkey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Defensive over citizenship status - ‘Moderates’ display significant convergence w/TC opposition

The oppositional groups, on the other hand, and the left-leaning trade unions such as the 'Teachers' Union' (KTÖS) and the 'Public Servants' Union' (KTAMS) in particular, which represent the eldest segments of the civil-societal opposition (see below), turned progressively against what they saw as the chipping away of democracy and above all, political autonomy by an authoritarian leadership in favour of forging ever-closer links with Turkey under the banner of Turkish nationalism. Though reluctant contributors to the early state-building efforts of the Turkish-Cypriot leadership through participation in the constitutional assemblies of the Turkish Federated State (KTFD) and that of the TRNC (1983) (see section 4.2 in Chapter 4), these actors would continue to voice forceful criticisms of the oppressive leadership and its official nationalist rhetoric on the 'Cyprus Problem', the promotion of Turkish-Cypriot statehood in this context as well as the regular (and often explicit) meddling of the Turkish embassy/military in the Turkish-Cypriot affairs.

While raising concerns over the future prospects of the Turkish-Cypriot community as a self-ruling entity and the overall viability of Turkish-Cypriot statehood as an alternative to federal solution, the oppositional Turkish-Cypriot civil society actors were also instrumental in initiating and promoting bi-communal contacts with the Greek-Cypriot civil society aimed at rapprochement between the two communities. In this context, several meetings were held from the early 1980s onwards, often abroad due to travel restrictions that were put in place across the 'Green Line', to facilitate dialogue and to coordinate civil-society efforts in parallel to formal

negotiations towards reaching a solution.¹³⁹ The 1990s saw the intensification of such efforts to widen the scope and impact of civil-society involvement in the peace process in parallel to Cyprus's EU accession and in the context of the renewed diplomatic efforts to resolve the 'Cyprus Problem'.¹⁴⁰

More remarkable, nonetheless, is the turbulent atmosphere which ensued in the aftermath of the murder of Turkish-Cypriot journalist Kutlu Adalı in 1996 (see section 6.3 in Chapter 6), the diplomatic crisis which saw open confrontation of the coalition government with a Turkish general (2001), the banking crisis that saw the near-collapse of the Turkish-Cypriot banking sector (2000-2001) and finally, with the publication of a UN-sponsored peace plan (or the so-called 'Annan Plan') in view of Cyprus's imminent accession into the EU (2002), that really set the scene for the further political and verbal militancy of the Turkish-Cypriot oppositional civil society to then take centre-stage and orchestrate (together with opposition parties) the unprecedented societal opposition against the nationalist leadership and in favour of a federal solution and EU membership. Against this backdrop, the oppositional civil society began to organise under the umbrella platforms 'This Country is Ours' and the 'Common Vision' and

¹³⁹ The challenges that confronted the bicomunal effort from its inception in the early 1990s is described succinctly by Anastasiou (2008: 38): 'Restrained by an unsympathetic and reluctant nationalist portion of the GC culture, and obstructed by a separatist and often directly intrusive nationalist TC administration, managing to organise and sustain bicomunal meetings was always a struggle. Innumerable meetings between TCs and GCs scheduled to take place in the buffer zone were cancelled by the TC authorities only moments before they were due to commence. The authorities often frustrated the efforts of the citizen peace-builders as though the objective was to break their spirit—the spirit of rapprochement'.

¹⁴⁰ Funded mostly by international donors such as the UN and USAID, this resulted in activities ranging from training on conflict resolution for citizens, academics, politicians, business leaders and other civil society actors across the political spectrum to conferences, youth camps, meetings of former co-villagers, the set-up of bicomunal choir and dance groups, women's groups and regular meetings of experts (Wolleh, 2002; Loizos, 2006; Anastasiou, 2008).

launched an unprecedented series of demonstrations/peace rallies in the north. Despite the fact that such efforts to reunify the island before its EU accession did not yield the desired outcome following the rejection of the 'Annan Plan' by the Greek-Cypriot community in a referendum, the post-2004 period nonetheless marked the emergence of a relatively more diverse Turkish-Cypriot civil society, a phenomenon which was certainly boosted by EU support and a more conducive political climate.

Indeed, as recently noted by Kyris (2015), the Turkish-Cypriot civil society became the main beneficiary of the EU assistance that has been provided to the Turkish-Cypriot community by the EU.¹⁴¹ While the EU support, broadly aimed at peace and reconciliation, has enabled a number of existing NGOs to acquire not only funding but also significant 'technical support'¹⁴² in implementing a number of community projects, it has also facilitated (though indirectly) the creation of new NGOs that later became beneficiaries of the EU funding schemes.¹⁴³

¹⁴¹ The main EU instrument related to the TC civil society is the 'Financial Aid Regulation' (European Council, 2006). For the most recent and overarching Aid programme provided by the EU to the Turkish-Cypriot civil society, see 'Aid Programme for the Turkish Cypriot community'; http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/policy/themes/turkish-cypriot-community/ [Last accessed: 12 April 2015]

¹⁴² A 'Civil Society Support Team' was established in April 2008 to engage in capacity-building for the Turkish-Cypriot civil society and to address its low familiarisation with internationally-recognised practises; for a detailed discussion of the EU's engagement with the Turkish-Cypriot civil society, see Kyris (2015)

¹⁴³ It is important to note, however, that besides several existing civil-society actors, the EU's sphere of influence in relation to the Turkish-Cypriot civil society has remained limited. A particularly relevant argument in this context has been made by Kyris (2013: 198) who have usefully highlighted the rather 'unenthusiastic stance' of Brussels in supporting those 'politicised' civil society actors. Those long-established and politicised NGOs on the other hand, have also shown a similarly low-levels of enthusiasm toward the EU (see below). In any case, the EU's impact on the Turkish-Cypriot civil society has been fragmented to the extent that the highly EU-orientated actors represent only a small 'professionalised' and highly-depoliticised segment of the wider Turkish-Cypriot civil society.

Perhaps more remarkably, the Turkish-Cypriot civil society since 2004 has also benefited greatly from the ending of the relatively hostile political climate. Indeed, one of the most significant outcomes of the socio-political turmoil that the Turkish-Cypriot community experienced during the 'Annan Peace Process' leading up to the historic referendum in 2004 was the opening up of the discursive space following the 'implosion of the hegemonic Turkish nationalism' (Lacher and Kaymak, 2005) manifest in the overwhelming victory of the left-leaning CTP at the legislative elections (see section 4.3 in Chapter 4). It can be argued that Turkish-Cypriot civil society actors have since been able to organise more effectively and freely to articulate a number of demands; this can also be seen in the emergence of new and more radical actors promoting social agendas inspired by a wide range of ideologies and critical perspectives (Fig.9). These actors are distinguished from traditional civil society for endorsing counter-cultural discourses and promoting alternative identities in order to challenge the existing order. In this sense, they offer important sites which expand participatory possibility by re-imagining inclusive identities, constitute a voice for the 'excluded' and challenge existing public/hegemonic discourses (Cohen and Arato, 1994; Lewis, 2013). Their framings of 'Turkish settlers', immigration but also the citizenship status of Turkish nationals are thus elaborated below.

Lastly, given the focus of the thesis, a further group of NGOs that is put under further scrutiny here is the 'immigrant community organisations' (ICOs) representing the large immigrant/settler population from mainland Turkey. These organisations represent an important though often unrecognised form of engagement aimed at promoting a sense of community conceived in the place of origin (region, hometown, etc.) and promotion of the group's rights and

interests within the host society. Due to the voluntary nature of groups and the working-class profiles of their members, the activities of these organisations are often limited to fundraising and promotion of cultural events and educational activities. These organisations also engage in fundraising for special occasions, such as organising a religious celebration or to build places of worship (see below). Such activities and projects are often carried out in liaison with the local authorities in terms of support or indeed, authorisation. The lack of financing (sometimes due to structural difficulties in relation to staffing, time, non-profit status but also inadequate or complete lack of governmental financing) mean that they also often heavily rely on securing corporate sponsorship to carry out their activities and implement projects (interview no.11). It is perhaps for these organisational and structural restraints that they generally represent low-levels of politicisation. While this can present a serious challenge with respect to interest promotion and voicing demands, the organisations that have been chosen here have nonetheless engaged in the political debate on identity and/or expressed concern over immigration-related issues that are relevant for this research.

5.3. Nationalist responses

Given the pervasiveness of the 'Cyprus problem' in public and political discourse and the profound impact of 'conflicting-nationalisms' (see Chapter 2) in defining identities in relation to the conflict, it is perhaps not surprising that a number of organisations do exist on each side of the island who subscribe to nationalist rhetoric. As Demetriou and Gurel (2008), in their comparative study of the Cypriot civil society have noted, these actors can be categorised as

'nationalist' in a dual sense: in conceiving identity in ethno-national terms whilst articulating a narrative of victimhood in relation to the 'Cyprus Problem' and the respective community in order to securitize that particular conception in an essentialist perspective. In the north, these groups represent the strongest nationalist factions who tend to regard Greek-Cypriots as the 'bastions of Hellenism' thus the historic arch-enemy of the 'greater Turkish nation'. In this vein, the Greek-Cypriot community is framed as the 'sole culprit' of the 'Cyprus Problem' which continues to pose an existential threat to the Turkish-Cypriot community by maintaining their national goal of *enosis*; to 'add insult to injury' for these groups, the Greek-Cypriot community and the Republic of Cyprus they control is 'unjustly' recognised as the sole legal authority by the international community. Similar to the situation in the south, the various 'fighters' associations' which represent those who took part in the inter-communal fighting (1956-1963-1974) endorse this nationalist perspective. In the north, these organisations also favour pursuing ever-closer relations with Turkey and promote a positive view in relation to the immigration-settlement of Turkish nationals on the island.

One such nationalist organisation is the 'Association of Martyrs' Families and Disabled Veterans' (*Şehit Aileleri ve Malul Gaziler Derneği*, the 'Veterans' Association' hereinafter). The association was established in 1975 and self-reports to have over four-thousand members (*Şehit Aileleri*, 2016a). It is also remarkably active in organising several high-profile commemorations, celebration and festivities throughout the year as well as publishing material about the 'atrocities' committed against Turkish-Cypriots by the Greek-Cypriot paramilitary organisations prior to 1974 (*Şehit Aileleri*, 2016b). It is a well-known fact that the association in the past was

closely allied to the politics of Rauf Denktash and continues to support the nationalist politics of the Turkish-Cypriot right, represented by the 'Nationalist Unity Party' (UBP) and to a lesser extent, by the 'Democratic Party' (see section 4.2 in Chapter 4). In a similar vein, it has, over the years, forged closer relations with the shady 'Grey Wolves' (or the *Ülkü Ocakları Derneği*), an extreme nationalist group who was suspected of organising intimidation campaigns toward Turkish-Cypriots during the 'Annan Peace Process' (Bryant,2010: 120).

As indicated above, a central feature of the nationalist discourse which the 'Veterans' Association' subscribes to is the representation of Greek-Cypriots as the 'aggressors'. In the association's narrative, it was the Greek-Cypriot side who 'destroyed' in December 1963 the bicomunal Republic and 'ejected the Turkish-Cypriot community by force of arms from the partnership government' (cited in Select Committee on Foreign Affairs, 2005). From then on, Turkish-Cypriots were subjected to a violent campaign of 'ethnic cleansing' which, according to the Association, amounted to no less than 'genocide' (Select Committee on Foreign Affairs, 2005). The rhetoric adopted by the Association also continues to utilise an 'ever-present threat of attack' from Greek-Cypriots, 'who have always been the attacking side', which the Turkish army currently protects Turkish-Cypriots against. While the Association made a reference to the notion of a 'negotiated solution' and opted for a less-hostile tone toward the EU, its emphasis remained on the restoring of the rights of the 'Turkish Cypriot people' that had been 'violated' and to end the 'inhuman embargoes' (Select Committee on Foreign Affairs, 2005). Moreover, these 'human rights' claims are made in reference to Turkish-Cypriot statehood (the TRNC), which serves to antagonise the Greek side and maintain the perpetuation of the conflict. Perhaps

more remarkably, the same, insular 'human-rights discourse' is extended onto the representation of 'Turkish settlers' and immigration from Turkey:

Turkish migrants came to the North because manpower was needed. They started a new life in Cyprus, had children and grandchildren who know nowhere else but Cyprus as home. Majority of these people have been living in Cyprus for over twenty or thirty years. Don't they have the same right as all other migrants who have become and are accepted as the citizens of the countries they settled in after 5-10 years in Europe? Does [sic] human rights and freedoms ask for their punishment simply because they settled in a conflict island? We don't think so and hope that the EU will not allow Greek Cypriots to cause new problems in pursuit of their unjust demands (Select Committee on Foreign Affairs, 2005).

The 'TMT Fighters Association' (*Kıbrıs TMT Mücahitler Derneği*, the 'Fighter's Association hereinafter)¹⁴⁴ is yet another Turkish-Cypriot civil society actor who has fiercely promoted a nationalist understanding of the 'Cyprus Problem' and an unabashedly primordialist vision of 'Turkish-Cypriotness' in which the latter is subsumed under a Turkish national identity with Ankara as its national centre. For its part, the organisation has not refrained in the past from branding those on the left and in favour of reconciliation (such as those who organised under the 'This Country is ours' Platform, see below) as 'traitors'. Indeed, in the run up to the UN-sponsored referendum, the 'Fighters' Association' played a critical role in organising the 'no' camp within the Turkish-Cypriot community to oppose the purported 'ploy against Turkey and the TRNC with the help of the EU dream' and to ensure that 'TRNC' would 'live forever as part of the honourable Turkish world with the help of the power and inspiration it draws from the Ataturkist [sic.] thought' (*Cyprus PIO*, 2001). Over the years, the organisation has not deviated from its nationalist-line despite occasional reference to a 'long-lasting' and 'just' solution'; as it declared

¹⁴⁴ Essentially a veterans' league of all those who were members of the TMT and supporters of the 'liberation struggle', the Cyprus TMT Association was established in 2012 with the merger of the earlier 'TMT Association' (*TMT Mücahitler Derneği*) and the 'Turkish-Cypriot Fighters' Association' (*Kıbrıs Türk Mücahitler Derneği*).

more recently: 'We trusted them [Greek-Cypriots] in 1960 and we were deceived, we trusted them again in 2004 and yet again we were deceived. Let's not be deceived for another time. Let's focus altogether to a realistic solution which is based on our sovereign state' (*Cyprus PIO*, 2014).

More recently, the organisation has also taken a more vocal stance on the issues of immigration or the naturalisation of Turkish settlers. The two issues are considered within an explicitly nationalist framework characterised by the 'much-cherished' Turkish-Cypriot relationship with Turkey and on the basis of ethnic kinship. Accordingly, the Association has fiercely criticised the recent attempts of the CTP-DP coalition government to introduce stricter requirements for the acquisition of citizenship for Turkish immigrants (see section 3.5 in Chapter 3) claiming the latter to be issues of humanitarian nature and with significant repercussions for the Turkish-Cypriot economy (*Kıbrıs Postası*, 2013k). In itself, this would be a progressive position from a human rights perspective. Yet in couching this in a wider frame of bilateral relations with Turkey and claiming the necessary continuity of Turkish tutelage and protection for Turkish-Cypriot survival and for a stronger position on the negotiating table vis-à-vis Greek-Cypriots numerically, it ends up offering an insular interpretation of human rights, primarily aimed at promoting Turkish-Cypriot interests. In this sense, the citizenship rights of the Turkish immigrants are justified on the basis of ethnic-kinship, level of contribution to the economy, their importance to bilateral relations with Turkey and on the merit of their numerical strength in 'boosting the numbers' to maintain a stronger position in securing gains regarding future consociational arrangements. As such, they are devoid of any democratic concerns.

In conclusion, it could be said that the major characteristic of the discourse subscribed and dispersed by the nationalist civil society actors is that it promotes an overwhelmingly ethnocentric understanding of immigration which submerges the presence of Turkish nationals with insular interpretations of human rights to fit within the prevailing narrative on the ‘Cyprus Problem’. This finding is further elaborated in Chapter 7.

5.4. ‘This Country is Ours’: Trade unions and the immigration-settlement debate

Trade unions¹⁴⁵ are among the eldest and most influential civil-society associations in northern Cyprus. This is even more remarkable considering their ideological positioning to the left of the political spectrum together with a consistently moderate profile with relation to the ‘Cyprus Problem’ and also the fact that, for years, they were overpowered by the nationalist regime. The ‘Turkish Cypriot Teachers’ Union’ (KTÖS, *Kıbrıs Türk Öğretmenler Sendikası*) is one of the oldest and most-organised and it was among the first to declare its support for a federation before the partition of the island in 1974 (KTÖS, 1971). Likewise, it has also been highly-critical of what it sees as the extensive interference of the Turkey in Turkish-Cypriot affairs (KTÖS, 2013). As such, the union, in the past, had an uneasy relationship with the political leadership and faced fierce responses to its alleged ‘communist’ agenda including libel charges and imprisonment of its leadership.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁵ Both KTÖS and KTAMS selected for investigation are public sector unions; private sector unionisation (though recognised by the constitution) is negligible, at around 0.5 percent of the total working population (*Yenidüzen*, 2015) The state, on the other hand, continues to be the biggest employer with public sector employment stood at around 30 percent Guven-Lisaniler, F. and Ugural, S. (2010).

¹⁴⁶ For a detailed account, see former union leader Arif H. Tahsin’s interview with *HaberKıbrıs* (2011) and his memoirs in Tahsin (2011).

Significantly, the union was also among the few in the immediate aftermath of the partition to criticise immigration from Turkey, framing the naturalisation of Turkish nationals as the consolidation of Turkish control over the community. As the union's 1988 declaration put it: 'it is now common-knowledge that the political will of the Turkish-Cypriot community has been impaired with the arrival of those imported vote[r]s since 1976' (KTÖS, 1988). This view falls squarely with the 'fifth column' thesis which suggests a 'settler constituency' acting as a voting bloc in line with the Turkish national interests to ensure electoral success for those candidates supported by Turkey. In an identitarian vein, the Teachers' Union has also seen the presence of large numbers of Turkish immigrants/settlers as a form of cultural assimilation which puts the distinct identity of the Turkish-Cypriot community at perpetual risk (see below).

Another trade union, the KTAMS (*Kıbrıs Türk Amme Memurları Sendikası*, or the 'Turkish-Cypriot Public Servants' Union') also promotes similar views. From its founding in 1973, the Union, together with its counterpart KTÖS, has mounted fierce opposition with a particular focus on workers' rights that are said to be under systemic attack in the shape of bilateral protocols the Turkish-Cypriot authorities have signed with Turkey over the years in order to acquire much-needed financing. In this sense, the Union, representing a significant fraction of the largest social group in northern Cyprus has stood firmly opposed to what it considers as 'austerity policies' that would by design impoverish the Turkish-Cypriot community and escalate their outward migration from the island.

In parallel to the decision of the European Union to begin accession negotiations with Cyprus in the 1990s and the reaction to that decision on the Turkish-Cypriot side to pursue ever-closer 'integration' with Turkey, these influential organisations would become more vocal in their criticism of the Turkish/Turkish-Cypriot leadership and the integrationist policies that, the Unions argued, would seriously harm Turkish-Cypriot interests (*Yenidüzen*, 1997a). Indeed, the Teachers' Union argued earlier that following a path of integration with Turkey in reality meant '[...] loss of all hard-earned [labour rights] creating a 'free for all' country by removing passport procedures for travel from Turkey [...] crippling trade unionism through illegal workers [and] estrangement of the Turkish Cypriot community and their emigration from Cyprus' (*Cyprus PIO*, 1996).

Significantly, it was such efforts of the trade unions in early 2000s to oppose integrationist policies in general and the implementation of austerity measures tabled by Ankara, in particular, that truly placed them at the forefront of an unprecedented societal upheaval. And the financial meltdown and the diplomatic crisis which ensued in parallel (see section 4.4 in Chapter 4) was to prove conducive for the anti-systemic discourse to be voiced louder than ever, now organised under the 'This Country is ours' platform. The project was largely led by the KTÖS and the KTAMS and included under its roof a wide range of NGOs and two left parties, the 'Republican Turkish Party' (CTP) and the 'Patriotic Unity Movement' (YBH).

Initially, the platform's discourse was marked by its emphasis on the worsening economic situation in the north and on bilateral relations with Turkey which was articulated in relation to Turkish-Cypriot autonomy. As such, it attacked the 'reform package' tabled by the Turkish

government as part of the 'Financial Protocol' signed with the Turkish-Cypriot authorities (it was dubbed the 'economic destruction package') and called for total autonomy from Turkey on domestic matters including political and economic issues as well as the separation of the police from military control [headed by a Turkish General] and the transfer of its command to civilian Turkish-Cypriot authorities (*The Economist*, 2000a). At the same time, it was also characterised by a distinct anti-Turkish rhetoric which framed Turkish-Cypriot identity in existential terms, threatened by assimilationist policies which Turkey and its allies in northern Cyprus had tried putting in place. In a particularly fiery statement, indirectly addressed to the late Turkish-Cypriot leader Denktash also known for his notoriously nationalist views on identity and *Turkishness*, the Platform would declare that:

The One who sits at the [Presidential] Palace is claiming that there is no such thing as a distinct Cypriot culture. He wants us to dance [to Turkish folkloric songs] and eat 'Lahmacun'¹⁴⁷ Let us all speak in one voice and let the Palace know: 'We are Cypriots [...] we have a distinct culture and people of this country have the right to govern themselves [...] Above all, this country is ours (Yenidüzen, 2003a).

In the months ahead, such fiery rhetoric was largely maintained and the Turkish-Cypriot leadership came under daily attack from the oppositional civil society actors on the worsening economic situation. As pointed earlier however, the resolution of the Cyprus problem together with the integration of the Turkish-Cypriot community into the EU became, for a brief period of time, the focal aspect of the anti-establishment discourse and earlier references to immigration were temporarily muted not only in party political discourse (Chapter 4) but also in oppositional civil society rhetoric; the clear benefits emanating from Cyprus's imminent EU membership coupled with the coming to the power of the AKP government in Turkey in 2002 which had

¹⁴⁷ A popular Turkish/Middle-eastern flatbread

indicated a shift in favour of a moderate policy toward a solution can explain this change at the discursive level.

The controversy over the large-scale granting of citizenship rights to Turkish immigrants nonetheless, which blew up in late 2003 would reignite the issue and place it under the spotlight once again. Following the legal ‘citizenship-stripping’ court battles that was launched by the opposition parties (see section 4.4 in Chapter 4), this period also saw the civil society platform staging a general strike and several mass rallies to protest the new citizenships granted on the eve of the much-anticipated legislative elections. In a statement, the platform described the naturalisations as ‘illegal’ and the move by the Turkish-Cypriot authorities to fast-track citizenship applications was condemned as an ‘obstruction of the reflections of the people’s will in the ballot’ (*Cyprus News Agency*, 2003).

The aftermath of the aborted reunification and the accession of the still-divided island into the EU in 2004 would see a further reconfiguration of the oppositional *Cypriotness* discourse in which the prominence of EU as the key signifier of popular demands diminished and the trade union narratives were organised once again around the issues of immigration and the citizenship status of Turkish nationals. The key issue which facilitated the discursive shift was the new set of ‘austerity’ measures tabled by Ankara in early 2008. The KTAMS and the Teachers’ Union opposed the proposals from the outset and claimed that they presented a mere pretext to facilitate the outflow of Turkish-Cypriots from Cyprus, hence dubbing it the ‘emigration law’. In this sense, such austerity measures were articulated together with prevalent fears related to

losing of Turkish-Cypriot identity. In other words, the austerity measures, for the unions represented a threat to Turkish-Cypriot autonomy by further consolidating Ankara's control in its domestic affairs through systematic impoverishment of their community (interview no.9). To this end, 'Communal Survival' rallies were organised by the KTÖS, KTAMS and others between 2010 and 2012 which saw thousands of Turkish-Cypriots taking to the streets to reassert their Turkish-Cypriot identity, protest against Turkish-imposed austerity measures and tell Ankara to keep its 'hands-off the Turkish-Cypriot community'.

A securitised notion of citizenship and the framing of the ongoing naturalisation of Turkish immigrants as a threat to the autonomy of the Turkish-Cypriot community also continued to feature heavily within this reinvented anti-austerity discourse. In this sense, the twin issues of immigration and citizenship are framed as a calculated Turkish policy of hegemony toward the Turkish-Cypriot community through the assimilation of its distinct cultural, religious and linguistic character that make up its authentic identity (interview no. 9 and no. 10). From this perspective, the immigration and citizenship policies Turkish-Cypriot authorities pursue in northern Cyprus are dictated by Turkey to maintain a 'truly Turkish' and recently a 'more Muslim' population to consolidate its control and hegemony in a strategically important territory (interview no.9). It is nonetheless important to note that other immigration-related issues are viewed in distinction to this and within a pluralist and inclusive human rights framework (interview no.10). This is especially evident in the education policy of the teacher's union, KTÖS, which calls for a multicultural approach to address cultural diversity at schools and ensure the successful orientation of immigrant pupils (interview no.9). To that end, the union has promoted a rather

important distinction between a 'state crime' (regarding Turkish policy towards northern Cyprus) and the individual human rights, at least in rhetoric.

A clear continuity also emerges in the ways in which the 'Public Servants' Union' (KTAMS) has conceived of the twin issues of immigration from Turkey and the citizenship status of Turkish settlers. Though the union has not campaigned on these issues directly until the early 2000s, it has since then consistently opposed the large-scale naturalisation of Turkish immigrants as a form of 'demographic erosion' and the usurpation of the Turkish-Cypriot political will through the manipulation of the electorate. For KTAMS too, such worrying changes have accelerated since 2009 with the change in Turkish-Cypriot leadership and the replacement of moderate Mehmet Ali Talat with the right-wing Derviş Eroğlu (interview no.10). Similar to that of the 'Teacher's Union', the KTAMS' discourse also pointed out to a calculated Turkish policy of hegemony toward the Turkish-Cypriot community and direct interference with the 'distinct ways of living' that make up its cultural identity (interview no.10). The important repercussions of a blanket framing of Turkish immigrants or naturalised Turkish-Cypriots as mere 'tools' of a hegemonic project and subsequent 'demonization' of Turkish immigrants/settlers is emphasised even more by the KTAMS who has claimed that such discourse has led to ethnic discrimination but also a 'two-way segregation' in recent years (interview no.10). The labour union has nonetheless continued to stand opposed to large-scale naturalisations especially ahead of elections which it considers a form of manipulation directed by Turkey to maintain its control on Turkish-Cypriot domestic affairs (*Cyprus Mail*, 2013a; see also appendix 2).

5.5. Immigrant Civil Society Organisations

Immigrant civil society organisations (ICSOs) play an important role in the preservation of ethno-cultural identity and in mobilising support over issues of concern in relation to the welfare and the settlement processes of their members. The most common and generalised aims pursued by such associations are to achieve concrete integration policies (most notably, attaining citizenship rights for the immigrant populations) and recognition of the specific needs (linguistic, religious, etc.) of their group. In this sense, these organisations are instrumental in the construction of identity narratives which distinguish the immigrants from the host society whilst also mirroring the perceptions of the latter often as a rallying point for collective action.

Though a relatively recent feature of the Turkish-Cypriot civil society, proliferating particularly in the post-referendum period, numerous ICSOs now operate in northern Cyprus. The rapid growth of these groups both in size and in scope during the last ten years and their activism is, to a large extent, due to the growth of the immigrant/settler population along with the further politicisation of immigration and citizenship policies that has ushered in tighter naturalisation procedures. Ever-growing antagonism moreover, and lack of substantive steps to alleviate long-standing concerns of certain immigrant groups also serve as a motivation for the organisations representing immigrants to turn to political lobbying. At the same time, recent years have also seen immigrant associations forming or indeed consolidating their ties with established Turkish-Cypriot actors (political parties and other civil-societal bodies) to represent and promote their interests (see below).

One such immigrant/settler association which has engaged in lobbying governments in conjunction with others, to demand legal recognition for its congregation and improved religious freedoms is the '*Pir Sultan Abdal Association*' (*Kıbrıs Pir Sultan Abdal Derneği*), which represents the several-thousand strong Alevi community in northern Cyprus.¹⁴⁸ A central grievance of the Alevis is the lack of a suitable place of worship or a *Cemevi* (Alevi house of worship). As Dayıoğlu has recently pointed out, while the Turkish Embassy's 'Aid Committee' (*yardım kurulu*) provides significant financial aid for the construction of Sunni mosques, no funds are provided to Alevis for the construction of a *Cemevi* because they are not officially recognised as a religious community (Dayıoğlu, 2014). To address these grievances, in 2006 the CTP-ORP coalition government allocated land to the Alevi community to build a *Cemevi*. While the building work on the allocated plot for a *Cemevi* began the same year, the Alevi community has since argued that the right-wing 'National Unity Party' which came to power in 2009 stopped financing the project.¹⁴⁹ As a result, the Alevi community has tried to raise the funds needed for the construction of the *Cemevi* through donations or proceeds from various social events (interview no.11). Representatives from the Alevi community, moreover, lamented that 'state' funding was spent exclusively on building mosques and that the Turkish-Cypriot authorities dragged their feet on the *Cemevi* project to avoid antagonising the AKP government in Ankara which is affiliated

¹⁴⁸ Alevis are a non-Sunni religious/cultural group who follow the teachings of the Alevi saint and sufi Master, Bektasi Veli; according to US Department of State's 'Religious Freedom Report' for 2013, an estimated 10,000 immigrant workers and 8,000 settlers from Turkey of Turkish, Kurdish, and Arab origin are Alevis. (US DoS, 2013)

¹⁴⁹ Ankara's policy toward its own Kurdish population is an important factor which has shaped the attitudes of successive Turkish-Cypriot governments toward the Alevis in northern Cyprus. With the relative improvement of the situation in Turkey in mid-2000s as part of Turkey's EU membership bid (some recognition of cultural rights such as broadcasting in Kurdish) has allowed the Turkish-Cypriot authorities greater flexibility and increased interaction with the Alevi community. The ceasefire which was declared between the Turkish forces and the PKK in 2013 was also met with great enthusiasm in Cyprus symbolised with the nationalist UBP government taking part in the traditional Newroz celebrations for the first time. Ankara's reluctance, however, to take substantial steps on the issue has translated to tentative progress in Nicosia.

with the Hanafi-Sunni doctrine of Islam (interview no.11). Alevi, together with leftist political parties and other associations including the 'Teachers' Union', have also stood firmly against the state sponsored summer religious courses (including Qur'an lessons) that were put in practice in 2009. For the *Alevi* and others, such classes perpetuate the Hanafi-Sunni doctrine of Islam and violate the principle of laicism (*Kıbrıs Postası*, 2011). In a similar vein, the same associations also opposed the opening in 2013 of the 'Hala Sultan Divinity College' (*Hala Sultan İlahiyat Koleji*), arguing that pressure from the AKP in Turkey was behind the project and that it was an explicit attack on the distinct Turkish-Cypriot secularism and part of systematic attempts to replace it with a more religious community. In this sense, the Alevi discourse on identity shows a remarkable convergence in interests and rhetoric particularly in relation to Turkey but also on other features of the oppositional Turkish-Cypriot narratives which often antagonise immigration, as discussed above. With such interactions taking place and the influence of the 'context' in negotiating identity strategies, organisations such as the 'Pir Sultan Association' may indeed be considered a 'third-space' of belonging (Bhabha, 1994) that represents hyphenated-identities, articulating in this case an Alevi-Cypriot amalgamation.

Other cases of convergence or borrowing of discursive components can also be seen across different immigrant associations. A particularly telling example is provided by the comments of an association leader shortly after the first 'Communal Survival Rally' which had been organised by several trade unions including the Teachers' Union and the KTAMS in January 2011. In the words of the leader of the 'Öz Hataylılar Association', representing immigrants and settlers from the Turkish region of Hatay, the underlying reason for the Turkish-Cypriot hostility

towards new naturalisations in particular and towards the Turkish immigrants in general, is the lax immigration regime:

Anyone can enter TRNC using a [Turkish] id card and without being subjected to any checks [...] This then leads to all those unemployed people and ex-convicts piling up here [...] The real losers of course are those who've been living here for the past ten-twenty years, those who've never committed a single crime in their lives and meet the conditions of citizenship but can't obtain one because of this piling-up [...] Past governments have also made the situation worse by granting citizenship status only to those who'd vote for them in the elections instead of the ones who really deserve it (Açık Gazete, 2011).

The spokesperson for the immigrant association also lamented of the enormous strain placed on social and welfare services including health and education as a result of uncontrolled immigration from Turkey. More specifically, he claimed that the infrastructure for such services was already 'beyond stretch' and that the financial support Turkish-Cypriot authorities received from Turkey was 'barely enough to cover the needs of the native population' was not sufficient to address the needs of the Turkish immigrants (Açık Gazete, 2011).

Such views, however, are by no means universal. In fact, the discourse promoted by another group, namely the 'TRNC *Hataylılar* Culture and Solidarity Association' (*Kıbrıs Türk Hatay Kültür Dayanışma Derneği*¹⁵⁰) which also claims to represent those immigrants and settlers from Hatay, displays a stark contrast to those views ascribed above with a defensive, nationalist narrative that has received significant public/media attention over the years. More recently, the tighter citizenship provisions introduced by the CTP government in 2013 (see section 4.5 in

¹⁵⁰ The 'TRNC *Hataylılar* Association' (*KKTC Hataylılar Derneği*), was first set up in 2002 and renamed in 2014 after bringing under its roof two sister organisations, '*Reyhanlılar* Culture and Solidarity Association' (*Reyhanlılar Kültür ve Dayanışma Derneği*) and *Hataylılar* Culture and Solidarity Association (*Hataylılar Kültür ve Dayanışma Derneği*). It currently boasts 8,000 members mainly immigrants and naturalised Turkish nationals from the region of Hatay.

Chapter 4) have been key in providing the strong imagery for the association to describe the new policy as 'arbitrary' but also 'a grave injustice' which 'amounts to a blanket refusal of extending citizenship status to Turkish immigrants' (*Milliyet*, 2013). The association also argued that the decision of the government to reform its citizenship policy was part of a sinister plot to discriminate but also antagonise Turkish immigrants (*Milliyet*, 2013). During this time, the association organised a series of high-profile protests which were reported widely in the media together with a number of fiery statements threatening to pursue legal action against the government's alleged blanket suspension of all citizenship applications (*Kıbrıs Postası*; 2013k). In discursive terms, the association's rhetoric on the citizenship rights of Turkish nationals perpetuates a certain victimisation of Turkish immigrants by framing tighter citizenship provisions as an 'ideologically motivated denial' of 'just' and 'democratic demands' and with reference to 'human rights' (*Kıbrıs Postası*, 2013k). The diversification of the association in form and aims from other ICOSOs is emphasised even more in its narrative of the 'Cyprus Problem' which reveals an unmistakable nationalist image based on primordial *Turkishness* and distinguishes it from other Immigrant associations that have generally maintained rather low-profiles on this particular issue (*Kıbrıs Postası*, 2013i).

5.6. Radical Perspectives

As outlined above, an important feature of the Turkish-Cypriot civil society in the post 'Annan Plan' period has been the emergence of a number of radical civil society actors. Such civil society actors have since been able to take advantage of the opening-up of the political space to

organise more effectively and articulate a radical social agenda inspired by a wide range of ideologies and critical perspectives such as the New Left, Marxism, Feminism, Environmentalism and LGBTQ activism. In northern Cyprus, however, the focus of such civil society actors have not yet been able to construct (the much-anticipated) holistic discourse, which has meant that their concern with issues of immigration and the citizenship rights of Turkish immigrants in particular vary greatly both in form and scope across different organisations.

Two such notable organisations which have, nonetheless, focused extensively on Turkish immigrants is the *Baraka* and the *Feminist Atelier* (FEMA hereinafter). Set up in 2003, *Baraka* is primarily concerned with the exploitation of the immigration issue from a Marxist perspective. *Baraka* is diametrically opposed to the discourse employed by the Turkish nationalists and critical of the traditional oppositional discourses promoted by the mainstream left (that of the CTP in particular, see below). From this perspective, the presence of Turkish immigrants in northern Cyprus is framed in terms of a systematic attempt by Turkey to assimilate or 'Turkify' the Turkish-Cypriot community through demographic manipulation (interview no.12). In this vein, the association has fervently criticised the lax immigration regime which it claims has facilitated the large influx of Turkish immigrants into northern Cyprus since the partition of the island in 1974 (interview no.12). More cynically, *Baraka* also points out that the recent attempts by the CTP governments (2005-09 and 2013) in particular to regularise unauthorised workers through the issuing of work permits is an extension of the systematic 'population transfer' which paves the way for the regularised newcomers to qualify for citizenship later on (interview no. 12).

At the same time, transcending the immigrant-native dichotomy that is central to ethno-nationalist discourses, *Baraka* has argued that the interaction between the two groups over the years amalgamated a new Turkish-Cypriot identity that now presents an opportunity to galvanise into a common, revolutionary struggle against the assimilationist policies of Turkey but also the 'xenophobia' that is fuelled by the 'traditional left' (Şahin, 2014). For *Baraka*, the anti-assimilationist discourse of the 'traditional left', represented by the leftist parties such as the CTP, the YKP but also the BKP, promote exclusivist, ethno-nationalist understandings of *Cypriotness* and 'assimilation' which in return, demonises Turkish immigrants/settlers. Such 'animosity', for the Association is counter-productive for the anti-assimilationist struggle since it alienates these groups who are then forced to seek support from the right which is represented as the pawn which furthers Turkish assimilationist plans (Şahin, 2014: 223). From this perspective, moreover, reaching out and forming alliances with Turkish immigrants/settlers is essential for the "revolutionary class struggle" to oppose Turkish hegemony and foster an inclusive notion of *Cypriotness* that could then reunify the island in order to stage 'a common struggle against imperialism' (Şahin, 2014: 227).

From a radical feminist perspective, FEMA promotes the view that such phenomena of peace, conflict or indeed immigration are all gendered. FEMA's discourse on identity is equally centred on a critical view of the recent history of Cyprus's relations with Turkey (Derya: 2009a, 2009b; FEMA, 2011). It thus promotes ideas of reconciliation which includes acknowledging aspects of the other community's positions as legitimate, as for example the fact that human rights violations had been perpetrated by both sides during the inter-communal violence (FEMA,

2014). Indeed, the group recently made the headlines when one of its founding members (also an MP), Doğus Derya, asserted during a speech at the Turkish-Cypriot Parliament that many Greek-Cypriot women were (also) raped by the Turkish army in 1974 (*Cyprus Mail*, 2014). Perhaps more remarkably, the feminist group which describes itself as ‘anti-capitalist’, ‘anti-militarist’ and ‘anti-racist’ has played an important role in articulating a number of grievances experienced by Turkish immigrants and women in particular (workers’ rights, welfare entitlements, domestic violence, etc.) which often go unnoticed within the hegemonic patriarchal system that perpetuates the nationalist and xenophobic frames. In this respect, FEMA has highlighted the class-based xenophobia which accentuates cultural differences displayed by Turkish immigrants to marginalise and demonise the latter (Türkoğlu, 2012). It is important to note, however, that while FEMA distinctly avoids engaging in a discourse of ‘demographic manipulation’, it has not been concerned with the citizenship issue either; this is an important omission which obscures as much as it distinguishes FEMA’s position from other oppositional civil-society actors’ who have used securitised frames to articulate the naturalisation of Turkish immigrants.

5.7. Evaluating civil society narratives

As discussed in detail in the previous chapters and outlined further above, the aftermath of the Turkish military intervention in 1974 saw the further consolidation of the hegemonic *Turkishness* discourse now signifying a new perception of order and security based on statehood as well as an overarching belonging to the Turkish nation. Turkish-Cypriot identity was effectively subsumed under this representation as a form of ethnic/local variation. The various ‘fighters’

associations' which currently represent those who fought against the Greek-Cypriots when the intercommunal fighting broke in 1963 and again in 1974 have invariably defended this conceptualisation of identity as being an 'indivisible part of the larger Turkish nation'. In this sense, these associations consider the presence of Turkish immigrants and their citizenship status within an explicitly nationalist framework characterised by a much-cherished Turkish-Cypriot relationship with Turkey and on the basis of ethnic-kinship. In a more remarkable vein, recent attempts to introduce stricter requirements for the acquisition of citizenship for Turkish immigrants are further criticised as breaching of immigrants' human rights and with negative repercussions for the economy. Though the latter framing of immigrants' citizenship status may seem a progressive position from a human rights perspective, the study has shown that such reference to human rights are couched in a distinctly ethno-nationalist framing of the Turkish-Cypriot relationship with Turkey which favours continuity of Turkish tutelage for Turkish-Cypriot survival. In this sense, the citizenship rights of the Turkish immigrants are justified on the basis of ethnic-kinship, level of contribution to the economy, their importance to bilateral relations with Turkey but also on the merit of their contribution in boosting the Turkish-Cypriot population numerically to maintain a stronger position in relation to the Greek-Cypriot community. As such, they are devoid of any democratic concerns.

This is an important finding since it highlights the deployment and articulation of a range of civic and ethnic elements within the hegemonic *Turkishness* discourse. From this perspective, the nationalist civil-society narrative can indeed be regarded as an extension of a hegemonic struggle in constructing and consolidating a form of identity by articulating as many available

elements (i.e. ‘floating signifiers’, such as the economy and ‘human rights’, see Chapter 2) as possible. This assertion is also in line with the hypothesis posited in Chapter 2 and elaborated within the historical context in Chapter 3 that:

Hypothesis 1: *Given the local history and in the context of the Cyprus conflict, Turkish-Cypriot identity was cultivated and subsumed within a hegemonic notion of Turkishness that did not distinguish between Turkish-Cypriots and Turkish settlers.*

As the conceptual discussion in Chapter 2 noted earlier, the discourse-analytical framework on identity is premised on the ultimate impossibility of a total closure’ that makes a range of articulatory practices and political agency possible. This is further predicated on a social field criss-crossed by antagonisms, and the presence of elements (‘floating signifiers’) that can be instrumentalised by opposed political projects in the construction and articulation of political identities. Indeed, it was precisely within this context that the Turkish-Cypriot left capitalised on the ‘settlers’ cleavage from the 1980s onwards to challenge the hegemonic *Turkishness* discourse with an alternative notion of belonging which emphasised a distinct ‘Cypriot’ character. The *Cypriotness* discourse was constructed against a ‘threat’ that conceived immigration-settlement from mainland Turkey as part of Ankara’s assimilationist project to ultimately undermine the distinct Turkish-Cypriot identity and the community’s autonomy.

In this respect, the leftist trade unions such as the KTAMS and the Teachers’ Union (together with the opposition political parties, see Chapter 4) explicitly linked immigration from

Turkey and granting of citizenship rights to Turkish immigrants onto the issues of identity, societal security and political autonomy. In this vein, immigration from Turkey was criticised for instigating the outflow of Turkish-Cypriots onto other countries and that the lax immigration regime facilitated the 'transfer of population' from mainland Turkey would, in the long-term, undermine Turkish-Cypriot autonomy but also endanger the distinct Turkish-Cypriot identity through 'demographic manipulation'. Such 'speech-acts' (Buzan and Wæver, 1998) employed by the trade unions constructed a securitised discourse in which the presence of populations from Turkey were treated as an existential threat to the presumed 'authority', 'authenticity' and 'ways of living' of the Turkish-Cypriot society. Within this discourse, moreover, Turkish settlers were seen as a homogenous constituency that invariably supported the nationalist status quo and the Turkish tutelage over Turkish-Cypriot affairs. These claims were also articulated with an appeal to autonomy and a political project that would safeguard it.

Significantly, such demands were at the heart of the anti-systemic discourse which the trade unions, now organised under the 'This Country is Ours' platform, promoted from the late 1990s onwards. In this connection, the platform overwhelmingly supported EU membership for Turkish-Cypriots in the run up to the referendum in 2004 that would allow a reunified, federal Cyprus to join the EU (see also section 4.2 in Chapter 4). The economic benefits from EU membership were articulated together with the worrisome, numerical decline of the Turkish-Cypriot community with large numbers emigrating elsewhere for better employment prospects. But above all, such integration meant an endorsement of the Turkish-Cypriot community internationally and a recognition of its well-defined identity.

While the pro-EU rhetoric would, to a large extent, overshadow the settler-related issues in the run up to the 2004 referendum as it became the focal point of identity narratives, the granting of ‘fresh citizenships’ by the Turkish-Cypriot authorities on the eve of Cyprus accession into the EU would once again put the issue under spotlight with the ‘This Country is Ours Platform’ and the trade unions within it organising strikes and public rallies in fear that Turkish settlers who had been given citizenship by the UBP-DP coalition government would oppose the ‘Annan Plan’ and torpedo Turkish-Cypriot prospects of joining the EU (see section 4.3 in Chapter 4). In sum, these findings confirm the hypothesis posited in Chapter 2 that:

Hypothesis 2: *In the context of Cyprus’s accession into the EU and the anticipated Turkish-Cypriot integration into the European mainstream, Turkish settlers came to be perceived as a threat to Turkish-Cypriot identity.*

The impact of the EU in seemingly transforming oppositional identity narratives began to decrease, however, once Cyprus was admitted to the EU as a divided island. The peculiar and rather ‘marginal’ positioning of the Turkish-Cypriot community within the post-accession context (see section 3.4 in Chapter 3) meant that the ‘EU project’ was unable to consolidate itself into a viable social, and perhaps a more inclusive imaginary. Instead, the pro-EU *Cypriotness* discourse that brought together large segments of the Turkish-Cypriot society and led simultaneously a political sea-change in the run up to Cyprus’s EU accession became progressively disorientated. In discourse theoretical terms, the ‘dislocation’ that occurred following the referendum obstructed the continuity of the common ‘social imaginary’ represented by the prospects of EU

membership and thwarted the emergence of a stable hegemonic formation (based on a 'European' discourse) in Turkish-Cypriot politics during this period. Moreover, the dislocatory experience of the aborted EU membership has led to a new reconfiguration of the pre-existing elements articulated within the oppositional *Cypriotness* discourse promoted by the KTÖS and the KTAMS in which settler antagonisms took centre stage. This argument was hypothesised in Chapter 2:

Hypothesis 3: *With the failure of the 'Annan Plan', the pro-EU Cypriotness discourse is disorientated and settler antagonisms take centre-stage.*

While the leading trade unions such as the KTAMS and the Teachers' Union remained committed towards reunification and EU membership, the post-referendum period has seen a vocal anti-Turkish rhetoric that surpassed the all-empowering pro-EU trend. To this end, these organisations instrumentalised on the austerity policies which were gradually introduced from 2009 onwards, by adopting a more defensive rhetoric on Turkish-Cypriot identity in general and the bilateral relations with mainland Turkey, in particular. During this time, Turkish-Cypriot identity was conceived once again within an explicitly securitised framework and in relation to immigration from mainland Turkey.

In this vein, the unions argued that the Turkish-Cypriot identity was put at risk not only through its positioning in relation to Turkey which excluded 'mutual respect' but also through the large-scale naturalisation of Turkish nationals that altered the domestic political balance,

further consolidating Ankara's grip over Turkish-Cypriot affairs. To this end, 'Communal Survival' rallies were organised by the KTÖS, KTAMS and others in 2011 and 2012 which saw thousands of Turkish-Cypriots taking to the streets to reassert their Turkish-Cypriot identity, protest against Turkish-imposed austerity measures and tell Ankara to keep its 'hands-off the Turkish-Cypriot community'. The unions also once again began asserting that the naturalisation of Turkish immigrants, especially during election times was a form of gerrymandering to manipulate results of those parties (UBP and the DP in particular, see sections 4.2 and 4.3 in Chapter 4) who aligned themselves with Turkey.

The proliferation of immigration associations both in size and in scope in the post-referendum period also confirms the arguments formulated in Hypotheses 2 and 3. Ever-growing schism and hostility on the part of the Turkish-Cypriot community (Chapter 6) and lack of substantive steps to alleviate the long-standing concerns of certain immigrant groups indeed served as a motivation for the organisations representing Turkish immigrants and settlers to turn to political lobbying in order to demand the enlargement of citizenship status confront other political actors that have traditionally dominated the discussion on immigration and citizenship. At the same time, recent years have also seen immigrant associations forming or indeed consolidating their ties with established Turkish-Cypriot actors (political parties and other civil-societal bodies) to represent and promote their interests. One major finding in this section was the nature and scope of the diversification which characterised the narratives of these associations borrowing heavily from the two counter discourses, *Turkishness* and *Cypriotness*. In respect to citizenship status, for example, it needs to be stressed that some organisations

borrowed heavily from oppositional Turkish-Cypriot discourses and sought to articulate their claims as part of 'common grievances' ('assimilationist policies' of Turkey in particular) while others were largely defensive and couched their claims in nationalist terms based on an 'immigrant/settler vs native' dichotomy whereby leftist groups within the Turkish-Cypriot community are presented as 'others' who antagonise the presence of Turkish immigrants and deny them basic human rights and against whom 'national' interests ('impeccable relations' with Turkey above all) need to be defended.

Finally, the chapter also considered different interpretations of immigration and citizenship articulated by organisations who promote alternative political identities and social agendas formulated within critical and radical discourses. In line with much of the conceptual insights provided by the literature, the analysis undertaken in this section has shown that these actors are instrumental in widening the discursive space which expand participatory possibility by challenging existing public discourses and constituting inclusive identities (see section 2.5 in Chapter 2). One major finding here, however, points to the difficulty in framing immigration from Turkey in ways other than already prescribed by the meta-narratives especially on the 'Cyprus Problem'. Such organisations have thus focussed on the symptoms of the 'Cyprus Problem', above all the prospects of becoming a Turkish protectorate, which pre-determines the terms of the debate on immigration and citizenship. This, in turn, points to the pervasiveness of the Cyprus conflict as a key reference-point in the organisation of political discourses including those that aim to challenge the existing symbolic order. The concluding chapter (Chapter 7) further reflects on these findings.

5.8. Conclusion

This chapter has examined the civil society responses to immigration from mainland Turkey and the citizenship status of Turkish settlers. The issue as it stood in the mid-1990s was framed by the left-leaning labour unions as an existential threat to the presumed 'authority' as well as the 'authenticity' of the Turkish-Cypriot community. The securitised *Cypriotness* discourse regarded Turkish settlers as a homogenous constituency which invariably supported the nationalist regime, hence the Turkish tutelage over Turkish-Cypriot affairs. The fighters' organisations linked to the Turkish-Cypriot right, on the other hand, have traditionally articulated the 'settlers issue' largely within a nationalist *Turkishness* discourse thus appealing to a number of ethno-national myths such as common descent in combination with other civic references to 'human rights'.

The introduction of EU membership into the political agendas of the Turkish-Cypriot community from the mid-1990s onwards had an important effect in the framing of immigration from Turkey especially within the labour union narratives in the sense that it was largely downplayed within a new 'imaginary' in which EU membership came to signify. As the EU became the focal aspect of identity narratives, immigration related anxieties were largely muted or omitted altogether from the oppositional rhetoric. This was only a partial discursive shift however as the 'settler issue' continued to lurk in the background as evidenced in the protests and strikes staged by the unions on the eve of Cyprus's EU accession.

As asserted in the previous chapter (Chapter 4), the partial nature of this discursive shift and the absence of a complete paradigmatic change in terms of how immigration was presented by the labour unions, can be explained by the structural and historical features of the issue (particularly its linkage to the bilateral relations with Turkey) as well as the contingent nature of the 'window of opportunity' represented by EU membership that was made available. Indeed, the impact of the EU in seemingly transforming oppositional identity narratives began to diminish once Cyprus was admitted to the EU as a still-divided island. The peculiar and rather 'marginal' positioning of the Turkish-Cypriot community within the post-accession context meant that the 'EU project' was unable to consolidate itself into a viable social, and perhaps a more inclusive imaginary in relation to the 'settler question'. In this case, this was evidenced by the reintroduction of the immigration-related anxieties into oppositional rhetoric from mid-2000s onwards to, in effect, take centre stage in organising *Cypriotness* centred identity discourses in the post-referendum period. Such discursive structuring of immigration and the citizenship rights of Turkish settlers within prevalent perceptions toward Turkey point out to the pervasiveness of the conflict in all spheres of life. Unsurprisingly, this is also implicated in alternative discourses as a major stumbling block to construct inclusive identities for collective action and political struggle. Building on these findings, the following chapter explores the ways in which immigration from mainland Turkey has been represented in the major Turkish-Cypriot newspapers.

CHAPTER 6. FRAMING OF IDENTITY, IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP IN THE PRINT MEDIA

6.1. Introduction

6.2. Turkish-Cypriot print media: A Brief overview

6.3. Media discourses on 'settlers' on the eve of anticipated European integration

6.4. The framing of immigration and 'settlers' in the post-2004 period

6.5. Identity (re)construction and the immigration-settlement debate in the Turkish-Cypriot newspapers (1995-2013)

6.6. Conclusion

6.1. Introduction

Much scholarship has focused on the spread of nationalism and identity (re)construction in media discourse (see Chapter 1). The following chapter examines how the print media in northern Cyprus and the Turkish-Cypriot newspapers in particular have framed the twin issues of immigration from Turkey and the citizenship status of Turkish settlers in ways that articulate competing discourses on Turkish-Cypriot identity. To that end, the chapter begins by providing a brief overview of the Turkish-Cypriot newspapers and their enduring relationship with the domestic politics of the island, namely nationalism and the Cyprus problem (6.2). This is followed by a critical discourse analysis of a selection of political events significant to the immigration debate and their framing by various mainstream newspapers and their columnists with different ideological orientations. In order to gain a good understanding of the nature of this environment and in line with the conceptual framework developed earlier (Chapter 1), the analysis concentrates less on the linguistic (de)construction of particular texts than on the change and continuity in the articulation of core concepts that have been important to particular discourses

on Turkish 'settlers' and on identity. Accordingly, in the subsequent sections (6.3 and 6.4) the framing of Turkish-Cypriot identity in the Turkish-Cypriot newspapers in relation to immigration from Turkey is analysed diachronically across two distinct time periods distinguished by Cyprus's accession into the EU i.e. pre-2004 and post-2004 era respectively. Section 6.5 provides a summarising account which further evaluates the interplay between various framings of immigration, the Turkish 'settlers' and the competing narratives on identity, linking the empirical findings to the conceptual framework developed earlier in Chapter 2.

6.2. Turkish-Cypriot print media: A Brief overview

The news media are thought of as an integral part of any political system, informing, prioritizing, shaping and controlling events, opinions and society itself (Fairclough, 2003; Wodak, 2001). Cyprus, and the northern part of the island more specifically, is no exception to this. On a closer look, discourses articulated in the Turkish-Cypriot media closely reflect those of the mainstream narratives that dominate the political field, that is those preferred by politicians and the political parties (see Chapter 4.) This overriding feature of the media in northern Cyprus as a highly-politicised domain and a conduit of political discourse is captured well by the "polarized pluralist model" developed by Hallin and Mancini (2004, see also Papathanassopoulos, 2007). In their influential work on media systems across Europe, the authors outline the main characteristics of this model as consisting of a politically oriented press, high political resonance in journalism, prevalence of the State as an owner and regulator and a high degree of ideological

diversity and conflict that is 'atypical in a Mediterranean society with a strong role for the state and the political parties' (2004, pp. 68-73).

Indeed, the Turkish-Cypriot media (but also its Greek-Cypriot counterpart in the south, see Avraamidou and Kyriakides, 2015; Christophorou, 2010; Christophorou, Sahin and Pavlou, 2010) is enmeshed in pervasive contemporary political economic, social and cultural dynamics marked by the ongoing conflict, also known as the 'Cyprus Problem'. It is in this sense placed at the heart of the (re)production of that conflict, either promoting the status quo to signify *Turkishness* based on independent statehood and suspicion toward the 'other', that is the Greek-Cypriot community — or, to the contrary, an oppositional discourse contesting the dominant ethno-national notions of peace (marked by independent statehood in the form of the TRNC) and belonging grounded on *Turkishness*. In this context, the media is also part of a complex public sphere that forms and redefines collective identity.

Though implicated in it, the enduring relationship of the Turkish-Cypriot newspapers with the Cyprus conflict predates the outbreak of the bi-communal violence of the mid-1950s and 1960s and that of the inter-communal fighting which served as a prelude to the de-facto partition of the island in 1974. In fact, from their inception toward the end of the nineteenth century,¹⁵¹ the early Turkish-Cypriot newspapers were critical not only in fending off Greek-Cypriot demands for *enosis* (the unification of the island with Greece) but also in promoting nationalist ideals that

¹⁵¹ The first newspaper, *Umid* ('Hope') written in Ottoman Turkish was published in 1879. There were in total 24 newspapers published in the old vernacular until modern Turkish i.e. the phonetic writing system based on the Latin alphabet was adopted gradually from 1928 onwards (KTGB, 2012: 22; Yurdakul, 2002: 56-72)

would later find embodiment in *Turkishness* as the national identity of the Turkish-Cypriot community (see Chapter 3). As in other parts of the world, newspapers in Cyprus served to standardise vernacular languages and to reinforce the perceived homogeneity of ethnic groups. Perhaps more remarkably, early newspapers also connected the Cypriot intellectuals and civil society to Greece and Turkey, allowing the entrenchment of two distinct imagined communities in the image of their respective 'motherlands'. As in Turkey, nationalism in the Turkish-Cypriot community was initially an elite-driven project rather than a popular movement. Newspapers thus played a significant role in the dissemination of nationalist ideology to the Turkish-Cypriot community especially during the 'Turkish War of Liberation' and with the founding of the new Turkish Republic in 1923 when nationalist fervour was at its peak. Turkish language newspapers, including the *Vatan* ('Homeland') and the *Doğru Yol* ('Right Path'), praised the military victories and Kemalist reforms and promoted the ethnic kinship of the Turkish and Turkish-Cypriot populations (see section 3.2 in Chapter 3). With the gradual spread of nationalist sentiment in Cyprus, the introduction by the colonial administration of repressive laws restricting public assembly and because of a lack of an elected national chamber between 1931 and 1960, the newspapers became major platforms for the dissemination of opinion and nationalist propaganda. In the following years, major newspapers continued to echo the nationalist rhetoric, endorsing secession (or the policy of *Taksim*), but also turned increasingly into mouthpieces for different organisations and as means to challenge political rivals. It is noteworthy in this context that the two key figures of the Turkish-Cypriot nationalist movement, Dr Fazıl Kuchuk and Rauf Denktaş were also proprietors of the influential Turkish language newspapers, *Halkın Sesi*

(‘Voice of the People’ and the *Nacak* (‘The Hatchet’¹⁵²), respectively. While the *Halkın Sesi*, represented the dominant ethno-nationalist position, *Nacak* adopted a more severe form of ethno-nationalism and though the latter were initially supportive of Dr Kuchuk’s leadership, the newspaper would serve as a critical platform for his owner, Denktash, to later challenge his rival and catapult him into power.

The emergence of party politics in the early 1970s was an important factor which further politicised the newspapers with the entering of political parties on the scene. One direct outcome of party politics was the setting up of newspapers to serve as mouthpieces for the emerging parties. But a more indirect impact here also relates to a certain opening-up of Turkish-Cypriot politics during this period that had previously been inhibited by the so-called ‘BEY’ regime which tightly controlled the affairs of the Turkish-Cypriot community (sometimes with recourse to violence) during the period which large numbers of Turkish-Cypriots lived in ethnic enclaves (see section 3.3 in Chapter 3). Though not entirely free from harassment, violence and above all, the authoritarian grip of the Denktash regime (see below), the emerging of new political parties which represented (to some degree) diverse agendas and a broad spectrum of opinions also led to a certain diversification of editorial policies of the Turkish-Cypriot newspapers from then onwards.

¹⁵² As Sahin (2011) has also noted, the newspaper’s motto that ‘every Turk should keep a *Nacak* at home’ in case of an armed conflict, reflected the violent conception of *Turkishness* it espoused. *Nacak* consistently associated the nationalist cause with ‘martyrdom’ and presented the Turkish-Cypriot experience in terms of persecution and violent resistance.

More recently, there has been a further improving of the political climate with the election of the moderate CTP into office in 2003 when the new government worked together with the 'Turkish Cypriot Journalists Association' (*Kıbrıs Türk Gazeteciler Birliği*) to ease the previous restrictions on freedom of access, movement and coverage (Kahvecioglu, 2008). The improving of press freedoms but also a number of other developments further elaborated below, have in the last decade allowed for an active independent media landscape, regarded as "free" by the latest Freedom House report (2015) with both leftist and rightist newspapers, (some openly critical of the establishment) able to report on issues that was once considered 'taboo' (the role of the Turkish military, for instance). As indicated earlier however, the specific Cypriot context can open major ideological contradictions with reference to 'right' and 'left' labels so it is worth reflecting on the similarities and differences in their approaches to the Cyprus Problem (Fig. 10).

The *Yenidüzen* ('New Order'), for instance, began circulating in 1975 as a mouthpiece for the leftist CTP ('Republican Turkish Party') and has consistently promoted a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation. The *Afrika* (2000) too promotes the reunification of Cyprus but one resulting from a return to the 1960 constitutional order and is also the only Turkish-Cypriot daily newspaper that sees Turkey as an 'occupier'. The *Kıbrıs* ('Cyprus'), on the other hand, is a commercial newspaper owned by the ex-convict and businessman Asil Nadir, with the highest circulation in the 'TRNC' and is regarded as the most influential. During the period under study, the newspaper had shifted its position in relation to the Cyprus problem from a nationalistic to

Figure 10. Newspaper positions on immigration-settlement

Name	In-group	Out-group	Position(s) on immigration-settlement
<i>Kıbrıs</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ethno-cultural conceptions of 'Turkish-Cypriotness' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Greek-Cypriots ('bastions of Hellenism', 'existential threat') but 'moderate' stance re. the 'Cyprus Problem' since 2003 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ethnic kinship ties - economic arguments ('much-needed workforce', 'immigration as economic benefit') - Emphasis on 'civic' belonging - Markedly critical of immigration and citizenship policies since 2004
<i>Halkın Sesi</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - favour <i>Turkishness</i> - 'Turkish-Cypriotness' not a distinct identity but an ethnic/local variation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Greek-Cypriots ('bastions of Hellenism', 'existential threat') - The EU (pro-Greek) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ethnic kinship ties - economic arguments ('much-needed workforce', 'immigration as economic benefit') - demographic arguments re. the 'Cyprus Problem'
<i>Yenidüzen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Civil/cultural conceptions of <i>Cypriotness, sui-generis</i> - antagonises <i>Turkishness</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Turkish immigrants, settlers - Turkey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - form of cultural assimilation & electoral manipulation - Some emphasis on civic belonging but very 'limited' - consolidates 'Turkish hegemony'
<i>Afrika</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Civil/cultural conceptions of <i>Cypriotness, sui-generis</i> - antagonises <i>Turkishness</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Turkish immigrants, settlers - Turkey ('occupier') 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - form of cultural assimilation & electoral manipulation - consolidates 'Turkish hegemony'

moderate, pro-solution and pro-EU stance. The *Halkın Sesi* is a centre-right newspaper and the longest-surviving Turkish-Cypriot daily, having begun publication in 1942. As underlined above, the newspaper played a key role in the promotion of Turkish nationalism and has been a consistent supporter of nationalist policies. *Yeni Volkan* ('New Volcano') is on the extreme right of the political spectrum, a highly nationalistic newspaper favouring the status quo (or a 'two-state solution') and ever closer ties with Turkey.¹⁵³

The apparent diversity and differing ideological standpoints notwithstanding, the role of the State and its intervention in the functioning of news reporting through its centralised news agency, the TAK (*Türk Ajansı Kıbrıs*, or the 'Turkish Agency Cyprus'.) is an important dimension of news reporting which mediates further the relationship between the media and politics in northern Cyprus. Since its founding in 1975, the TAK has served for most outlets as the primary source of information, enabling the state to disseminate news often reflecting its ideological and political bias. According to Azgin and Baillie (2011: 693), this is a direct outcome of the unique political economy of the Cypriot media where, among others, 'relatively small newspapers cannot [...] afford the luxury of independent, investigative journalism'. This, in turn, has meant that newspapers in the north tend to report heavily on what has been selected from among the press releases provided by the TAK, resulting in a certain uniformity of news across media outlets 'with minor changes often made "in-house" by editing the text or the headline of the agency stories'.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵³ Only the *Yenidüzen*, *Afrika*, *Kıbrıs* and *Halkın Sesi* are examined in this study.

¹⁵⁴ According to Kahvecioglu (2008), TAK produced bulletins account for as much as 85 percent of the content that appear in the Turkish-Cypriot newspapers.

It is primarily for this reason that the analysis below focuses on a selection of newspaper columns and interviews with columnists rather than exclusively on 'hard news' to examine the media discourses on identity in relation to immigration from Turkey. In this sense, the views articulated in commentaries are valuable sites to observe more explicit frames in relation to settlers, immigration and identity related discourses. It is also important to note, as Azgin and Baillie (2011, p.692) have suggested previously, that in the northern Cyprus news media (but also to some extent, in the RoC), political columnists play the dual roles of 'opinion leader' and 'ideological indicator'. Based on anecdotal evidence, it is also suggested that the Cypriot readership tend to overvalue the work of columnists as an objective and critical source of information over that of news reports.¹⁵⁵ In this sense, the selection of columnists is based upon their high degrees of popularity (thus wider readership) and the crucial role they play in the Turkish-Cypriot society as shapers of public opinion especially in identity and immigration related issues that are relevant to this study.

6.3. Media discourses on immigration on the eve of anticipated European integration

For most of the pre-1995 period, the political agendas in northern Cyprus were dominated by domestic disputes relating little to international developments or the settlement of the 'Cyprus Problem'. The 'refugee issue', in particular, and the rather arbitrary and often clientelistic

¹⁵⁵ In this sense, though the aforementioned authors do not elaborate on the concept of 'opinion leadership', it can be suggested that the orientation of newspapers with respect to opinion columns and journalists with respect to opinion leadership can also be seen as substituting their rather limited agenda-setting and reporting functions.

process of land distribution and housing allocations for the Turkish-Cypriot refugees who had fled South during and in the aftermath of the partition, served as a hot topic of contention and dominated the pages especially of the opposition newspapers *Ortam* ('Ethos')¹⁵⁶ and *Yenidüzen*, that had then served as the mouthpieces for the TKP and the CTP respectively (see *Kurtuluş*, for example, 1980, *Ortam*, 1980 and *Yenidüzen*, 1988). The nationalist leadership, for its part, stoked up its rhetoric against the left by exploiting the 'national question' and declaring all dissent an act of national sacrilege; such establishment newspapers as the *Bozkurt*¹⁵⁷, the *Birlik*¹⁵⁸ ('Unity') and the *Zaman* (The 'Times') that had begun circulating in the pre-1974 period praised government policies in their stories and largely with reference to the 'national cause'.¹⁵⁹ The so-called 'national cause' (*Milli Dava*) embodied independent statehood conceived as the 'inseparable part of the motherland Turkey' requiring perpetual protection against the Greek-Cypriots framed here as the enemy (*Bozkurt*, 1975). In the aftermath of the partition, the Turkish-Cypriot leadership continued to assert that the Greek-Cypriots still posed an existential threat and that any form of internal dissent would harm the 'national cause' by undermining 'national unity' and serving, in effect, the Greek-Cypriot cause of *enosis*, or unification with Greece (*Zaman*, 1975). As such, the opposition newspapers came under heavy attack with such accusations and often labelled as 'traitors' when they appeared to take a critical line over the government's handling of domestic problems, or on the broader issues of the 'Cyprus problem' and the bilateral relations with Turkey (see, for example, *Zaman*, 1976, *Birlik*, 1988 but also Küçük, 1976).

¹⁵⁶ *Ortam* (1981) would replace the earlier *Kurtuluş* ('Liberation') which went out of print in February 1984.

¹⁵⁷ 'The Gray Wolf', a sacred animal in Turkish nationalist mythology

¹⁵⁸ *Birlik* would replace *Ulus* ('Nation') in 1980 which remained in circulation until 2004 when it was replaced by *Güneş* ('The Sun', also used as the party emblem).

¹⁵⁹ For a detailed discussion of the Turkish-Cypriot media in this period, see Hüdaoğlu (2011) and Eraslan (2015)

It was precisely within the context of this contestation that *Turkishness* was further politicised and identity became a central cleavage of Turkish-Cypriot politics, rendering the newspapers a key site where two competing visions of national/collective identity strived for hegemony. While the nationalist, establishment newspapers such as the *Halkın Sesi* and the *Birlik* ('Unity') promoted the *Turkishness* discourse which construed the Turkish-Cypriot community as part of the 'greater Turkish nation' and the Greek-Cypriots as the threatening 'other', the newspapers of the leftist opposition such as the *Yenidüzen* and the *Ortam* increasingly promoted an alternative notion of identity characterised by a distinct 'Cypriot' character. The ongoing migration of Turkish mainlanders into northern Cyprus would, in this connection, serve as an important cleavage, or a 'key signifier' (see Chapter 2) for these competing identity discourses aimed at constructing distinct 'imagined communities'.

A critical development here was the leadership change within the leftist CTP which saw Özker Özgür becoming the new chairman of the party in 1976. Under Özgür, the CTP was the first to take the centre-stage in voicing radical views on Turkish immigrants and their naturalisation by the Turkish-Cypriot leadership. The CTP's arguments, during this time, explicitly linked immigration from mainland Turkey and granting of citizenship status to Turkish settlers onto wider debates on identity, societal security and political autonomy (for various citations, see Chapter 4). The seismic shift in the political discourse that occurred during this time in relation to immigration further exasperated the ongoing polarization of the media landscape but also intensified the latter's focus on immigration-related issues.

For the oppositional, leftist newspapers, the dispute soon became the focal point of their identity discourse. The migration of Turkish nationals into Cyprus and their naturalisation was framed as a serious challenge and at times, an existential threat to the distinct identity of the Turkish-Cypriot community but also its autonomy. One of the most prominent features of the leftist media narratives on immigration during this time was therefore the production and amplification of a discourse of fear with reference to the scenarios of disorder, loss of sovereignty and political subjugation. Within it, the Turkish settlers/migrants who first began to arrive as part of a 'facilitated settlement programme' and as a 'much-needed labour force' (see sections 3.2 and 3.3 in Chapter 3), were presented by and large as 'troublemakers', 'unassimilable persons' undermining cohesion and cultural authenticity, and as 'cheap labour' taking jobs away from the native Turkish-Cypriots (see below). These nativist anxieties also helped promoted the view that immigration from Turkey was harming the identity of the community by undermining the demographic equilibrium and diluting its autonomy through large-scale granting of citizenships, giving settlers the right to vote in the local and national elections. In fact, Turkish immigrants cum settlers would soon become the new 'enemy', in much the same way the nationalist newspapers had often portrayed the Greek-Cypriots. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s numerous news stories and commentaries constructed along this identitarian axis associated migration with unemployment, urban environment deterioration, loss of sovereignty and autonomy, and a certain clash of civilization related to the perceived cultural differences and the supposed inability of the settlers to assimilate into the Turkish-Cypriot society (*Ortam*, 1985; *Yenidüzen*, 1986a, 1986b; *Kıbrıs*, 1989).

The immigration controversy intensified following the proclamation of the 'TRNC' in 1983 and in the run up to the first presidential and parliamentary elections for the new statelet. Only weeks before the parliamentary elections, in an article published in the *Ortam*, influential columnist Kutlu Adalı delivered the following observation:

it was the settler¹⁶⁰ votes which ensured that the new [TRNC] constitution was approved in the referendum. The next [target] is the parliamentary and presidential elections. In the same way they made sure the new constitution was passed, thousands of [settlers] will once again follow orders [...] to determine the outcome of these elections. According to some sources [...] several retired army men [Trojan horses], backed by shady financiers, are already organising [the settler constituency]. Without a doubt, thousands of these 'Trojan Horse' ballots [...], will be enough to send 4 or 5 MPs to the Parliament who will then be able to exert Turkey's sway on any [Turkish-Cypriot] government (1985a).

Adalı's writings carried significant weight since he was privileged as a former 'insider' who had seen how immigration and citizenship policies were supposedly manipulated behind closed doors. Indeed, his high-profile but also his turbulent relationship with the Turkish-Cypriot leadership placed him at the heart of the political debates. He began his early career in the 1960s as the private secretary to the late Turkish-Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash. After a well-known fallout with Denktash for turning down an offer to work for the TMT controlled *Bayrak* radio station, he was briefly imprisoned. He began working for *Bayrak* following his release until 1974 when he was appointed as the Director of the 'Identity Cards Department' at the General Registration Office. In December 1979, he was removed from his position (then as the Director of that Office) by a ministerial decree. After a High Court battle, he returned back to his position but was then forced to take early retirement in 1987 at the age of 50. By that time, Adalı was an outspoken critic of the Turkish-Cypriot administration and a well-known advocate of an

¹⁶⁰ Adalı uses the label 'Türkiyeli' i.e. of Turkish origin instead of settlers.

overarching 'Cypriot' identity. He used his political column in the *Ortam* and later in the *Yenidüzen* to promote the reunification of Cyprus. Perhaps more remarkably, for the purposes of this study, he argued that the very 'Cypriot' character of the Turkish-Cypriot community was under imminent threat by the perpetual influx of Turkish immigrants and their large-scale naturalisation.

More specifically, Adalı argued that Turkish settlers and the 'native' Turkish-Cypriots were leading parallel, segregated lives: 'Not only their [settlers'] villages are separate but also their [...] traditions, worldviews and political parties. They don't allow their children to get married with Cypriots [...] clearly they are a conservative community' (1985b). In his view, allowing Turkish-mainland voters to organise separate political parties (referring to the 'YDP', see section 3.2 in Chapter 3) was also deepening the existing cleavages. Yet more importantly, Adalı argued that Turkish settlers were now the determinants of electoral races; his words would also underline, rather sarcastically, the fact that their precise number was unknown: '15,000 for some, 20-30,000 for others; TRNC citizens of Turkish origin will decide who will form the government' (1985b). A week later, Adalı made his views on the upcoming elections clear: 'Turkish-Cypriots can appoint candidates [to run in the elections] against those backed by Turkey but they cannot govern against Turkey' (1985c).

Kutlu Adalı was murdered in 1996 near his home in Nicosia.¹⁶¹ In an article published only weeks before his murder, he wrote:

it is claimed that the Turkish government sends trillions of lira each year, which goes straight into Turkish-Cypriot pockets and into Turkish-Cypriot bank accounts. It's true that this was the case at the beginning [...] and I mean in the period between 1960-64 and 1964-74. During that time, Turkish-Cypriots lived on bare subsistence and sustained their [national] struggle with [financial] support from Turkey. But, even though [we lived on handouts and] there was no investment, any [socio-economic] development or indeed any sign of a promising, secure future, we [the Turkish-Cypriot community] were nonetheless a clean, pure, demographically undisturbed and uninflated community of around 100-120 thousand people [...] After 1974 [however] Ankara made sure that the 'door' was fully open to all Turkish nationals. Our country was suddenly swamped by thousands of people of non-Cypriot origin [...] So all that [financial] help from Turkey was rationed [...] Those trillions of lira which Turkey had channelled into Cyprus in the past 22 years hasn't only fed Turkish-Cypriots but also thousands of Anatolian people transferred from Turkey [...] What's more, while Turkish-Cypriots emigrated elsewhere, the number of Turkish nationals transferred from Anatolia has grown considerably; [they are now] the dominant [ethnic] group, controlling almost all aspects of life. There are now hundreds of [settlers], employed at all levels of the public sector. Half of the police force [...] is of Turkish-origin. It is now impossible for the 100-120,000 Turkish-Cypriots to control their own affairs here. [They] no longer have the numerical strength to appoint their own MPs. If there was a referendum vote tomorrow [on Cyprus's reunification], Turkish-Cypriots wouldn't be able to get an outcome reflecting their decision (1996).

By the end of the 1990s and with Cyprus's EU accession now imminent, fierce discussions regarding the future of Cyprus then began to spill over the issue of immigration. The opening of the border in April 2003, easing the restrictions on the movement of Cypriots across the 'Green Line' for the first time since 1974, generated further controversy around the citizenship status of Turkish settlers. This time, the controversy was based on the restriction introduced by the RoC authorities toward naturalised TRNC citizens of Turkish origin, long considered illegal, to cross to

¹⁶¹ Before his murder, Adalı took up the issue of an alleged armed raid to a *St Barnabas* monastery which involved the Turkish-Cypriot Civilian Defense Organisation (*Kıbrıs Türk Sivil Savunma Teşkilati*) and the head of that organisation, a Turkish army officer named Galip Mendi. It is widely believed that this led to his murder. Indeed, there are many indicators which have surfaced since that links the murder to other extrajudicial killings, kidnappings, bombings and criminal activities carried out by the *Gladio* in Turkey. Indeed, a series of trials in the 1990s launched in the aftermath of the so-called 'Susurluk Scandal' linked several of the names with Cyprus and the issues Adalı was writing about as part of the picture.

the South. More controversially, however, 'second-generation settlers', that is those born in Cyprus to parents of 'settler' origin, were also left out of the historic opening.

The decision of the Greek-Cypriot authorities to exclude large numbers of TRNC passport holders, effectively preventing them from joining in the transitional period Cyprus was going through, would immediately turn citizenship into an open dispute between the two sides that had thus far been occupied largely with the numerical aspect of the issue in the context of the negotiations regarding consociational arrangements. The Turkish-Cypriot side argued that TRNC citizens of Turkish origin and their Cyprus-born children were part of the Turkish-Cypriot community and should thus face no discrimination. The diplomatic dispute was extensively covered by all major Turkish-Cypriot newspapers, publishing statements by the Turkish-Cypriot officials as well as from the opposition, criticizing the travel restrictions. Talks initiated by Mehmet Ali Talat (then the leader of the CTP) to discuss the issue with various Greek-Cypriot authorities during this time in order to lift the restrictions on Turkish 'settlers' also led to a flurry of news articles and similar statements from other political parties and moderate civil society groups (*Kıbrıs, Halkın Sesi* and *Yenidüzen*, 27-30 April 2003).

This was a remarkable discursive shift within the political arena and also at the civil-society level, and apart from tonal differences, the citizenship rhetoric utilised both by the opposition and the establishment now construed a civic notion of belonging to the political community hence categorizing Turkish-Cypriots and Turkish-born citizens, who were excluded by the Greek-Cypriot authorities, as members of the same group (see also sections 4.3 and 5.3 in

chapters 4 and 5 respectively). Unfortunately, however, in the Turkish-Cypriot newspapers, the view that regardless of their place of birth these Turkish-born passport holders were 'our' citizens and should be treated the same as those born in Cyprus, failed to gain adequate ground. In fact, by maintaining certain modes of exclusionary discourse, particularly in the categorical definitions and the use of pronouns, 'we', 'us' and 'them', the newspapers continued to participate and propagate in an exclusionary rhetoric (*Kıbrıs*, 2003a, 2003b, 2003c; *Yenidüzen*, 2003a, 2003b). As Sahin (2011) has previously pointed out, the settler/immigrant views were also omitted from much newspaper reporting. The newspapers reflected the opinions and efforts of the state authorities and the opposition parties concerning the restrictions adopted by the Greek-Cypriot authorities, but did not report on the views of immigrants or settlers in their news stories. Even the *Yenidüzen*, the only newspaper that brought the issue to its front page which read 'Is it a crime to be from Turkey?' (*Yenidüzen*, 2003c), omitted individual citizens' experience of the restrictions or their interpretation of them.

Meanwhile, the stark warning Adalı gave before his murder in relation to the influence of settler constituency on the political outlook of the Turkish-Cypriot community, more precisely that 'the settler votes would be pivotal in a possible referendum' (1996, *op.cit.*) would resonate deeply ahead of the looming referendum on Cyprus's reunification on the eve of its EU accession.

The controversy first blew up in the run up to the December 2003 legislative elections. At the heart of the citizenship dispute during this time was the fear on the part of the Turkish-Cypriot opposition parties (and the pro-EU, pro-reunification civil society) that their chances of

ousting the nationalist leadership at December's elections were being undermined by the large-scale granting of citizenship rights to Turkish immigrants. In other words, Turkish settlers who had been given citizenship by the UBP-DP coalition government, the opposition feared, would seemingly oppose the 'Annan Plan' and torpedo Turkish-Cypriot prospects of joining the EU. To this end, both the CTP and BDH set in motion a 'citizenship-stripping' battle by applying for a Supreme Court order to overturn 1,600 citizenships granted since the last local elections held in June 2002 (see section 3.3 in Chapter 3) Whilst the citizenship suits, subsequent protests and a one-day strike held at the 'immigration office' were extensively covered by all outlets (*Kıbrıs*: 2003e, 2003f, 2003g; *Halkın Sesi*, 2003a; *Afrika*, 2003a), some newspapers also sensationalised on the reports of 'long queues', Turkish immigrants 'swamping the hospitals [for health certificates required for citizenship applications]' and 'violent brawls breaking out' at various government departments describing the scenes as a 'disgrace' (*Kıbrıs*, 2003d). The *Kıbrıs* ('Cyprus') newspaper, that began to shift during this time toward a moderate standpoint, also took a more critical stance in its reporting on the citizenship case brought forward by the opposition BDH, charging government officials or 'those in favour of the status quo' with 'treachery', by effectively 'betraying the political will of the Turkish-Cypriot community' through the granting of illegal citizenships (*Kıbrıs*, 2003e.) The *Yenidüzen* newspaper also lashed out on the Turkish-Cypriot authorities for the large-scale granting of citizenships ahead of the elections, charging that the arbitrary naturalisations were a direct policy of electoral manipulation which reflected the 'panic' at the level of the UBP-DP coalition government. The newspaper also used a picture on its front page comparing the long queues outside immigration and citizenship offices in the north and the south, with Turkish immigrants and Turkish-Cypriots waiting to acquire

passports and identity documents of the Republic and the 'TRNC' respectively, which visually symbolised according to the newspaper, 'the status quo' that is the unresolved 'Cyprus Problem' (2003d).

Rather remarkably however, the issue became muted on the eve of the actual elections. This can be explained by the fact that all granting of citizenships was halted following the end of the official campaign period. It can also be suggested that virtually all parties, including those critical of fresh citizenships, tried to appeal to the 'settler vote' to secure seats (*Kıbrıs*, 2004b.) To that end, even the *Yenidüzen*, known with its close ties to the CTP, toned down its reporting on the issue – focusing instead on the 'clandestine scaremongering tactics' of the hardliners, what it called the 'status quo powers' to provoke the Turkish settlers/immigrants against the Annan Plan to sabotage the reunification of Cyprus (2003e).

Although there are no reliable figures on the numbers of naturalised settlers with TRNC citizenship to establish with certainty the extent of their influence on the outcome of the elections in 2003, the poll results at the end of the race nonetheless showed that many had indeed supported the pro-EU, pro-reunification parties.¹⁶² The CTP emerged as the first party, winning 19 seats out of 50. The BDH that ran on a slightly more radical platform came third and secured 6 seats. The right-wing parties collectively won the remainder 25 seats in the Parliament (see Chapter 4). On the negotiations front, talks were once again resumed in Nicosia and the Turkish-Cypriot press geared toward the peace process which culminated in the submission of

¹⁶² For some estimates see *Kathimerini* (2003); this was suggested earlier by the Chairman of the 'TRNC Immigrants' Association' in an interview with the *Cyprus Weekly* (2003).

the infamous 'Annan Plan' to simultaneous referenda in May 2004.

6.4. The framing of Turkish migrants/settlers in the post-2004 period

While the so-called 'Annan Plan Referendum' failed to secure a deal before the whole of Cyprus was admitted into the EU in May 2004, there was still considerable optimism in the northern part of the island that the Turkish-Cypriot commitment to reunification and EU membership would ease the community's ostracisation and that the international actors would act to bring the Turkish-Cypriot community 'in from the cold'.¹⁶³ To that end, the 'Cyprus problem' continued to dominate news stories in the post-referendum period, though with less intensity. A number of EU-level initiatives toward the Turkish-Cypriot community, in relation to facilitating trade from and into northern Cyprus ('Direct Trade Regulations' and 'Green Line Regulations') were extensively covered by the newspapers within a positive frame though sometimes with nationalist undertones emphasising the 'embargoes' (*Halkın Sesi*, 2004b; *Kıbrıs*, 2004d). Various statements from the UN officials (but also other international actors such as the US and Russia) reaffirming continuing efforts to find a deal were also widely reported in this context (*Halkın Sesi*: 2004b, c, d, e; *Yenidüzen*: 2004a, 2004c, 2004d; *Kıbrıs*: 2005c, 2005d). In a similar vein, the somewhat improving external relations of the Turkish-Cypriot administration and the positive international image of the Turkish-Cypriot community following their 'yes' vote to the UN plan was also a key focus of media reports. Virtually all major newspapers reported on high-level meetings that took place, emphasising the new post-referendum context and a notion

¹⁶³ For various statements see, section 3.5 in Chapter 3.

of legitimacy for the Turkish Cypriot identity tied to the expectations in relation to the lifting of the international isolations (*Halkın Sesi*: 2004a, 2004c; *Yenidüzen*, 2004b; *Kıbrıs*, 2004d).

More importantly, the settler issue in the immediate aftermath of the referendum was largely downplayed and found substantial coverage only in the years following the referendum and primarily in the context of the new round of negotiations with the election of the moderate Demetris Christofias as the new President of the Republic in 2008.¹⁶⁴ The focus during this time was on the citizenship status of Turkish settlers and the newspapers reported widely on the issue by publishing a number of statements made by Turkish-Cypriot leadership in relation to the dispute with Christofias. The *Kıbrıs* newspaper in particular, provided extensive coverage of the political discussions that took place in the southern part of the island on the settler issue (often using reports from the Greek-Cypriot media outlets; 2008a,2008b,2008c), and sometimes with headlines portraying an intolerant, uncompromising stance (2009b) going as far as charging the Greek-Cypriot politicians with 'racism' (2010b.)

Yet, a number of developments toward the end of the decade, in relation to the ongoing Cyprus problem, but also in the context of bilateral relations with Turkey would once again place immigration-related anxieties on top of the public and political agendas of the Turkish-Cypriot community. As noted in Chapter 4 previously, the legislative elections held in 2009 reflected the overall dissatisfaction with the governing CTP's performance domestically but also a clear disillusionment of Turkish-Cypriots with such promises of international and European

¹⁶⁴ Demetris Christofias was elected on 24 February 2008 becoming the sixth President of the Republic. His election would reignite hopes for reunification in view of his socialist background as the leader of the island's communist AKEL party which had long championed the idea of a federal Cyprus, see also *Euractiv* (2008).

integration. An important outcome of the disappointment in this sense was the gradually diminishing prominence of the EU as an oppositional narrative (see Chapters 4 and 5) and a reconfiguration of the partisan identity discourses organised once again around the settler issue, that is the ongoing migration from Turkey and the naturalisation of Turkish immigrants.

This was foretold in the context of the fierce debates during and following the introduction of an amnesty by the Turkish-Cypriot authorities in 2008 to register unauthorised migrant workers. The 2008 amnesty to grant work permits to thousands of ‘illegal migrants’ immediately became a bone of contention between the coalition CTP-ORP government and the leftist opposition parties and civil society organisations, and newspapers were dominated by their charges that the policy was a pretext for a fresh wave of naturalisations (*Kıbrıs*: 2008d, e, 2009c, see also below). The following year, with the return to office of the nationalist UBP, and the holding of a census shortly after in 2011, the controversy would escalate further.

The *Afrika* newspaper during this time was particularly vocal in its criticism of the UBP government’s citizenship policy. In one particular headline, the newspaper claimed that the demographic outlook of the northern part of the island was undergoing a complete overhaul and that the process of “Turkification” was in full swing following the election of Derviş Eroğlu as the new Turkish-Cypriot leader (*Afrika*, 2010a). Its editorial also argued that Turkish-Cypriots were now a minority largely thanks to the opposition who had now embraced the settlers as the ‘new Cypriots’ and sponsored their citizenship rights (*Afrika*, 2010a). The census, which the newspaper described as a ‘hoax’, also led to calls for civil disobedience and minimum cooperation with the

Census (*Afrika*, 2011b). In one particularly fierce article, published the day after the census, a senior *Afrika* columnist mocked the authorities by telling them to ‘count him out’ (2011a). More specifically, the article amplified the settlers’ supposed cultural distinctness in relation to the ‘Cypriot culture’ with reference to a number of famous Turkish-Cypriot personalities, thus construing a distinction between the ‘natives’ and the ‘settlers’ and ultimately suggesting that the authorities ‘don’t bother counting the natives’ (2011a). Not surprisingly, following the announcement of the results, the census was dismissed as ‘unreliable’ (2011b) and the same columnist would later claim that it was only a ‘cover-up’ since ‘Turkey would never reveal the true extent of its population transfer it’s carried out since 1974’ (2011c).

The so-called ‘Survival Rallies’ organised during this time by a group of trade unions and opposition parties were key to bring further media attention onto the issue (*Kıbrıs*: 2010b, c). In its coverage of the second rally in March 2011, the *Kıbrıs* newspaper, which had limited its attention on the status of settlers in the context of the Cyprus talks in the post-referendum period, began to highlight the domestic controversy surrounding the issue (2011a.) Citing previous census data, the paper claimed that the number of people on the electoral roll had grown twofold between 1976 and 2005 and that ‘no one knows of the precise immigration figures’ (2011b). During this time, heated parliamentary debates on citizenship and a further amnesty for illegal migrants in 2011, which ensued in the context of the rallies, newspapers continued to report on parties’ and civil society’s positions — official responses were also extensively reported by the *Kıbrıs* and to a lesser extent the *Afrika* (*Kıbrıs*: 2011c, d, e, f, g, h; *Afrika*, 2011a). Following the victory of the CTP in the 2013 legislative elections and with a pledge

to introduce stricter criteria for the granting of new citizenships¹⁶⁵, the debate would lessen in intensity though the newspapers continued to report on the issue, focusing in particular on the reaction from ‘immigrant civil society organisations’ (*Kıbrıs*, 24-30 October 2013, see also Chapter 5).

Another key issue which facilitated the discursive shift on part of the opposition toward a more critical stance on immigration and citizenship was the austerity measures orchestrated by Ankara. As noted previously in Chapter 3, the Turkish-Cypriot economy is buoyed by financial help from mainland Turkey (TRNC State Planning Organisation, 2007). In this somewhat IMF-style relationship, Turkish-Cypriot macroeconomic policy is also formulated and directed by Turkey in the form of bilateral economic protocols. The latest protocol was signed in December 2012 and included controversial austerity measures envisaging a drastic reduction in the size of the public sector, but also the privatisation of key Turkish-Cypriot assets including electricity, telecommunications and harbours.¹⁶⁶ The Turkish-Cypriot left, including opposition parties the CTP and the TDP but also several trade unions (see Chapter 5) opposed the protocol from the outset and claimed that it was a mere pretext to facilitate the transfer of strategic state-owned

¹⁶⁵The new and certainly stricter citizenship policy would end the controversial procedure of granting discretionary citizenship through the ‘Council of Ministers’ but also the automatic eligibility for *jus soli* citizenship, allowing foreign nationals to be considered for TRNC citizenship only after ten years of uninterrupted residency in northern Cyprus and within a quota that would be based on the demographic rate of natural increase. As such, the new policy reserved the right to refuse citizenships even if all necessary residency conditions were met. The CTP also promised new measures that would suspend voting rights for new citizens until the consecutive legislative elections following the granting of their citizenship.

¹⁶⁶ The Protocol stipulated that the Turkish-Cypriot government had agreed to implement the bilateral economic programme entitled ‘Towards a Sustainable Economy 2013-2015’ in order to reduce its balance deficit to 315 ml Turkish Lira(TL); controversial policy measures included the privatisation of the harbours and the electricity authority (Articles 5.2.4.2.1 and 5.2.5.2 respectively) and market liberalisation in telecommunications; (5.2.4.2.3), in TRNC Prime Minister’s Office, 2013.

assets to the so-called Islamic 'green capital' (*yeşil sermaye*) in Turkey that had sponsored the ruling AKP (*Afrika*: 2010b,c,d; *Kıbrıs*, 2010b). More importantly, such austerity measures were tied to prevalent fears related to loss of identity. In this sense, privatisation of public assets was seen as threatening Turkish-Cypriot autonomy by further consolidating Ankara's control in its domestic affairs.

These anxieties were employed by the *Cypriotness* discourse which conceived and emphasised identity once again within an explicitly securitised framework (see Chapters 2 and 3). In other words, Turkish-Cypriot identity was defined here in 'existential' terms as the fundamental stumbling block of the political community and with reference to its *precarious autonomy* that was threatened by Turkey through a double whammy of austerity/privatisation policies and the large-scale naturalisation of Turkish nationals (*Afrika*, 2012a). While the fierce debates on the austerity measures were reported widely by all media outlets, identity-related frames the newspapers themselves employed in representing 'the settler issue' have been articulated predominantly in the editorials and in the views of the columnists. Their opinions illustrate further the two contrasting discourses on identity – *Cypriotness* framing settlers' citizenship rights and immigration on the whole as a threat to identity, and *Turkishness* on the other side, more welcoming to Turkish immigrants, arguing that stricter immigration and citizenship laws would harm the Turkish-Cypriot economy, weaken Turkish-Cypriot negotiating position on the Cyprus talks but also jeopardise fundamental rights' of the immigrants, further portrayed in a positive light as 'ethnic kins'.

A particularly outspoken critic of the 'occupation regime' but also the presence of populations from Turkey, the *Afrika* newspaper criticised the 'Survival Rallies' for not taking an explicit stance on "Turkey's occupation of northern Cyprus" (2012b, c; 2013a) Nonetheless, it's narrative still tied the austerity measures and the privatisation plans of the UBP government (envisaged in the latest protocol with Turkey) to the issues of identity and citizenship, arguing that the new privatisations would deliver the 'fatal blow' to the Turkish-Cypriot community ('Editorial', 23 March 2012). According to one high-profile columnist of the newspaper, the privatisations was part of a 'grand plan' envisaging the 'Turkification of the island' that had gained momentum with the failed ratification of the 'Annan Plan' (interview no. 13). During the Annan Plan referendum, the attitudes toward the settlers and Turkish immigrants were much more positive, describing them as 'New Cypriots'. In other words, the issue was 'massaged through' to ensure a 'yes' vote in the referendum. But the 'new Cypriots' rhetoric was dropped in the post-referendum period (interview no. 13). In his view, Turkey had transferred twice as many settlers into the island since 2004 and that with the takeover of the key assets such as electricity and water, the colonization of the northern part of the island would be virtually complete. Taking a step further, an article published in the *Afrika* newspaper further claimed that as a result of the numerical superiority of the settler constituency, all MPs in the future would be of Turkish origin (Levent, 2012a). A year later, echoing further the newspaper's view on the 'Survival Rallies', the same columnist criticised the trade unions and the leftist parties for their 'cowardly ignorance'

on the involvement of Turkey who is ‘the real culprit’ (and not the Turkish-Cypriot government) imposing the new naturalisations (2013a).

Another columnist of the *Afrika* newspaper, who writes regularly on identity and immigration-related issues including the citizenship status of Turkish settlers also insists that the current government in the north is only a puppet of Turkey which has occupied Cyprus since 1974. In his view, the ongoing migration of Turkish nationals into northern Cyprus is part of systematic attempts of ‘Turkification’ and thus a ‘war crime’; the socio-economic problems facing the Turkish-Cypriot community also stem to a large extent from the transfer of population from Turkey (interview no. 14). For the columnist, large-scale naturalisations, granting of residency rights and allowing large numbers of settlers/immigrants to stay in the north undermines the Turkish-Cypriot identity and its Cypriot character above all:

Even a first-generation settler [who had arrived on the island in 1975] shows no respect toward the Cypriot identity; they choose to emphasise their Turkishness instead. In fact, they see Cypriotness as a threat. These sorts of views were promoted by [the late Turkish-Cypriot leader] Denktash who claimed that the only true Cypriots were the donkeys of the Karpas peninsula. Denktash did not believe in his country, in his homeland or in his people; he chose instead to dedicate his political career for the promotion of Turkishness and Turkey’s interests on the island. Cypriotness is also seen as a threat because it could reunify the island in the true sense and the settlers feel they would be excluded under this scenario. They [also] have vested material interests in the status quo which benefited them tremendously: especially those who arrived in 1975 — they were given land and allocated housing which many sold later for huge sums of money, becoming ‘sterling millionaires’ overnight. Neither do they have any shared experience with the [other communities of Cyprus] (interview no.14).

The line of argument introduced here, in relation to resource distribution is particularly telling. From this perspective, the settlers are portrayed as ‘debilitating people’, standing outside of the natives, utilising the unjust gains provided by the system. By construing the settlers as

backward in socio-economic terms, the narrative here establishes an axis placing settlers between the two extreme categories of 'sterling millionaires' or 'scroungers', emphasising in either case that they have benefitted unjustly from the status quo, given tremendous advantages and benefits on the one hand, or as a drain on scarce sources on the other.

The latter is further emphasised in the context of austerity and privatisation policies in which immigrants/settlers are blamed for imposing a high burden on the state's distributive capacities. Indeed, similar views are articulated in an article on the planned privatisation of the 'public electricity authority' (KIBTEK) in which the large numbers of immigrants/settlers are blamed for the shortfall in the electricity production, ultimately suggesting that the price hikes and privatisation plans were designed from the outset to sustain an artificially bloated and unnecessarily large population of immigrants/settlers (Kışmir, 2013). Echoing similar views to Kutlu Adalı, the article also asserts that the financial assistance from Turkey is targeted primarily 'toward its own people', hence insufficient to benefit the native Turkish-Cypriots (Kışmir, 2013).

The daily *Yenidüzen* too, has been a consistent critic of Turkish migration into northern Cyprus and the naturalisation of large numbers of Turkish immigrants. Though the paper differs significantly from its rival *Afrika*, in its negation of using the 'occupier' label against Turkey, it has nonetheless promoted an assertive rhetoric on autonomy which calls for less interference from Ankara in Turkish-Cypriot affairs. On the settler issue too, the paper features regular columns on the issues of identity, immigration and the citizenship but traditionally the focal point of its

narrative (especially on citizenship) has been the authorities in Nicosia and not the Turkish governments. According to a high-profile columnist of the daily:

The citizenship issue in northern Cyprus can be traced back to the Cyprus Problem. We were trying to prove that we were not a 'minority' against the Greek-Cypriots so [they] followed a deliberate policy of increasing the Turkish population on the island [...] The biggest wave was following the war in 1974. Families from Anatolia were encouraged to settle in Cyprus. In the later years, the biggest explosion happened toward the end of the 1980s. During the Ozal administration in Turkey, entry with ID cards created a new rush. Immigration or population transfer are not the same as citizenship. But the right-wing governments [in Cyprus] and the clique in charge of the 'Cyprus affairs' [in Turkey] made sure that the numbers were boosted also on paper. UBP was the main actor which created the sloppy, lax citizenship regime (Özuslu, 2013b).

In another article, praising the tighter citizenship laws introduced a year later by the CTP government, the columnist would claim once again that UBP was the main culprit and CTP had always been the party to 'apply the brakes' on new citizenships:

Citizenship policy exemplifies the ideological divide between the two mass parties positioned on the opposite ends of the political spectrum. On the one hand, there is the UBP with its remnant of the 1950s, 'head-counting' population policy, guided by the 'Turk comes, another Turk goes' practice; on the other hand, there is the CTP which approaches the issue of population transfer from a humanitarian but also legalistic and identity perspective [...] The Turkish-Cypriot community can no longer bear the burden of 'citizenship' created mostly by the UBP (Özuslu, 2014a).

Indeed, the 'burden of citizenship' appears to be a reflection of the greater existential anxiety of the Turkish-Cypriot community stemming from the unresolved 'Cyprus Problem' (interview no.15). From this perspective, the *Cypriotness* discourse is a certain reaction that flourished following the *de facto* partition of the island in 1974, only to intensify in the following years with the migration of the Turkish populations into the island, especially in the early 1990s with the introduction of a laxer immigration regime which lifted passport requirement for entry. According to the columnist, there was a certain 'misfit' and 'incompatibility from the outset as those who had arrived displayed little resemblance with the natives in terms of their socio-

cultural background and lifestyle [...]’ explaining to large extent the strong nativist reaction (interview no. 15). In the same vein, many believe that significant numbers of settlers still do not consider themselves ‘Turkish-Cypriots’ despite holding ‘TRNC’ citizenship (interview no.14 and no. 15). But it is the years of uncertainty and instability in the context of the lingering conflict, and the dependency on Turkey that has encroached into all aspects of life, including demography has created an ‘extinction syndrome’; immigration should thus be seen in the context of the Cyprus problem, and more specifically the non-recognition of northern Cyprus and the crippling dependency it’s contested status as a state has created on Turkey, or as a columnist put more poetically: ‘not knowing the size of its population, unable to print its own currency or to have control over its police force, unable to obtain its international postal code — or empathy, neither from its ‘south’ [the Republic] nor its ‘north’ [Turkey]’ (Özuslu, 2013a).

A similar view is also promoted by another senior columnist of the *Yenidüzen* newspaper. An outspoken critic of the granting of new citizenships to Turkish migrants, the senior columnist has consistently framed the issue with an existential understanding of autonomy in which naturalisation of Turkish migrants is construed a threat to the ‘political will’ of the Turkish-Cypriot community. In this understanding, the granting of citizenship rights to Turkish nationals is seen as part of a bigger project to maintain right-wing governments and subsequently to consolidate Ankara’s grip over the Turkish-Cypriot community. An interesting feature of this leftist narrative is the distinction it introduces between protecting the rights of the Turkish migrant workers and their children on the one hand, and obtaining of citizenship rights on the other. This is illustrated in the argument put forward by the columnist, that ‘no one should ignore the bureaucratic

discrimination they face [in obtaining work permits], their exploitation [at the hands of illegal ‘gangmasters’] or denial of their human rights [...] they can be granted long-term work permits, residency rights and further easing in setting up their own businesses’; granting them citizenship rights however, ‘is an entirely different matter, a different politics [...] and if it’s part of a grander operation[sic] to manipulate the political will [...] that’s when we have to say enough is enough’.

(Mutluyakalı, 2013a) A similar concern is also expressed by the journalist in relation to the unique political context marked by the ‘Cyprus Problem’, in that ‘[northern Cyprus] is not like any other country, [the total number of settlers] those that have been naturalised through the Cabinet and the ones that have been transferred now outnumber the natural-born citizens [...] we have to draw a line, [with certain exceptions] all fresh naturalisations should be terminated indefinitely’ (Mutluyakalı, 2013b).

Notwithstanding the consistent commitment the leftist newspapers *Afrika* and the *Yenidüzen* display to the ‘immigration threat’ narrative, other outlets are divided on the issue and their columnists represent diverse viewpoints. The *Kıbrıs* newspaper, is a good example here. An influential daily with the highest circulation (2011i), the newspaper’s editorial policy has also undergone the most profound change during the ‘Annan Plan’ years from a nationalist to a moderate, pro-EU stance (interview no.13). The newspaper has, nonetheless, maintained a balanced and neutral position on the settler issue, allowing a good range of views to be expressed in its columns. In this context, the *Kıbrıs* columnists articulate diverse viewpoints on immigration and citizenship – divided along competing discourses on Turkish-Cypriot identity.

In this context, according to one columnist, *Cypriotness* is once again considered ‘a reactionary emphasis’ triggered by a genuine fear of identity loss and even ‘extinction’ (interview no. 16). The use of such cultural markers in everyday contexts such as authentic restaurants named in the Cypriot dialect is a manifestation of this anxiety to protect a distinct identity. Indeed, a similar argument is advanced in a column, further asserting that the socio-cultural changes that have taken place in the northern part of the island since the partition, do not reflect a positive transformation, ‘something that the Turkish-Cypriots themselves have undertaken’ and that with the constant undermining of those cultural values, it is inevitable the community ‘will soon be snubbed [by the newcomers] on their own land’ (Hastürer, 2014). Another column written by the same author, in the context of the ongoing peace negotiations is even more alarming. In it, the columnist predicts that failure to reach a deal in current talks would result in a ‘population boom’ in the north through new wave of naturalisations (Hastürer, 2016). More specifically, the commentary claims that the new naturalisations would almost inevitably be imposed from Turkey, using ‘labour market shortages’ and ‘economic growth’ as pretexts and that no Turkish-Cypriot government would be able to resist such pressure from Ankara to introduce the ‘laxest citizenship regime’ to pave the way for fresh citizenships. Should the Cyprus problem linger beyond 2017, the article also projected that the population of the north, over the next several decades would surpass that of the Republic (Hastürer, 2016).

As indicated above however, another high-profile columnist of the same newspaper has consistently promoted a nationalist understanding of Turkish-Cypriot identity, echoing the essentialist *Turkishness* discourse. According to the columnist, there were no concerns over

identity among the Turkish-Cypriot community following the partition of the island in 1974; instead there was an overwhelming support for the view that the Turkish-Cypriot people had originated from the Turkish mainland which became even more popular with the proclamation of independent statehood in 1983 (interview no 17). It was during this time that the so-called *Cypriotness* discourse — contemplated initially, in the columnist's view, by the Greek-Cypriot politicians and AKEL in particular to undermine the national consciousness amongst the Turkish-Cypriots — would be taken up by a small number of dissident voices from within the Turkish-Cypriot community that begun to take issue with the strong, bilateral relations with Turkey (interview no. 17). The teachers' union KTÖS in particular, was at the forefront of this 'campaign' and would later seek to rewrite history to serve this 'false ideology' further by omitting the Turkish-Cypriot national struggle from the school textbooks. Such indoctrinations through education and other organised activities at the union level, the columnist believes, was to instigate the debates over identity culminating in a certain 'identity crisis' (interview no. 15).

Indeed, what is at the heart of the identity crisis, according to one of the prominent columnists of the *Kıbrıs* newspaper is a "rejection of Turkish identity" and 'a peculiar form of racism unique to the Turkish-Cypriot community' (Tolgay, 2015a). As the columnist would elaborate further in a particularly telling op-ed on *Cypriotness*:

As for the so-called 'Greek-speaking' and 'Turkish-speaking Cypriots'. This is a utopic idea, forged in order to create a 'Cypriot race'. It is a dangerous virus that is being spread by the Greek imperialist propaganda. It is very clear that those living in the South [Greek-Cypriots] never act in the spirit of Cypriotness. They are guided by the spirit of Hellenism. Yet they expect from us, in fact they insist that we cut off our ties with our roots, our history, our ethnic values, tradition and culture and with [our motherland] Turkey. The [so-called intellectuals among us] are trotting along a path to destroy the 445-year-old Turkish culture in Cyprus (Tolgay, 2015b).

Perhaps more remarkably, the columnist's views on Turkish settlers also tie the issue onto an insular understanding of 'human rights' thus displaying great similarity with the narrative utilised by the nationalist civil society actors (see section 5.3 in Chapter 5) further propped up with neo-liberal undertones that are evident in right-wing party narratives (Chapter 4). To that end, and in relation to the immigration reform¹⁶⁷ planned by the CTP-DP coalition government, the columnist wrote:

These [systematic] blows to our economy are also devoid of any human rights concerns. The flight of thousands of Turkish origin migrants, those that form the backbone of our human capital — and the labour crisis [their return back to Turkey] has triggered — is repeatedly ignored. Those who didn't leave voluntarily are now being forced to leave through this cynical immigration ploy. There are numerous associations representing sectoral interests but we lack an organisation to resist such gross undermining of human rights (Tolgay, 2015c).

In this view, the current immigration system is one of the most 'primitive' in the world (interview no. 17). In sharp contrast to other countries with ageing populations, decision-makers in northern Cyprus have been creating numerous barriers for entry and unjust obstacles on the path for citizenship.

A large population is needed for economic growth and there is nothing more normal than a country seeking to grow its population through immigration. Germany after the Second World War is a good example here, seeking to grow its population through immigration and offering these migrants German citizenship later on. If the Europeans can think in this way, why should it then be a concern when we bring labour force from other countries and grant them citizenships in due process? This is all due to the fact that the Greek-Cypriot side has used demographic arguments to undermine the Turkish-Cypriot case on the negotiating table. Frequent calls for the 'settlers' and the Turkish military to be sent back is also part of the same ploy to facilitate, in the long term, the assimilation of the Turkish-Cypriot community (interview no. 17).

¹⁶⁷ The bill was created in 2015 and restricted the length of the work permits to a maximum of three years following which the permit holder would be required to stay abroad for a minimum period of 90 days before becoming eligible to reapply. But with a change in government before a vote could take place, it was never ratified.

A sharp *Turkishness* rhetoric, framing the settler issue in essentialist, ethno-nationalist terms can also be found in the columns of the *Halkın Sesi* newspaper. In this vein, the presence of Turkish immigrants and their naturalisation are viewed within an explicitly nationalist framework characterised by the much-cherished Turkish-Cypriot relationship with Turkey and on the basis of ethnic-kinship. Perhaps more remarkably and largely due to the editorial legacy of the newspaper promoting a nationalist stance on the Cyprus conflict (the paper's logo features a picture of its founder Dr Kuchuk set against the Turkish flag), the views expressed in its columns on issues relating to citizenship and immigration also tend, more often than not, to frame the presence of 'settlers' more explicitly within the context of the ongoing negotiations. In this sense, 'boosting the numbers' through new citizenships to ensure a numerically stronger Turkish-Cypriot community is seen as a 'crucial policy' in order to secure better consociational returns on the negotiating table, but also to 'undermine Greek-Cypriot negotiating position which claims sole ownership of the whole island based on their numerical superiority [...] offering, in turn, mere minority rights for the Turkish-Cypriot community' (Aydeniz, 2015). A number of economic arguments are also utilised in this vein to promote the argument for a 'larger population which can facilitate economic growth but also to generate more tax revenue in order to ensure the sustainability of the 'pensions fund' and to stop the worrying demise of state-run industries' (Çetinel, 2012). This hybrid nature of the nationalist rhetoric on Turkish settlers and its implications for the framing of the Turkish-Cypriot identity are elaborated further below.

6.5. Identity (re)construction and the immigration-settlement debate in the Turkish-Cypriot newspapers (1995-2013)

As discussed in detail in the previous chapters and outlined further above, the nationalist *Turkishness* discourse based on independent statehood and an overarching Turkish identity was further entrenched in the aftermath of the Turkish military intervention. Under this representation, Turkish-Cypriot identity was effectively subsumed as a form of ethnic/local variation whereas *Turkishness* took pride of place. The establishment newspapers such as the *Halkın Sesi* that had begun circulating in the pre-1974 period subscribed without much hesitation to these official narratives and promoted Turkish nationalism with reference to the ‘national cause’. The so-called ‘national cause’ (*milli dava*) conceived statehood as an ‘inseparable part of the motherland Turkey’ requiring perpetual protection from the Greek-Cypriots. In the same vein, the presence of Turkish immigrants and their naturalisation have been viewed on the basis of ethnic-kinship, characterised also by the ‘much-cherished’ and ‘existential’ Turkish-Cypriot relationship with Turkey. More recently, in an effort to regain political legitimacy, the nationalist rhetoric has been discursively expanded to appeal to popular anxieties in relation to the economy, emphasising the positive contribution of Turkish immigrants/settlers into the economy (and similarly, the negative economic repercussions of limiting migration) but also to include a ‘human rights discourse’ in lashing back at attempts to introduce stricter immigration and citizenship laws.

Though this appeal to some notion of human rights combining economic and cultural arguments may at first seem a progressive transformation from a highly rigid essentialist discourse, the study has shown that such reference to human rights remain firmly couched in a distinctly ethno-nationalist framing which is aimed at legitimising the rather asymmetrical relationship between Turkey and the Turkish-Cypriot community. In this sense, the citizenship status of the Turkish immigrants is justified on the basis of ethnic-kinship, level of contribution to the economy, but above all its importance in the context of bilateral relations with Turkey in which the latter is privileged in ethno-mythical terms as the ‘motherland’. Moreover, in the context of the Cyprus problem, the *Turkishness* discourse also tries to capitalise on the alleged benefit of immigration and citizenship in boosting the Turkish-Cypriot population numerically in order to maintain a stronger position in relation to the Greek-Cypriot community, construed as the ‘threatening other’. As such, it is devoid of any democratic concerns. This is an important finding since it highlights the deployment and articulation of a range of civic and ethnic elements within the *Turkishness* discourse in its attempt to contest for hegemony. From this perspective, and similar to the narrative of the nationalist civil-society discussed in the previous chapter (Chapter 5), the nationalist rhetoric found within the Turkish-Cypriot newspapers (most notably in the *Halkın Sesi* and to a lesser extent in the *Kıbrıs*) can be regarded as an extension of a hegemonic project in constructing and consolidating a form of collective-identity by articulating as many available elements (i.e. ‘floating signifiers’, see Chapter 2) as possible. This assertion is also in line with the hypothesis posited in Chapter 2 and elaborated within the historical context in Chapter 3 that:

Hypothesis 1: *Given the local history and in the context of the Cyprus conflict, Turkish-Cypriot identity was cultivated and subsumed within a hegemonic notion of Turkishness that did not distinguish between Turkish-Cypriots and Turkish settlers.*

As noted previously, identity is conceived here as a discourse which is predicated on the ultimate impossibility of a total 'closure' that in turn makes a range of subversive articulations and political agency possible. From this perspective moreover, the social field is criss-crossed by cleavages and the presence of elements ('floating signifiers') that can be articulated by opposed political projects in constituting collective, political identities. Indeed, it was precisely within this context that the Turkish-Cypriot left capitalised on the immigration cleavage from the 1980s onwards to challenge the hegemonic *Turkishness* discourse with an alternative notion of belonging which emphasised a distinct 'Cypriot' character. Such *Cypriotness* discourse was constructed against a 'threat' that conceived the presence of populations from Turkey as part of Ankara's assimilationist project to ultimately undermine the distinct Turkish-Cypriot identity and the community's autonomy.

In this respect, leftist and oppositional newspapers such as the *Yenidüzen*, the *Ortam* and later on the *Afrika*, explicitly linked immigration from Turkey and granting of citizenship rights to Turkish settlers onto the issues of identity, societal security and political autonomy. In this vein, immigration from Turkey was criticised for instigating the outflow of Turkish-Cypriots to other countries but more importantly, that the lax immigration regime facilitated the 'transfer of population' from mainland Turkey which endangered the 'authentic' Turkish-Cypriot identity but

also undermined long-term prospects of Turkish-Cypriot autonomy through the large-scale granting of citizenships to the 'newcomers'. This media rhetoric on immigration and citizenship stem from a securitised *Cypriotness* discourse in which the presence of populations from Turkey are treated as an existential threat to the presumed 'authority', 'authenticity' and 'ways of living' of the Turkish-Cypriot society. Within this discourse, moreover, Turkish settlers were seen as a homogenous constituency that invariably supported the nationalist status quo and the Turkish tutelage over Turkish-Cypriot affairs. These claims were also articulated with an appeal to autonomy and a political project that would safeguard it.

Significantly, such demands were at the heart of the anti-systemic discourse and would keep immigration high in the domestic agenda ahead of the looming referendum on Cyprus's reunification on the eve of its EU accession. In this connection, the position of the influential *Kıbrıs* newspaper is telling. The newspaper that had thus far supported official positions on the Cyprus Problem, displaying suspicion if not outright hostility towards the EU, undertook a radical change in its editorial policy to a clear support for the 'yes' vote in the run up to the referendum in 2004 that would allow a reunified, federal Cyprus to join the EU. In parallel, and in stark contrast to its previously muted position on the issue, the newspaper also became an outspoken critic of the new citizenships, charging those in favour of the status quo with 'treachery' and betraying the political will of the Turkish-Cypriot community through illegal naturalisations. In sum, these findings confirm the hypothesis posited in Chapter 2:

Hypothesis 2: *In the context of Cyprus's accession into the EU and the anticipated Turkish-Cypriot integration into the European mainstream, Turkish settlers came to be perceived as a threat to Turkish-Cypriot identity.*

Certainly, there were moments in this period, and in the immediate aftermath of the referendum which pointed out a rather different, more inclusive (and equally de-securitized) rhetoric toward the settlers and their citizenship status. The response of the newspapers in this sense to the exclusion of settlers from new freedoms in movement following the opening of the crossing-points in 2003 is a case in point. So is the fact that the 'settler issue' was dropped from the political discussions on the eve of the crucial 2003 elections. Yet, these changes in rhetoric can also be explained by the fact that virtually all parties, including those critical of new citizenship claims, tried to appeal to the 'settler vote' for the elections and also for the referendum. To that end, even the *Yenidüzen* (bearing in mind its close ties to the CTP) toned down its reporting on the issue though only to now victimize the settlers that had been 'targeted' and 'manipulated' during this time by the right-wing parties against the 'Annan Plan' and the reunification of Cyprus. In other words, there is scarce evidence from the findings above to suggest a strong normative impact of 'Europe' and the 'EU' to suggest a transformative effect on the identity narratives articulated by the newspapers (this is further elaborated in the following chapter).

In any case, the impact of the EU in seemingly transforming oppositional identity narratives began to lessen, once Cyprus was admitted to the EU as a divided island. As suggested

earlier, the peculiar and rather ‘marginal’ positioning of the Turkish-Cypriot community within the post-accession context (see section 3.4 in Chapter 3) has meant that the ‘EU project’ was unable to consolidate itself into a viable, more inclusive imaginary vis-à-vis the settlers. Instead, the pro-EU *Cypriotness* discourse that brought together large segments of the Turkish-Cypriot society and simultaneously led to a political sea-change in the run up to Cyprus’s EU accession became disorientated. This ‘dislocation’ can be explained by the lack of any systemic change in relation to integrating the Turkish-Cypriot community into the European mainstream which, at the discursive level, obstructed the continuity of the common ‘social imaginary’ or the markedly pro-EU (and more inclusionary) *Cypriotness* discourse. Moreover, the dislocatory experience of the aborted EU-membership has led to a new reconfiguration of the pre-existing elements articulated within this discourse for the leftist and oppositional newspapers in which settler antagonisms took centre stage. This argument was hypothesised in Chapter 2:

Hypothesis 3: *With the failure of the ‘Annan Plan’, the pro-EU Cypriotness discourse is disorientated and settler antagonisms take centre-stage.*

While the *Yenidüzen* and *Afrika* remained committed towards reunification and EU-membership, the post-referendum period has seen a vocal anti-Turkish rhetoric that surpassed the all-empowering pro-EU trend. To this end, these newspapers instrumentalised on the austerity policies which were gradually introduced from 2009 onwards, by adopting a more assertive rhetoric on Turkish-Cypriot identity in general and the bilateral relations with mainland Turkey in particular. During this time, Turkish-Cypriot identity was conceived once again within

an explicitly securitised framework and in relation to immigration from mainland Turkey. In this vein, the unions argued that the Turkish-Cypriot identity was put at risk not only through its positioning in relation to Turkey which excluded 'mutual respect' but also through the large-scale naturalisation of Turkish nationals that altered the domestic political balance, further consolidating Turkish domination and tutelage over Turkish-Cypriot affairs. The *Afrika* has remained consistent in its rhetoric which considers immigration an illegal population transfer hence describing everyone from Turkey as 'settlers'. The *Yenidüzen*, on the other hand, has gradually sharpened its rhetoric on immigration and vis-à-vis Turkey, calling for greater autonomy in the face of increased interference from Turkey under the AKP government.

In this sense, the most striking feature of the identity discourses on both sides, has been their remarkable modification in relation to the changing context, reflected in the articulation of more recent anxieties in their appeal to popular sentiments. As indicated above, this has been the case also with the introduction of a 'human rights' element within the *Turkishness* discourse together with a neoliberal argument to further frame immigration as much-needed 'cheap labour' mainly as a reaction to the oppositional rhetoric of the *Cypriotness* discourse which seems to have dominated the discussions in the second half of the time-period under study. For the *Cypriotness* discourse, on the other hand, the most notable change since 2004 has been in relation to the framing of Turkey. While the *Afrika's* views on Turkey as an 'occupier' or immigration as an illegal population transfer did not change, what is striking is that once seen as marginal, similar views are now being taken by the more moderate *Yenidüzen*. Though the paper has continued to refrain from using an explicit 'occupation' rhetoric, certain elements of this

discourse has nonetheless spilled into its narrative. In this vein, the newspaper has taken a more explicit stance against Turkey and the increasingly authoritarian AKP government there, tying a number of elements including austerity and religiosity onto immigration in its articulation of the *Cypriotness* discourse. Within this discourse, the Turkish-Cypriot relations with Turkey are framed as one of subjugation, with immigration as part of the systematic efforts to sustain Ankara's overwhelming influence over the Turkish-Cypriot affairs. In this vein, the AKP government is further criticised for implementing its Islamic agenda in northern Cyprus through policies to boost the public visibility of religious symbols in the building of new mosques but also through the religious indoctrination of the immigrant/settler population by swaying the right-wing UBP government to reintroduce mandatory religious education in schools, turning a blind eye on privately organised Koran lessons (illegal under the 'TRNC' constitution) and lately with the opening up of a 'vocational Islamic college'.¹⁶⁸ For the oppositional and leftist newspapers such as the *Yenidüzen* and the *Afrika*, and to a lesser extent the *Kıbrıs*, this is a worrying trend which further undermines the Turkish-Cypriot identity and its secular character.

6.6. Conclusion

This chapter examined the media narratives, in this case the newspapers, on immigration from Turkey and the citizenship rights of Turkish immigrants/settlers in relation to the wider framing of Turkish-Cypriot identity. As the chapter confirmed, the rhetoric utilised by newspapers and their columnists on these issues not only influence the nationalistic imagination in society

¹⁶⁸ These are elaborated further in the following, concluding, chapter.

but were also shaped by the prevailing, rival discourses of *Turkishness* and *Cypriotness* that seek to capture the social imaginary. In their construction of national/cultural identity, the newspapers benefited from various strategies but mainly those of perpetuation and transformation. Reflecting on the changing political context, distinguished here with Cyprus's entry into the European Union in 2004, the political continuity between past and present times was emphasized on the one hand, mainly within the essentialist *Turkishness* discourse while, on the other, a necessary and desired political change between now and the future was predicted by its rival *Cypriotness* version. Constructive strategies were also employed to forge an imagined community with reference to rival visions of *Cypriotness* and *Turkishness*.

The introduction of the 'EU factor' into the political agendas of the Turkish-Cypriot community from the mid-1990s onwards had an important effect in this respect and in the representation of the 'settler issue' particularly within the *Cypriotness* discourse as the issue was largely downplayed in relation to a new 'imaginary' in which EU membership came to signify. As the EU became the focal aspect of identity narratives, immigration related anxieties became somewhat muted. This was only a partial, and perhaps an instrumental shift however, largely undertaken by the opposition in fear of losing votes from the settler constituency ahead of the referendum, and the 'settler issue' continued to lurk in the background as evidenced by the media coverage of the protests and strikes staged by the unions on the eve of Cyprus's EU accession.

As asserted also in the previous chapter (Chapter 5) moreover, the partial nature of this discursive shift and the absence of a complete paradigmatic change in terms of how the settler issue was presented in the Turkish-Cypriot newspapers, can be explained by the structural and historical features of the settler issue (particularly its linkage to the bilateral relations with Turkey) as well as the contingent nature of the ‘window of opportunity’ represented by EU membership that was made available. Indeed, the impact of the EU in seemingly transforming oppositional identity narratives began to diminish once Cyprus was admitted to the EU as a divided island. The peculiar and rather ‘marginal’ positioning of the Turkish-Cypriot community within the post-accession context meant that the ‘EU project’ was unable to consolidate itself into a viable social, and perhaps a more inclusive imaginary in relation to the ‘settler question’. In this case, this was evidenced by the re-introduction of the immigration-related anxieties into oppositional rhetoric particularly in the ‘austerity period’ from 2008 onwards to, in effect, take centre stage in organising *Cypriotness* centred identity discourses in the post-referendum period.

Such discursive structuring of immigration and the citizenship rights of Turkish settlers within prevalent perceptions toward Turkey point out to the pervasiveness of the unresolved ‘Cyprus Problem’ in all spheres of life and with important implications for the construction of inclusive identities, domestic balance of power and above all, the framing of the conflict. These issues are elaborated further in the following, concluding chapter which reviews the research investigation, its contribution and its future.

CHAPTER 7. CONCLUSION

7.1. Introduction

7.2. Nation, Identity and differentiation: Dynamics of change

7.3. Looking back: Research Question and Hypotheses Revisited

7.4. Identity politics and kin-state relations: Contribution of the Thesis

7.4.a. Relations between Turkey and the Turkish-Cypriot community

7.4.b. Identity politics and kin-state relations in non-recognised states

7.5. Conclusion: Looking Ahead

7.1 Introduction

This thesis has investigated the politics and discourses of Turkish migration into northern Cyprus in relation to conceptions of identity in the Turkish-Cypriot community. The first chapter briefly introduced the historical context for the study of Turkish migration, the focus and timeframe of this research, its scope and the discursive methodology utilised for the analysis. The following chapter (Chapter 2) then reviewed the literature on nationalism, identity and immigration paying specific attention to the discursive construction of national identities and their securitization in relation to immigration. In Chapter 2, the Turkish-Cypriot case was positioned within the discussion on identity and differentiation on which the conceptual framework of the thesis is premised and a set of working hypotheses were introduced for studying the impact of Turkish migration on three empirical domains, namely the political parties, civil society and the print media. Chapter 3 further elaborated on the historical evolution of the notion of *Turkishness* in the Turkish-Cypriot community, which provided the context for the empirical chapters that followed. Chapter 4 looked at the articulation of identity and immigration in the political discourse by the mainstream parties. Chapter 5 discussed the civil society

responses to immigration from Turkey and Chapter 6 examined the discursive construction of identity and the 'immigration-settlement debate' in the Turkish-Cypriot newspapers.

This concluding chapter aims at revisiting the conceptual framework, returning to the hypotheses which guided the empirical analysis and outlining avenues for future research. The following section (7.2) provides a conceptual review of the investigated impact of migration on conceptions of identity in the Turkish-Cypriot community. The third section (7.3) revisits the working hypotheses and the overall research question. Here, the change and continuity in conceptions of identity and their interplay with immigration all three empirical domains (political parties, civil society and the print media) is discussed in comparative perspective. This is aimed at providing a rounded presentation of the 'settler debate' in northern Cyprus. The contribution of the thesis, in both empirical and conceptual terms, is presented in section 7.4, before some concluding remarks on the future of the identity debate in the Turkish-Cypriot community and the related research on immigration and identity change in other comparable settings (7.5).

7.2. Nation, identity and differentiation: Dynamics of Change

In the empirical chapters above, the impact of Turkish migration on conceptions of identity was structured along three distinct empirical domains: political parties (Chapter 4), civil society (Chapter 5) and the print media (Chapter 6). In each of those domains, the conceptual framework of identity change was applied, with particular reference to two dynamics, as presented in the literature review: a) discursive construction involving the articulation of 'floating

signifiers' and b) securitization. In each of those empirical domains, the analysis also outlined a number of context-specific factors (unique to northern Cyprus) which further mediate the conceptualisation of Turkish migration. In order to provide a complete account of the identity debate in the Turkish-Cypriot community, this section aims at recapping the impact of migration on identity at the conceptual level before reflection on the empirical findings of the study based on its articulation by various actors and in distinct empirical domains. In other words, this section aims to discuss how some of the key premises of immigration and identity change (outlined in Chapter 2) have applied to the case-study. This will also enable further elaboration on cross-sectoral themes and provide a wider reflection on the empirical findings, before the thesis is concluded.

One of the key assumptions of this research is that identity in general and national identity in particular, is produced and renegotiated in discourse. As highlighted in the literature review (Chapter 2) dealing with nationalism, the idea of the nation and the notion of national identity became salient only in the modern period as a result of economic and social changes. The earlier modernist perspective considered nations and the national identities attached to them as *constructs*, forged by elites to achieve various socio-political and economic objectives. Gellner (1997: 7), for example, famously suggested that nationalism was not an 'awakening of nations to self-consciousness' but that it invented nations where they did not exist. Hobsbawm (2012: 1) too claimed that nationalist leaders went so far as to *invent* 'national traditions' in order to reproduce nationalist sentiment which implied continuity with the past in order to invoke legitimacy for the present (Hobsbawm, 2012: 1-2). Benedict Anderson (1991) elaborated on

these arguments further with more systematic attention to the role of the 'print capitalism' which has not only engaged in history-making but has constituted the nation as a community albeit an *imagined* one (Anderson, 1991: 1).

The historical evolution of *Turkishness* in the Turkish-Cypriot community (see above, sections 3.2 and 3.3 in Chapter 3) as a hegemonic identity largely mirrors this process of identity construction described above, yet with an important distinction. As the analysis has further revealed, the mechanism through which the nation and national identity have been construed in this case is not one of an entirely novel creation but a rather derivative process, mirroring the developments in its near abroad, especially Turkey. More specifically, the notion of *Turkishness*, or the idea of belonging to the greater Turkish nation, as the study has tried to highlight, wasn't a natural given or an ideal that was fostered in a vacuum but emerged gradually through interaction and borrowing from earlier Turkish nationalist currents within the Ottoman Empire and later with the Turkish Republic. Indeed, it was a complex set of domestic but also external dynamics ranging from inter-ethnic relations (the perceived threat of rising Greek nationalism, in particular) and the colonial politics to developments in Turkey which would lead to the development of an ethno-nationalist *Turkishness* discourse to further foster nationalism and prompt its expression in political action.

Nonetheless, nationalism in the Turkish-Cypriot community (as in other cases) too was initially an elite-driven project rather than a popular movement. Building upon the earlier modernist/constructivist approaches, a number of scholars have widely argued that it is

nationalism that creates and defines nations and our attention should return to more fruitful concepts of *power*, *discourse* and *ideology*. Wodak et al. (2009: 153) have argued that the idea of a national community becomes reality 'through reification and rhetoric orchestrated by the political elite, intellectuals and the media and circulated through education, mass communication, and other policy regimes'. Indeed, as Calhoun (1997: 30) has pointed out, the construction of national identity is 'a self-conscious and manipulative project carried out by elites who seek to secure their power by mobilizing followers on the basis of nationalist ideology'. This was also manifest in the Turkish-Cypriot case. A number of nationalist organisations, personalities but also newspapers thus played a significant role in the dissemination of nationalist ideology to the Turkish Cypriot population at large and promoted the ethnic kinship of the Turkish and Turkish-Cypriot populations during the period when nationalist fervour in Turkey was at its peak during the Turkish War of Independence led by the Kemalists and later with the founding of the new Turkish Republic in 1923 (see Chapter 1).

While particular note is made of the impact of external stimuli from Turkey and its interaction with the domestic context in spurring the notion of *Turkishness*, the study also acknowledged and sought to elucidate the contestation and differentiation that is inherent to nation-building and in the construction of a national identity. In other words, rather than arguing that national identity requires those who share it to have 'something in common' and exploring the 'cultural content' of *Turkishness*, the study sought to unpack the contextual and contested processes hidden behind its conception. That identities are constructed but also contested and modified has thus been a key assumption of this research from the outset. Premised on the

discourse of 'us' and 'them' and construed through the articulation of *signifying elements* from pre-existing discourses, competing definitions of national/collective identity are employed to construct distinct 'imagined communities' to seek legitimacy, consolidate control or rally support for alternative/subversive agendas. Contrary to the assertions that national identity is a natural phenomenon, the study confirmed that it is a product of the dialectical relationship between discursive acts and social practices. The conception of *Turkishness* in this case shifted and transformed with changes in the social, political and economic dynamics that were also instrumental in opening the discursive space for its contestation. Indeed, the study also confirmed that other, subversive visions of collective identity based on the notion of *Cypriotness* in particular also co-existed throughout the period studied.

This finding also complements the discourse theoretical assumptions of Laclau and Mouffe (2001) on hegemony and social change. In their discourse theory, Laclau and Mouffe define floating signifiers as concepts or political demands that do not have any intrinsic meanings, only non-deterministic traces of past articulations; their actual value depends on their precise definition in a specific historical context. From this perspective, dominant discourses such as *Turkishness* prevail by marginalising radically different discourses and by naturalising their hierarchies and exclusions. Yet, despite this, no hegemony can remain stable. This is because a) a hegemonic discourse cannot fix a meaning onto a 'floating signifier' but also because there is always an 'outside' in the *field of discursivity* that threatens the stability of the 'inside' and reveals the traces of its *contingency*. In the Turkish-Cypriot case, the contingency of the *Turkishness* discourse which succeeded to hegemonise the notion of belonging was gradually revealed with

the *de facto* portioning of the island in 1974 and with the introduction of an ‘other’ — the migrants/settlers from Turkey — that proved difficult to capture adequately in ethno-nationalist terms. While other important identity signifiers were acknowledged (see the ‘introductory chapter’), immigration from mainland Turkey and the presence of Turkish settlers in northern Cyprus was thus chosen as the *key signifier* which constituted rival accounts of the Turkish-Cypriot identity in the period under study.

More specifically, the study identified and examined the articulations of collective (national) identity and immigration-settlement along two antagonistic discourses: a historical version emphasizing irredentist ‘motherland nationalism’ and the newer, subversive version of *Cypriotness* discourse. Although each presented itself as the real and natural identity, the analysis tried to capture their contingency and modification within different contexts. In general, the nationalist discourse — fervently advocated by the late Turkish-Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash and to a large extent by the right-wing parties that have historically dominated the Turkish-Cypriot administration — did not differentiate a Turkish national from a Turkish-Cypriot, categorizing the mainland Turks and native Turkish-Cypriots under the same group. Turkish immigrant-settlers were described as co-ethnics or ethnic-kins from the historical homeland. In contrast, the *Cypriotness* discourse asserted a divergence in relation to Turkish migrants/settlers to emphasize its distinction on the basis of ‘authenticity’ but also autonomy.

The ways in which immigration and the ‘immigrant other(s)’ become privileged signs, or a key signifier in organizing discourses on identity have been elaborated in a number of works

from the immigration literature and the literature on securitization in particular. Buzan and Wæver's conceptualisation of 'societal security' in particular has suggested that societies, defined in terms of identity, could be seen as the referent-object for some cases of securitization in which what could be lost is not only sovereignty in the hard sense, but also identity. As the authors have argued, the two concepts can share the same label of 'existential threat' since: 'for a state, sovereignty defines when a threat is existential, because if a state is no longer sovereign, it is no longer a state; and similarly identity is the defining point regarding existential threats for a society [...]' (1997: 242). Indeed, identity could be a possible object of securitization since it can hold a symbolic power which makes it efficient to invoke and it can take a form which makes securitarian discourse possible, that is making a claim to survival as well as articulating what non-survival would mean (Buzan and Wæver, 1997: 243).

The study has confirmed that such speech-acts to securitize identity were discernible in both versions of national identity. The *Turkishness* discourse that had been dominant prior to 2003 as the official state ideology used speech-acts to demonise the Greek-Cypriot community as the enemy and a threat to the Turkish-Cypriot population with their intention described as perpetually aiming to deprive Turkish-Cypriots of their state and sovereignty – the twin notions which embodied national identity. Demonization of the other, while aimed at forging a 'national community' also marginalised different discourses and silenced internal dissent. The discourses that challenged official narratives on *Turkishness* and groups which promoted the alternative notion of *Cypriotness* were thus cast aside as the adversaries of the Turkish-Cypriot people, or indeed accused of national sacrilege.

The *Cypriotness* discourse, too, utilised similar securitizing acts in its narrative on identity and in the framing of Turkish immigrants/settlers. This is an important finding which confirmed another key assumption of this study that within a securitarian discourse on national identity, the former can be linked to immigration by framing the latter as an existential threat to the presumed 'authority, 'authenticity' and 'ways of living' of the host society. The burgeoning literature on immigration briefly outlined in Chapter 2 also suggests that political discourse and public opinion toward the former is largely influenced by anxieties and fears about physical security, 'well-being' and national identity. In addition to physical insecurity, threat perceptions to presumed authenticity of the 'national culture' and national identity have been shown to promote ingroup solidarity and ethnocentrism. The notion of *border* is a particularly relevant signifier which articulates immigration within a *securitised context* and in relation to collective (national) identity. The notion of border links immigration and national identity to one another by articulating the 'immigrant' as a cultural 'other' who, by crossing the border, disturbs the identity and the presumed authenticity of the host society. Immigrants who cross the border or who are already inside the national territory are then associated with 'incivilities', and 'alien forms of violence' (Ceyhan and Tsoukala, 2002); they are also often attributed different cultural identities that are not compatible with the ways of life, culture and the identity of the society. Immigrants from Turkey and settlers (Turkish-origin TRNC citizens) were also treated as the 'other' and as a homogenous group within the *Cypriotness* discourse such negative attributes. While this finding is in line with the conclusion of previous socio-psychological inquiries into identity formation in general and in the Turkish-Cypriot community in particular, describing the othering process with reference to Freud's notion on the 'narcissism of small differences' (Aksoy,

2005: 3). The study has further revealed the fact that Turkish migrants/settlers were not only seen as a threat to the perceived 'authenticity' in socio-cultural terms but also signified the precarious nature of the Turkish-Cypriot autonomy with regards to its relationship with Turkey (this is elaborated further below).

As stressed previously moreover, the two competing discourses *Turkishness* and *Cypriotness*, each embodying certain power relations and ideological assumptions, had been battling for dominance. The migration of populations from Turkey from 1974 was a particularly important cleavage which drove the contestation and was chosen as the primary unit of analysis here. More remarkably, as the study has attested, the discursive contestation between the two meta-narratives on Turkish-Cypriot identity also brought about their modification, a finding in line with the conceptual framework elaborated in Chapter 2 and recapped above. The conception of *Turkishness* and its framing of immigration shifted and transformed with changes in the social, political and economic dynamics that were also instrumental in opening the discursive space for its contestation by the rival *Cypriotness* discourse, which showed variation in content and intensity. In other words, the ongoing rivalry between the two discourses for domination has meant a certain fluctuation in trying to fix a meaning onto Turkish-Cypriot identity in relation to migration in a changing context which undermined their stability.

The change and continuity in relation to each discourse type is further captured in the notion of *dislocation* referring to the 'displacing' process which reveals the contingency of the discursive structures. Such processes disorientate the already existing identities (or discourses)

and induce an identity crisis which, in turn, opens up a discursive space for the constitution of new identities. The contingency but also the dislocation and displacement of dominant discourses was operationalised in the study with reference to a *critical juncture* (that is, times when social identities are in a crisis and structures need to be recreated) that subjects are compelled to identify with discourses which seem capable of suturing the rift in the symbolic order. It is also at these *critical junctures* that what Laclau (1990) calls *myths* emerge to construct new spaces of representation by articulating dislocated elements and social demands. When a *myth* or a political project has proved to be successful, it is transformed into a *social imaginary* that is defined by Laclau as a 'horizon' or 'absolute limit which structures a field of intelligibility' (Howarth et al., 2000: 16). From this perspective, Cyprus's accession into the EU presented a critical juncture which led to a disorientation of the hegemonic *Turkishness* discourse and presented a strategic opportunity for the *Cypriotness* discourse to ascend. It is further argued that the inability of the 'EU Project' to integrate northern Cyprus into the European mainstream has resulted in a dislocatory experience which led to a crucial discursive shift in oppositional, pro-EU discourse to transform and reorganise, once again, around the issue of Turkish settlers and opposition against the 'assimilationist immigration-settlement policies' purportedly engineered by the AKP government in Turkey.

It is nonetheless important to note that such shifts and dislocatory moments, while emphasising contingency, do not preclude the relative endurance of the meta-narratives on Turkish Cypriot identity. In fact, while the discursive rivalry brought about their modification with important changes in the way they attempted to capture the key issues discussed here

(immigration and the settler issue, in particular) such contestation also showcases how both narratives have co-opted a range of justifications as the extension of a hegemonic struggle and to maintain their own power relations. The findings of the study elaborated further below also show that there was no paradigmatic change during the period of study and the 'core', structural frames (relating to the symptomatic extension of the 'Cyprus Problem', see below) remained relatively durable.

In sum, identity was conceptualised here in an operationalised and embedded way, pegged onto a theory of discourse which is produced through competing articulations of 'Turkish settlers'. To suggest that collective identity be understood as a discourse does not assume *a priori* definition of the former or the pre-given attributes attached to it. Instead these definitions are allowed to emerge from specific empirical analyses. Articulation, securitization but also dislocation have been identified as the key dynamics which construct and reconstruct identities that are in constant flux due to their inherent indeterminacy (at least in principle, see section 2.2.b in Chapter 2). In addition, and in line with much of the literature on nationalism and national identity, the study has also acknowledged the 'agency' of various social actors in the orchestration, reconstruction and dispersal of various discursive frames. From this perspective, the study has examined the articulation of settlers by the Turkish-Cypriot political parties, civil society and the print media which were considered key empirical domains in the discursive construction of Turkish-Cypriot identity. The following section discusses in a comparative manner how each discursive mechanism of identity change outlined above has applied to the case-study by looking at its impact in the three empirical domains. This will also enable further elaboration

on cross-sectoral themes and provide a wider reflection on the empirical findings, before the research is concluded.

7.3. Looking back: Research Question and Hypotheses Revisited

This section revisits all three hypotheses and the overall research question of this thesis, and concludes the investigation of the impact of immigration on identity in the Turkish-Cypriot community, before proceeding to the concluding remarks with regards to the thesis contribution and future prospects for the 'settler debate' in Cyprus and beyond. As set out in the introductory chapter, the thesis sought to investigate the impact of migration on conceptions of collective identity in northern Cyprus formulated in the following, overarching research question:

- What has been the impact of immigration from mainland Turkey on conceptions of collective identity in northern Cyprus?

In Chapter 2, three working hypotheses, which correspond to the discursive change in identity conceptions were set to track the impact of immigration across three distinct empirical domains: political parties (Chapter 4), civil society (Chapter 5) and the print media (Chapter 6). Each of those hypotheses were tested in each of the separate empirical domains.

The first working hypotheses posited that:

Hypothesis 1: *Given the local history and in the context of the Cyprus conflict, Turkish-Cypriot identity was cultivated and subsumed within a hegemonic notion of Turkishness that did not distinguish between Turkish-Cypriots and Turkish settlers.*

This hypothesis is concerned with the impact of Turkish migration on the notion of *Turkishness*. A thorough investigation of Turkish nationalism was first provided in section 3.2 which discussed the specific historical juncture at the beginning of the twentieth century by providing a brief chronological analysis of the spread of Turkish nationalism which rendered *Turkishness* the primary locus of collective-identity. Key elements of the nationalist discourse which came to constitute and entrench *Turkishness* were also highlighted throughout. As the investigation attested, a national identity based on *Turkishness* was cultivated from the late nineteenth century onwards in conjunction with several domestic and international developments (in the Turkish mainland) to replace the ethno-religious form of *Ottomanism* (on *Ottomanism*, see Ergul, 2012). While Turkish nationalism in Cyprus was to an important extent characterised by kin-state nationalism, that is a response to the nationalist developments in the Turkish mainland, the study has also highlighted the specific characteristics and conditions of the domestic context which bore out, sustained and at times, magnified Turkish nationalist sentiment. Of these domestic factors, the long-term economic prospects of the Muslim/Turkish community, rapid and large-scale emigration but also the perturbing prospects of ‘communism’ — all perceived to be threatening the very survival of the Muslim/Turkish community in the face of *enosis* — were particularly instrumental in constituting the earlier Turkish national identity in Cyprus.

Encapsulating the idea of Cyprus's union with Greece, the goal of *enosis* indeed laid at the heart of Cypriot Muslims' fears over their autonomy as a distinct community. The argument advanced here was that economic prosperity was not only a goal in-itself but would provide the Muslim community with the means they desperately needed in order to maintain their 'authentic' identity and reassert their 'autonomy' against the economically superior Greek community. It was also widely argued that unemployment had been forcing many 'Muslims' to emigrate (mainly to Turkey) for better economic prospects. This was particularly worrying for a small minority who feared that the better-educated and economically more advanced Orthodox population would ultimately use their economic muscle to assimilate the numerically weakened Muslim/Turkish community. In the following decades, the nationalist movement succeeded in galvanising these 'existential anxieties' into stronger national identification with *Turkishness*. Also discerned in this context was that the version of *Turkishness* that began taking root in Cyprus from the early 1920s onwards was conceived not as a *sui generis* identity but rather an overarching notion of belonging to the greater Turkish nation which had replaced the ethno-religious Ottoman identity.

By the 1950s, Turkish nationalism became a reckonable movement and fought under the banner of the TMT against Greek-Cypriot *enosis* and ultimately for the partition of the island in order to unify with Turkey (*taksim*). The establishment of an independent, bi-communal Republic in 1960 failed to provide a remedy for the violent nationalist conflict which ultimately led to *de-facto* partition of the island when large numbers of Turkish-Cypriots retreated into ethnic enclaves (1963-64). Turkish-Cypriot enclavement contributed significantly to the further

deterioration of relations between the two communities but most importantly, it consolidated the hegemony of Turkish nationalism. Territorial separation was also fortified with the ideological exclusion of *Cypriotness* from official discourses dominated by the monolithic conception of *Turkishness*. The hegemonic *Turkishness* discourse remained prevalent after 1974 when the island was partitioned as a result of Turkish military intervention and dominated official conceptions of identity for much of the Turkish-Cypriot administration's history.

In this context, the hypothesis concerning the hegemonic construction of *Turkishness* was confirmed in all three case studies. As discussed in Chapter 4, the right-wing parties DP and the UBP have both acted as staunch advocates of 'ever-closer' links with Turkey, conceived not only in geo-strategic terms that denotes the latter clear political/military rights in relation to Cyprus, but also in nationalist-mythological terms as the 'motherland' that the 'TRNC' (as the so-called 'infant-land' or *yavruvatan* in Turkish) and the 'Turkish population of Cyprus' depends for its security and well-being. As the hypothesis purported, Turkish-Cypriot identity, within this 'motherland/infant-land' narrative, is conceived not as a *sui generis* identity but as a form of ethnic/local variation in which *Turkishness* takes pride of place and signifies belonging to the larger Turkish nation. This was evident in the parties' programmes, describing the Turkish-Cypriot community as an indivisible part of the Turkish nation based on history, culture, language and religion but also in their efforts to utilise ethno-national myths (in combination with other civic references to sovereign statehood¹⁶⁹) in relation to immigration to advance the argument that

¹⁶⁹ This is elaborated further below.

Turkish migrants/settlers and native Turkish-Cypriots belonged in the same ethnic group with 'common roots' in Anatolia.

The nationalist rhetoric of the 'fighters' associations' examined in Chapter 5 also did not deviate from the official discourse of the nationalist leadership and the political elite which dominated the Turkish-Cypriot political scene until the early 2000s (see sections 3.3 and 3.4 in Chapter 3). Similar to the situation in the south (Papadakis, 2003) but also in other cases of post-conflict as Croatia (Fisher, 2002) various 'fighters' associations' which represent those who fought against Greek-Cypriots present perhaps the strongest nationalist and extreme nationalist factions in Cyprus. As it was highlighted in that discussion, these actors can be categorised as 'nationalist' in a dual sense, in articulating an ethno-nationalist conception of collective identity whilst maintaining a discourse of victimhood in relation to the 'Cyprus Problem' in order to securitise that particular conception in a nationally-insular perspective. Within it, the 'Cyprus Problem' is framed as the Turkish-Cypriot 'oppression' at the hands of the Greek-Cypriot majority; the Turkish military intervention that ensued following a coup attempt against President Makarios in 1974 is seen in this context as the 'liberation' of the Turkish-Cypriot community which put an end to 'Greek atrocities' and settled the Cyprus Problem by bringing about 'bizonality' in which Turkish-Cypriots could now lead 'peaceful' lives in the safety of their own state under the effective guarantee of 'motherland' Turkey. In this vein, these organisations also favour pursuing closer relations with Turkey and promote a positive view of immigration from the mainland. The twin issues of immigration and citizenship rights of Turkish settlers are considered within an explicitly nationalist framework characterised by the much-cherished

Turkish-Cypriot relationship with Turkey and on the basis of ethnic-kinship. Moreover, recent attempts to introduce stricter requirements for the acquisition of citizenship for Turkish immigrants are criticized by these groups as breaching of immigrants' human rights and with negative repercussions for the economy.

The investigation of media rhetoric in Chapter 6 has also shown that exactly the same appeal is taken up by the establishment newspapers such as the *Halkın Sesi* and by nationalist columnists in other outlets. In other words, the presence of Turkish immigrants and their naturalisation were viewed on the basis of ethnic-kinship, the 'existential' Turkish-Cypriot relationship with Turkey but also framed as an 'economic necessity' and branded a 'human rights issue'. The similarity, however, is not accidental. The suggestion that Turkish immigrants/settlers are good for the economy and that their entry and settlement should be treated as a human-rights issue has broader political appeal. It is, in fact, used as part of an effort to regain political legitimacy. Though such references to human rights and positive economic contribution in the articulation of immigration may at first seem a progressive position, the study has shown that they are couched in a distinctly ethno-nationalist framing of the Turkish-Cypriot relationship with Turkey, thus devoid of any democratic concern. In other words, there is a hierarchical relationship between the propositions of the *Turkishness* discourse which are ultimately aimed at preserving the power constellation that exists between Turkey and the Turkish-Cypriot community. In discursive terms, statements based on economic arguments and with reference to human rights are uttered here in a particular configuration, combined in ways to privilege but also marginalise; the Turkish migrant/settler is privileged on the basis of ethnic kinship and from a specific context

of 'kinship' which does not apply to other immigrant groups. The specific context of 'kinship' is also characterised by a certain dependency of the Turkish-Cypriot community to Turkey. The asymmetrical context characterised by the 'special relationship with Turkey' in which Turkish-Cypriots depend on Turkey for their 'well-being' and 'security' is thus emphasized to counteract or override other immigration-related concerns. Last but not least, it is an exclusionary discourse in relation to the Greek-Cypriot community by justifying a nationalist Turkish-Cypriot position on the negotiating table in which the latter's demands are bolstered through demographic/numerical strength. More importantly perhaps, the deployment and articulation of a range of civic and ethnic elements within the *Turkishness* discourse can be regarded as the extension of a hegemonic struggle in constructing and stabilising a form of collective identity by articulating as many available elements (i.e. 'floating signifiers', such as the economy, 'security' and 'human rights', see Chapter 2) as possible.

This assertion is also in line with the hypothesis posited in Chapter 2 and elaborated within the historical context in Chapter 3:

Hypothesis 2: *In the context of Cyprus's accession into the EU and the anticipated Turkish-Cypriot integration into the European mainstream, Turkish settlers came to be perceived as a threat to Turkish-Cypriot identity.*

As noted earlier in Chapter 2, the theory of discourse that is utilised in this study, based loosely on the post-structuralist Discourse Theory (DT), is predicated on the ultimate impossibility of closure, a condition that makes articulatory practices and political agency possible. Thus,

hegemonic practices presuppose a social field traversed with antagonisms but also elements ('floating signifiers') that can be articulated by various political projects. Indeed, it was precisely this context which created the condition of possibility for empowering the discourse of *Cypriotness* and initiated its rivalry with the hegemonic Turkish nationalism. The migration and presence of populations from Turkey developed into a major cleavage between the two rival interpretations of national identity and provided the anti-establishment left with an opportunity to challenge the hegemony of the *Turkishness* discourse with an alternative notion of belonging which emphasised a distinct 'Cypriot' character. Such a commitment, moreover, to the indigenous character of the Turkish-Cypriot identity was constructed against a 'threat' that conceived immigration-settlement from mainland Turkey as part of Ankara's assimilationist project to ultimately undermine the distinct Turkish-Cypriot identity and its long-term autonomy.

This hypothesis was tested in all three case studies which traced the securitization of the settler issue within the *Cypriotness* discourse in the specific time period marked by anticipated EU membership. Though not immediate in its impact and certainly not an outcome wholly of this specific context, the study has shown that the EU was instrumentalised heavily during this time within the *Cypriotness* narrative, offering a new political reality. Indeed, from the early 1990s onwards, Cyprus's EU accession process gradually came to be viewed by the Turkish-Cypriot left as a political project that could enhance their community's security and consolidate its 'distinct' identity. They sought to attain this goal by creating a *social imaginary* (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001) through discourse whereby the Turkish-Cypriot community was conceived as a member of the international community but also a stronger collectivity (the European Union) beyond the control

of Turkey. The economic lure of EU membership was important to the extent that it would end the crippling isolations over the Turkish-Cypriot economy, foster growth and stem the worrisome decline of the Turkish-Cypriot community numerically through emigration. But above all, such integration meant an endorsement of the Turkish-Cypriot community internationally and a recognition of its well-defined identity. In this political vein, the EU was framed within a popular struggle against the Denktash-UBP establishment and came to signify such political notions of 'democracy', 'peace' and 'freedom' and ultimately the upholding of 'Turkish-Cypriotness' that had been undermined by the nationalist policies of the Turkish-Cypriot regime not least through the large-scale naturalisation of Turkish immigrants/settlers. As such, the EU soon became a central element of the collective identity discourses invoked by political actors on the left of the political spectrum and played a critical role in galvanising support against the Turkish nationalist hegemony by legitimising the alternative conceptions of belonging, namely *Cypriotness*. The rhetoric surrounding the ongoing naturalisations on the eve of Cyprus accession into the EU further indicated the securitised nature of the issue in propagating fear that the fresh citizens would oppose the 'Annan Plan' and torpedo Turkish-Cypriot prospects of joining the EU.

In this connection, the study has found that Turkish migration was construed by the leftist parties CTP and the TKP (later BDH-TDP) within a securitised discourse of collective identity in which the presence of populations from Turkey was treated as an existential threat to the 'autonomy' of the Turkish-Cypriot community. The notion of autonomy was visible in the appeal to the securitised *Cypriotness* discourse which regarded Turkish settlers as a homogenous constituency that invariably supported the nationalist status quo and the Turkish tutelage over

Turkish-Cypriot affairs – a reference to the inability of the Turkish-Cypriot community to take hold of their own destiny. The political call for reunification of the island and EU membership was therefore based on a dissociation from Turkish interference and voiced as an invocation for greater autonomy in a federal future, that is ‘finding an own place under the sun’ for Turkish Cypriots. Yet, the study has also shown that despite the framing of EU membership as ‘crafting its fate in own land’ — and in longing for emancipation and autonomy from Turkey — the leftist parties were acutely aware of the unacceptability of such an exclusionary social imaginary (crafted along ethnic lines) for large numbers of naturalised Turkish-Cypriots (Turkish settlers with ‘TRNC’ citizenship). Faced with suspicion and a potential rebuke at the polls that could jeopardise plans to conclude the peace negotiations and submit a finalized plan to the referendum ahead of the island’s EU accession, the left, and the CTP in particular, thus toned-down on its anti-immigration rhetoric within a newly formulated, more inclusive ‘imaginary’ making the EU the focal aspect of identity narrative. The party’s rhetoric was modified to represent a more-inclusive notion of ‘Turkish-Cypriotness’ in which identity was articulated together with citizenship ties and with reference to human rights. This was only a partial discursive shift however, that came about at the eleventh-hour in order to appeal for votes; the ‘settler issue’ continued to lurk in the background, evidenced in the citizenship-stripping court battles on the eve of EU accession.

Similar dynamics were also discerned among various civil society groups (section 5.3 in Chapter 5) and in the narratives of the leftist newspapers (section 6.3 in Chapter 6). The trade union movement in particular, now organised under the ‘This Country is Ours’ platform, linked

its rhetoric on autonomy to embracing EU membership. In this connection, the Platform overwhelmingly supported EU membership for Turkish-Cypriots in the run up to the referendum in 2004 that would allow a reunified, federal Cyprus to join the EU (see section 4.2 in Chapter 4). An identical link was also shown between the immigration rhetoric of the leftist trade unions such as the KTAMS and the Teachers' Union and the issues of identity, societal security and political autonomy. In this vein, immigration from Turkey was criticized for instigating the outflow of Turkish-Cypriots onto other countries and that the lax immigration regime facilitated the 'transfer of population' from mainland Turkey would, in the long-term, undermine Turkish-Cypriot autonomy but also endanger the 'authentic' Turkish-Cypriot identity through large-scale naturalisations. EU membership was once again depicted as a political project which signified a new political opportunity that would enable the desired emancipation of the Turkish-Cypriot community and offer a safeguard for its long-term autonomy within a federative statehood with the Greek-Cypriot community.

The leftist newspapers such as the *Yenidüzen*, the *Ortam* and the *Afrika*, also explicitly linked immigration from Turkey and granting of citizenship rights to Turkish settlers onto the issues of identity, societal security and political autonomy. This media rhetoric on immigration and citizenship stem from a securitised *Cypriotness* discourse in which the presence of populations from Turkey are treated as an existential threat to the presumed 'authority', 'authenticity' and 'ways of living' of the Turkish-Cypriot society. Within this discourse, moreover, Turkish settlers were seen as a homogenous constituency that consistently supported the nationalist status quo and the Turkish meddling in Turkish-Cypriot affairs. These claims were also

articulated with an appeal to Turkish-Cypriot autonomy and a political project that would safeguard it. Significantly, such demands would keep immigration high in the domestic agenda ahead of the looming referendum on Cyprus's reunification on the eve of its EU accession.

In this context, the position of the influential *Kıbrıs* newspaper is telling. The newspaper that had thus far supported official positions on the Cyprus Problem, displaying suspicion if not outright hostility towards the EU, undertook a radical change in its editorial policy to a clear support for the 'yes' vote in the run up to the referendum in 2004 that would allow a reunified, federal Cyprus to join the EU. In parallel, and in stark contrast to its previously muted position on the issue, the newspaper also became an outspoken critic of the new citizenships, charging those in favour of the *status quo* with treachery and betraying the political will of the Turkish-Cypriot community through illegal naturalisations. On the other hand, the positive, transformative effect of the EU rhetoric on newspaper and trade union narratives was much limited. The response of the newspapers in this sense to the exclusion of settlers from new freedoms in movement following the opening of the crossing-points in 2003 is a case in point. So is the fact that the 'settler issue' sometimes appeared muted within the civil society narrative during and in the immediate aftermath of the referendum. Yet, these changes in rhetoric can also be explained by the fact that virtually all parties, including those critical of new citizenships, tried to appeal to the 'settler vote' for the elections and also for the referendum. To that end, even the *Yenidüzen* (bearing in mind its close ties to the CTP) toned down its reporting on the issue though only to now victimize the settlers that had been 'targeted' and 'manipulated' during this time by the right-wing parties against the Annan Plan and the reunification of Cyprus. In other words, there

is scarce evidence from the findings above to suggest a strong normative impact of 'Europe' and the 'EU' to suggest a transformative effect on the identity narratives. Prospects of EU membership did reduce to some extent the salience of immigration and citizenship temporarily but did not amount to less antagonistic framing of the settler issue or a restructuring of the discursive context of identity articulation.

As asserted throughout the empirical chapters (4,5 and 6), the partial nature of the discursive modification within the *Cypriotness* discourse and the absence of a complete paradigmatic change, can be explained by the contingent nature of the 'window of opportunity' represented by EU membership as well as the structural and historical features of the settler issue (particularly its linkage to the bilateral relations with Turkey). As the study has further asserted, what compromised the potentially transformative effect of the EU on collective identity and in effect perpetuated settler antagonisms was the peculiar and rather 'marginal' positioning of the Turkish-Cypriot community within the post-accession context (see section 3.4 in Chapter 3) which meant that the 'EU project' was unable to consolidate itself into a viable social, and perhaps a more inclusive imaginary. Instead, the pro-EU *Cypriotness* discourse that brought together large segments of the Turkish-Cypriot society and led simultaneously a political sea-change in the run up to Cyprus's EU accession became disorientated. In other words, the abortion of the plan to integrate the Turkish-Cypriot community into the European mainstream obstructed the continuity of the common 'social imaginary' and thwarted the emergence of a stable hegemonic formation in Turkish-Cypriot politics during this period.

Moreover, the dislocatory experience of the aborted EU-membership has led to a new reconfiguration of the pre-existing elements articulated within the oppositional *Cypriotness* discourse in which settler antagonisms took centre stage. This argument was hypothesized in Chapter 2:

Hypothesis 3: *With the failure of the 'Annan Plan', the pro-EU Cypriotness discourse is disorientated and settler antagonisms take centre-stage.*

In this case, this was evidenced by the reintroduction of the immigration-related anxieties into oppositional rhetoric which soon took centre stage in organising *Cypriotness* based identity discourses in the post-referendum period. This period was also characterised by a more vocal anti-Turkish rhetoric on the part of this camp that surpassed its distinct pro-EU stance. To this end, the leftist parties instrumentalised on the anti-austerity sentiment from 2009 onwards by adopting a more assertive rhetoric on Turkish-Cypriot identity in general and the bilateral relations with mainland Turkey in particular. Inevitably, the renewed context of insecurity which put emphasis on Turkish-Cypriot identity further perpetuated the securitised narratives in relation to immigration from mainland Turkey.

In a similar vein, the trade unions too argued that the Turkish-Cypriot identity was put at risk not only through its positioning in relation to Turkey which excluded 'mutual respect' but also through the large-scale naturalisation of Turkish nationals that altered the domestic political balance, further consolidating Turkish hegemony and tutelage over Turkish-Cypriot affairs. To

this end, a series of 'Communal Survival' rallies were organised by the KTÖS, KTAMS and others in 2011 and 2012 which saw thousands of Turkish-Cypriots taking to the streets to reassert their Turkish-Cypriot identity, protest against Turkish-imposed austerity measures and tell Ankara to keep its 'hands-off the Turkish-Cypriot community'. The unions in this context also asserted that the ongoing naturalisation of Turkish immigrants (especially during election times) was a form of gerrymandering to manipulate results in favour of those parties who aligned themselves with Turkey. The analysis of leftist newspaper narratives also confirms these findings. Both the *Yenidüzen* and the *Afrika* (perhaps more so) have taken a more explicit stance against Turkey and the increasingly authoritarian AKP government there, tying a number of elements including austerity but also religiosity onto immigration in its articulation of the 'Turkish-Cypriotness' discourse. In the narratives of their editorials and their columnists, the Turkish-Cypriot relations with Turkey are framed as one of subjugation, with immigration as part of the systematic efforts to sustain Ankara's overwhelming influence over the Turkish-Cypriot affairs. From this perspective, the AKP government was further criticized for implementing its 'Islamic agenda' in northern Cyprus through policies to boost the public visibility of religious symbols in the building of new mosques but also through the religious indoctrination of the immigrant/settler population.

In this sense, the most striking feature of the identity discourses on both sides, has been their remarkable modification in relation to the changing context, reflected in the articulation of more recent anxieties in their appeal to popular sentiments. As indicated above, this has been the case also with the introduction of a 'human rights' element within the *Turkishness* discourse

together with a neoliberal argument to further frame immigration as much-needed 'cheap labour' mainly as a reaction to the oppositional rhetoric of the *Cypriotness* discourse which seems to have dominated the discussions in the second half of the time-period under study. For the *Cypriotness* discourse, on the other hand, the most notable change since 2004 has been in relation to the framing of Turkey. While the *Afrika's* views on Turkey as an 'occupier' or immigration as an illegal population transfer did not change, what is striking is that once seen as marginal, similar views are now being taken by the more moderate *Yenidüzen*. Though the paper has continued to refrain from using an explicit 'occupation' rhetoric, certain elements of this discourse has nonetheless spilled into its narrative. Concerns over the religiosity of Turkish immigrants/settlers, though not entirely new, were also frequently aired in this period in parallel to developments in Turkey, with particular reference to the increasingly Islamist and authoritarian AKP under Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

Finally, the study also considered different interpretations of immigration and citizenship articulated within critical and marginal discourses. As noted in the conceptual discussion on discourse, several interpretations compete for the contents of the same identity signifiers, in upholding their own narratives. Their salience, moreover, is determined by the outcome of political struggles which eventually brings about the stabilisation (albeit temporary) of one interpretation over another. Some of these discourses may be termed 'marginal' in the sense that they are non-dominant and promote critical narratives and practices, focusing on oppression, how powerless groups are oppressed within power relations and the possibilities of resistance. In line with much of the conceptual insights provided by the literature, the analysis of

these discourses articulated by various civil society actors including the feminists, communists but also the immigrant associations (ICSOs) has shown that these actors are often instrumental in widening the discursive space by challenging existing public discourses of gender, economy and politics (see section 2.5 in Chapter 2). One major finding here, however, points out to the difficulty of articulating alternative discourses on immigration from mainland Turkey which may contradict meta-narratives in relation to the 'Cyprus Problem'. Indeed, when marginalised discourses come under scrutiny by more powerful discourses, the possibility exists that they may be co-opted into the dominant discourse or may undergo extensive modification that renders them 'completely sterile' (Powers, 2001: 62). The discussion has shown that some of these actors in northern Cyprus too have therefore focused on bilateral relations with Turkey as a symptomatic extension of the 'Cyprus Problem' and as a problem of assimilation (and to a lesser extent, occupation) thus perpetuating securitised discourses on immigration and citizenship. This, in turn, points out to the pervasiveness of the Cyprus conflict in the organisation of identity discourses including those that aim to challenge the existing symbolic order. The following section further reflects on these findings.

7.4. Identity politics and kin-state relations in unrecognised states: The Contribution of the Thesis

As stated in the introductory chapter and elaborated further in the literature review provided in Chapter 2, the focal aim of this research has been to contribute to the conceptual discussions on immigration and identity change, by applying it to the Turkish-Cypriot case, a particularly intriguing example of an unrecognised polity that hosts immigrants/settlers from a

kin-state. In this sense, the research sought to provide rich empirical findings with regards to the framing of 'Turkish settlers' in northern Cyprus, Turkish-Cypriot relations with Turkey in the context of domestic identity politics but also on the Turkish-Cypriot society and politics in general. It was also posited that the research, although restricted to observations on northern Cyprus, provides useful conceptual insights that are of potential comparative value to other case-studies similar to northern Cyprus, that is in unrecognised states or in fact cases in which the context of identity politics resembles that of the identity politics in northern Cyprus involving a kin-state (Romania-Moldova relations or Crimea's relations with Russia for example). What follows is a summary of the thesis's contribution.

7.4.a. Turkish 'settlers' in northern Cyprus

The specific focus of the thesis on Turkish settlers in northern Cyprus is an original, much-needed contribution to existing academic knowledge on the modern history and politics of the island. Whilst the inter-communal conflict and the 'Cyprus Problem' has drawn significant academic attention over the years, there is scant information on Turkish settlers which is an important aspect of that conflict. The immigration-settlement dispute as it features in the identity politics of the Turkish-Cypriot community and in the context of its relations with Turkey is even more understudied. When they have been studied at all, it has often been through an anthropological and socio-psychological approach, insufficiently embedded in the political context, or in a language not accessible to the English-speaking world (for exceptions, see Chapter 3). This thesis addresses all three omissions by providing extensive empirical findings

with regard to Turkish settlers, Turkish-Cypriots and Turkey during a particularly captivating and important period (1995-2013).

In the first place, the thesis thoroughly investigated the effect of migration from Turkey on conceptions of identity, during two very important periods distinguished by the 'Annan Plan' referendum on reunification and EU membership, held in 2004. The investigation of the first period (1995-2004) provided important knowledge for the gradual securitization of the 'immigration issue' and the citizenship rights of the Turkish settlers which, during that era, was framed by the *Cypriotness* discourse as an existential threat for the distinct identity and long-term autonomy of the Turkish-Cypriot community, in a similar fashion to the 'othering' of the Greek-Cypriot community by the nationalist *Turkishness* discourse. Chapter 3 also discussed how the *Turkishness* discourse promoted the migration from Turkey and the citizenship status of Turkish nationals based on kinship and the ethno-mythological ties with the latter but also its failure in discursive terms to remain hegemonic. The empirical sections of the thesis (4, 5, 6) also discussed how the EU as a framework instigated a temporal change on the framing of the Turkish settlers in a more inclusive way by the left but ultimately failing to surpass identity-related anxieties during the post referendum period (2004-2013). A focussed literature review, official document and news report analysis combined with extensive fieldwork and interviews with central actors of this process in each empirical domain (the press, civil society and the political parties), provided original and fascinating insights into the framing of immigration and the citizenship status of Turkish 'settlers' in the context of intense contestation over identity during that period.

The second contribution of this thesis concerns the modern history and politics of Cyprus. The 'Cyprus Problem' which has marred much of the recent past of the island has been discussed extensively in the chapter reviewing modern Cypriot history from a Turkish-Cypriot perspective, by means of tracing the evolution and spread of the *Turkishness* narrative that came to dominate that community, its relations with the Greek-Cypriot part and ultimately the trajectory of the self-proclaimed 'TRNC'. In this sense, the investigation uncovered complex layers of identity discourse which complement accounts on competing nationalisms in the context of the 'Cyprus Problem'. Even more so, the empirical chapters presented extensive evidence on the socio-political development of the Turkish-Cypriot community. Focusing on the remits of the press, political parties and civil society, the thesis offered a useful contemporary account of Turkish-Cypriot affairs together with detailed profiles of the main societal actors in northern Cyprus. This is a particularly important contribution to the existing literature, which is short of scholarly works exclusively focused on northern Cyprus as a political and social space. Again, the extensive research fieldwork and material that this research was based on, such as the literature review, news report analysis and interviews, offered a well-informed insight into the Turkish-Cypriot polity.

7.4.b. Identity, non-recognition and kin-state relations

As stated above, the thesis has further sought to provide useful conceptual insights that are of comparative value to other case-studies similar to northern Cyprus, such as in relation to the presence of settlers in unrecognised states or in fact cases in which the context of identity

politics resembles that of the identity politics in northern Cyprus involving a kin-state. The study offers an original conceptual framework, combining discourse theory with reflectivist strands from two academic (sub-)disciplines: nationalism and immigration studies. Looking at collective/national identity from the cross-section of these academic fields permits a much broader and fuller understanding. It allows for the incorporation of various theoretical approaches (securitization theory and critical approaches to studying nationalism), various levels of analysis (distinguished by various domestic remits or empirical domains) and various qualitative methods (through discourse analysis of official publicly produced texts, news reports and elite interviews). Placing this investigation within the wider discourse-analytical framework can complement existing understanding of many aspects of the political relevance of identity in particularly intriguing migration settings or contexts involving similar conflict dynamics and/or the presence of a kin-state. The current thesis thus offers a particular fragment of the infamous 'Cyprus Problem' but one that points to many 'bigger' stories in Europe and beyond.

Indeed, the nature of northern Cyprus as an internationally unrecognised state provided important insights for the literatures on nationalism and immigration, beyond what has been researched until now. The distinct features of the Turkish-Cypriot case, namely the non-recognition of northern Cyprus as a sovereign entity and its dependence on Turkey because of its international isolation have been the two major factors that have shaped identity politics of the Turkish-Cypriot community, rendering Turkish migration a key reference-point for multiple conceptions of identity. Lack of recognition means that migration of Turkish nationals into the disputed territory controlled by Turkish-Cypriots is deemed illegal (and thus stigmatised) from an

international law perspective. But more importantly perhaps, their hosting is seen domestically by the opposition groups as the consolidation of the *status quo* under indirect control of Turkey. Turkey in this case acts both as a 'patron state' and 'kin', and perceptions regarding Turkey are a crucial part of the identity politics which acts as a mediating factor in the framing of immigration and the citizenship claims of Turkish nationals. As the study has shown, the long standing isolation of the community but equally important dependence this has created on Turkey have also made the prospects of EU integration all the more important with significant implications on the framing of 'settlers'.

The role of the kin or 'patron' is indeed important in other cases of contested states, such as Transnistria or in South Ossetia and Abkhazia which enjoy significant Russian support. Abkhazia is also interesting as far as the ethnic identification and relationship with the patron state is concerned: though mostly Russian citizens and reliant heavily on Russian help, the Abkhaz remain very sensitive to any possibility of becoming a minority or their homeland becoming a province of Russia (*The Guardian*, 2016). By extension, other examples of kin-states whereby migratory flows but also the dual-citizenship status of co-ethnics have been contributing to increased anxieties over identity are increasingly scrutinized within a burgeoning literature. The relations between Romania and Moldova and the changing nature of identification is a particularly revealing example from the post-Soviet space (Ticu, 2016). The thesis thus has increased relevance to a number of other cases, where research can benefit from the discussion of kin-state migration and identity change in northern Cyprus. For future inquiries into the

framing strategies, differentiation and contestation in similar cases, the present study can indeed offer an important blueprint.

7.5. Conclusion: Looking Ahead

This thesis has sought to shed light onto identity politics in northern Cyprus during an exceptional time marked by the prospects of EU accession (1994-2014). A series of identity markers have mediated the construction of Turkish-Cypriot identity but the migration of Turkish nationals and the citizenship rights of Turkish 'settlers' were chosen as the key reference-point for the organisation of two dominant narratives which have competed with one another to uphold their stories of identity and belonging. The framing of 'settlers' within the two rival discourses has also revealed the pervasive effect of the bilateral relations with Turkey and the non-recognition of the Turkish-Cypriot community, both symptomatic of the 'Cyprus conflict' that has structured the specific discursive context. The years to come will thus be important to test the salience of identity politics and the 'settler issue' in a fluid political/diplomatic scene in relation to the ongoing negotiations. The aborted plan to reunify the island in 2004, but also the slow-moving reunification talks since then has led to a surpassing of the positive 'EU effect' by insecurity and widespread anxieties in relation to the ongoing migration of Turkish nationals. In this sense, it would not be far to suggest that such anxieties are only set to intensify with significant and potentially polarising implications for the inter-ethnic relations in northern Cyprus, but also the Turkish-Cypriot relations with Ankara. Here, it will be interesting to see to what extent the discussions on 'Political Islam' (in line with recent developments in Turkey

following the coup attempt in July 2016) will gain salience within identity debates in northern Cyprus. The impact of Ankara's attitudes toward northern Cyprus will also be important in this context: will Ankara continue in its effort to pull Turkish-Cypriots closer to its orbit? Will it take a more pro-active role toward the Turkish citizens in northern Cyprus as it has done recently with Turks living in Germany? In the case of reunification too, there will be a number of new dynamics the new context will bore out. Will EU membership lead to a change in attitudes toward the migration of Turkish nationals? In what ways, will reunification and EU membership affect notions of belonging among the Turkish-Cypriots but also the Turkish settlers? It will be revealing to see if a 'European reading' of identity will emerge in either case. Indeed, another important item on the research agenda opened by this thesis represents the discursive effect of 'Europeanization' over the re-conceptualisation of identity.

The investigation offered here was able to establish a rather temporal and instrumental effect and only from a Turkish-Cypriot perspective which began to decrease following the abortion of reunification. This does not mean, however, a reduced potential of Europeanization in modifying national identity narratives in a less conflictual, or more inclusive way following an eventual reunification. Indeed, all these questions testify to the increasing relevance of identity politics in northern Cyprus which this thesis has sought to track. In this context, the study offers the starting-point for further and in-depth research on each of these themes. The remarkable influence of bilateral relations with Turkey as 'patron'/kin in the context of northern Cyprus's non-recognition on conceptions of identity and the framing thus of Turkish migrants/settlers and their citizenship rights, indicates that the topic of Turkish-Cypriot relations with Ankara also has

increased research potential. With or without reunification, moreover, studying the way conflict evolves along the relations between an EU member state (Republic of Cyprus) and a non-member state (Turkey) would add important insights to further developing the argument presented here. This is significant because antagonistic politics is not limited to states outside the EU. The RoC position on Turkey in that same context of the 'Cyprus Problem' is an illustration (see for example, Diez and Tocci, 2010). Thus, future inquiries into the effect of Europeanization over national identity narratives in Greek-Cypriot relations with Turkey, and perhaps its own 'kin-state' relationship with Greece, is among the items in the future research agenda proposed by this thesis.

Paving the way for these exciting avenues for future research, this thesis aims to be a significant contribution to existing, albeit limited knowledge and understanding of the much-contested notion of identity in the original and particularly intriguing research context presented in northern Cyprus. With the Cyprus peace talks set to enter a crucial phase in early 2017 moreover, the issue of Turkish migration and the citizenship status of settlers continues to be important. During the most recent round of negotiations that took place since 2014, the leaders of the two communities were keen to present the eventual resolution of the conflict as a turning point in the island's affairs and more remarkably a clear path toward a more inclusive entity, protecting the citizenship status of all inhabitants including 'settlers' (*Cyprus Mail*, 2016b). Nevertheless, the reality is still rather different. Almost 40 years after their first arrival following the *de facto* partition of the island, the presence of populations from Turkey (and their

descendants) continues to underpin identity narratives on both sides of the island, and in the northern part more notably so. The need to promote multiculturalism and inclusiveness was largely ignored as the issue became intimately linked with securitised notions of belonging and purpose and framed in the context of the 'Cyprus Problem' and through the relationship of the Turkish-Cypriot community with Turkey. Against this background, the viability of any solution to the conflict will also depend on its ability to address these issues effectively (and quickly) within the new institutional-political formulation of governance. In this respect, there is no doubt that debates around the issues of immigration, identity and citizenship will continue to shape the contours of the island's politics for the foreseeable future

APPENDIX 1. 'COMMUNAL SURVIVAL MOVEMENT' LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

1. CTP ('Republican Turkish Party')
2. TDP ('Communal Democracy Party')
3. YKP ('New Cyprus Party')
4. BKP ('United Cyprus Party')
5. KTMMOB ('Union of the Chamber of Cyprus Turkish Architects and Engineers')
6. KTEZO ('Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Shopkeepers and Artisans')
7. KTGB ('Cyprus Turkish Journalists' Union')
8. Zeytin Üreticileri Birliği ('Olive Producers' Union')
9. Kıbrıs Türk Taşeronlar Birliği ('Turkish Cyprus Sub-Contractors' Union')
10. Kıbrıs Türk Taksiciler Birliği ('Turkish Cyprus Taxi-Drivers' Union')
11. Güzelyurt Lefke Narenciye Üreticileri Birliği ('Güzelyurt Lefke Citrus Producers' Union')
12. KTAMS ('Cyprus Turkish Public Servants' Union')
13. KTÖS ('Cyprus Turkish Teachers' Union')
14. KTOEOS ('Cyprus Turkish Secondary School Teachers' Union')
15. TURK-SEN ('Turkish Union')
16. DEV-IS ('Revolutionary Workers' Union')
17. BES ('Municipal Workers' Union')
18. GUC-SEN ('Port Workers' Union')
19. TIP-IS ('Healthcare Workers' Union')
20. CAG-SEN ('Cyprus Turkish Union of the Public Sector Workers')
21. BASIN-SEN ('Communication Workers' Union')
22. DAU-SEN ('Union of the Eastern Mediterranean University')
23. DAU-BIR-SEN ('United Union of the Eastern Mediterranean University')
24. KOOP-SEN ('Cooperative Workers' Union')
25. HAVA-SEN ('Airways Union')
26. EL-SEN ('Cyprus Turkish Electricity Authority Workers' Union')
27. TEL-SEN ('Cyprus Turkish Telecommunications Authority Workers' Union')
28. DEVRIMCI GENEL-IS ('Revolutionary Labour Union')
29. EMEK-IS
30. PETROL-IS ('Cyprus Turkish Petroleum Workers' Union')
31. MAGUSA TURK GENEL-IS ('Famagusta Labour Union')
32. BANK-SEN ('Bank Workers' Union')
33. GIDA-SEN ('Food Producers' Union')
34. SAGLIK-SEN ('Health Workers' Union')
35. HTKS ('Air Traffic Controllers Union')

APPENDIX 2. 'COMMUNAL SURVIVAL MOVEMENT' FOUNDING DECLARATION¹⁷⁰

PRINCIPLES

- Despotism of the conspiratorial UBP government has been driving the Turkish-Cypriot community to the brink of extinction.

The Communal Survival Movement has decided to wage a struggle until such time that:

- The privatisation plans and other systematic attempts of the AKP government in political, economic, social, cultural and demographic spheres, designed to exterminate the Turkish-Cypriot community are thwarted;
- Conditions for self-rule restored;
- Turkish-Cypriot community takes its rightful place as a member of the international community following the resolution of the Cyprus Problem on a federal basis guided by the relevant UN resolutions.

Within this framework, the Movement will distribute flyers across the island and in all districts on 17 January 2013. On 18 January 2013, the Movement will also hold a sit-in at the Ministry of Internal Affairs to protest the arbitrary granting of citizenship status to Turkish nationals aimed at undermining our country's demographic structure.

We hereby invite every conscientious person to take part in the 'sit-in'.

On behalf of the Communal Survival Movement,
Ahmet Kaptan (KTAMS Chairman)

¹⁷⁰ 15 January 2013

APPENDIX 3. ARCHIVAL PICTURES



Sir Münir (on the right) together with Herbert Richmond Palmer, Governor of Cyprus (1933-1939) at a school play performed at the Victoria High School for Girls (1937, author's personal archive)



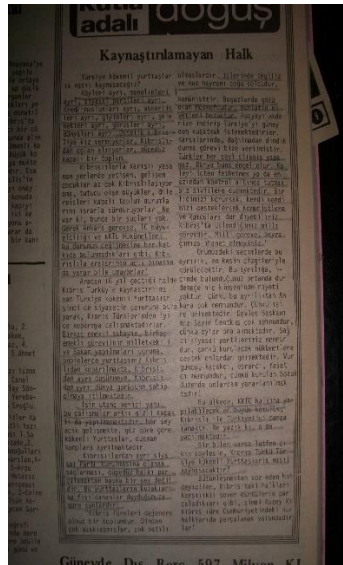
Public gathering in Atatürk Square in Nicosia, organised by the Turkish-Cypriot community to greet the Turkish Foreign Minister Şükrü Saraçoğlu and his British counterpart Anthony Eden. 13 March 1941, from the author's personal archive.

13-3-41.
Şükrü Saraçoğlu
ile edenin geldiği gün
Saray meydanında
Kurban danalar
Kesilirken.

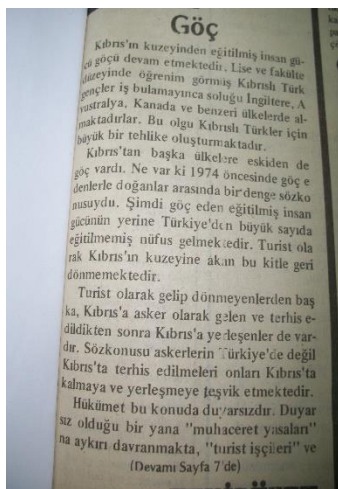
APPENDIX 4. SELECTED NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS (1985-2013)



Adalı, K. (1985a). 'Tahta Atlar Mühür Peşinde [Trojan Horses in search for single-mark ballots]', *Ortam*. 8 May 1985



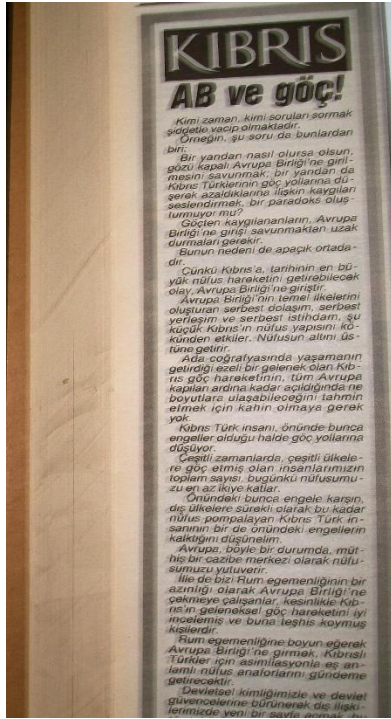
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Yenidüzen (1986a). 'Göç [Migration]', 20 January 1986



Akinci, M. (1995), 'Entegre olacak neyiz kaldı? [What have we got left to integrate further?]', *Ortam*, 09 September 1995



Kıbrıs (1998). 'AB ve Göç [EU and Migration]', 13 April 1998



Kıbrıs (1998). 'Göç etmek istemiyoruz' [We don't want to emigrate]', 17 September 1995



Kıbrıs (2006), 'KKTC'nin 'de-facto' nüfusu 264 bin 172' ['De-facto' population in the TRNC: 264,172]', 06 May 2006



Ortam (1995), 'Onlar da mı 'vatan haini'? [Are they 'traitors' too?], 19 September 1995



Kıbrıs (2003). 'Talat: 'Özgürlükleri ön planda tutacak bir yönetim kuracağız [Talat: Freedoms will be prioritized in the new administration]', 13 December 2003



Kıbrıs (2005). 'Rauf Denktaş, TMT'yi anlattı [Rauf Denktaş recalls TMT]', 22 November 2005



Afrika (2003). '2 Rum, 1 Türk ve 1 gerçek Kıbrıslı tutuklandı [2 Greeks, 1 Turk and 1 true Cypriot gets arrested]', 23 September 2003



Yenidüzen (2009). 'Postallardan sonra takunyallılar [First the 'Combat Boots', now the 'Sabots'], 26 August 2009



Yenidüzen (2008). 'Talat: Yetkiyi yalnızca Kıbrıslı Türklerden alırım [Talat: I take my mandate only from the Turkish Cypriot people]', 23 June 2008



Yenidüzen (2013), 'Yasadışı seçmenlerin etkisini artırır [Low turnout would increase the influence of illegal voters]', 20 June 2013

APPENDIX 5. INDICATIVE STRUCTURE OF INTERVIEWS

Topic Areas	Sample Questions
IDENTITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your thoughts on the recent debates about identity? Do you agree with those who are concerned about the loss of cultural identity? • To what extent is identity a significant aspect of the Turkish-Cypriot community's security?
DEMOGRAPHY, IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would you say that there is a demographic erosion in northern Cyprus? • What are your thoughts on immigration from Turkey? What kind of an impact, if any, has this had on the conceptions of identity in your community? • Does your party/association/union/newspaper have any specific policies toward immigration/immigrants/citizenship?
RELATIONS WITH TURKEY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northern Cyprus is a non-recognised state. Has this had any impact on conceptions of identity? • In this context, what are your thoughts on the Turkish-Cypriot community's relations with Turkey? • What were your reaction to (former Turkish EU Minister) Mr Egemen Bagis' statement that northern Cyprus should be annexed to Turkey, if necessary? What were the responses here to this statement from the community?
ATTITUDES TOWARD THE EU/EUROPEANNESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cyprus joined the EU in 2004 but the international isolations over the Turkish-Cypriot community remain. What are your thoughts on this? • Is it possible to talk of a certain 'Europeanness' in the sense of belonging in northern Cyprus?

APPENDIX 6. LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

INTERVIEW no.	DATE	PLACE	STATUS	ORGANISATION
No.1	23. 08. 2013	Nicosia	Senior party official	'National Unity Party'
No.2	23.08.2013	Nicosia	Mid-ranking party official	'National Unity Party'
No.3	25.08.2013	Nicosia	Mid-ranking party official/MP	'Democratic Party'
No.4	28.08. 2013	Nicosia	Senior party official	'Democratic Party'
No.5	03.09.2013	Nicosia	Junior party official	'Republican Turkish Party'
No.6	03.09.2013	Nicosia	Junior party official	'Republican Turkish Party'
No.7	04.09.2013	Nicosia	Junior party official	'Communal Democracy Party'
No.8 (telephone interview)	21.09.2013	Manchester	Mid-ranking party official	'Communal Democracy Party'
No.9 (email interview)	10.08.2014	Manchester	Mid-ranking trade union representative	Teachers' Union
No.10 (email interview)	05.06.2014	Nicosia	Mid-ranking trade union representative	'Public Servants' Union'
No.11	08.06.2014	Nicosia	Junior NGO representative	<i>Pir Sultan Abdal</i> Association
No.12	13.06.2014	Nicosia	Junior NGO representative/activist	<i>Baraka</i>
No.13	11.06.2015	Nicosia	Senior Journalist/columnist	<i>Afrika</i>
No.14	14.06.2015	Nicosia	Columnist	<i>Afrika</i>
No.15	17.06.2015	Nicosia	Columnist	<i>Yenidüzen</i>
No.16	18.06.2015	Nicosia	Columnist	<i>Kıbrıs</i>
No.17	18.06.2015	Nicosia	Columnist	<i>Kıbrıs</i>

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Afrika (2010a). 'Golifa Gibi [As if it was Golifa]', 30 April 2010

Afrika (2010b). '35 Sendika meclis önünde [35 Unions outside the Parliament]', 01 July 2010

Afrika (2010c). 'Öfke ve İsyan [Fury and Revolt]', 05 July 2010

Afrika (2010d). 'Ankara: Elini çek [Ankara: Get your hands off]', 30 July 2010

Afrika (2011a). 'Adım Adım Vatandaşlık [Citizenship – step by step]', 29 July 2011

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