THE CYPRUS REVIEW

A Journal of Social, Economic and Political Issues

The Cyprus Review is an international bi-annual refereed journal which publishes articles on a range of areas in the social sciences including primarily Anthropology, Business Administration, Economics, History, International Relations, Politics, Psychology, Public Administration and Sociology, and secondarily, Geography, Demography, Law and Social Welfare, pertinent to Cyprus. As such it aims to provide a forum for discussion on salient issues relating to the latter. The journal was first published in 1989 and has since received the support of many scholars internationally.

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INTRODUCTION

Paradise Lost:
Media Representation and the 2013
Financial and Political Crises in Cyprus

Tao Papaioannou, Mike Hajimichael

Social conflicts in the form of citizen protests have historically performed a critical role in the development, maintenance and subsequent enactments of democracy, and they will continue to do so in the current climate of capitalism in decline and systems of governance in question. In liberal democratic political theory, social conflicts serve the function of bridging, overcoming and even transcending possible disconnects between publics, opinion formation and policy-making. Within the realm of more recent social theory, they provide opportunity of crystallising new collective identities and connective actions (Bennett and Segerberg, 2011). As evidenced in the 2013 financial crisis in Cyprus, the Eurozone crisis has revealed political dynamics which have contributed to the emergence of new conflicts within a European Union (EU) member state, among EU countries and between citizens and elites over the willingness and capacity of governments to enter into political dialogue and maintain public accountability. In today's society where the politics that animate dissent have become extensively mediated (Cottle, 2008), media representation of conflicting social and political interests and the contention that surrounds them, particularly against the background of the Eurozone or global financial crisis, constitutes one of the central themes in current research on media and political economy of communication (Mercille, 2015; Statham and Trenz, 2012). How does the contingent role of media hegemony and resistance co-exist as forms of economic, political and social conflict facilitate, restrict or even transform the manifestations and inclusions of the ordinary, the contentious as well as the powerful and privileged? More broadly, the debate on whether or not and in what form traditional and new media are related to the nature and practice of democratic politics has generated considerable attention.

With these questions in consideration, analysing media discourse on the 2013 Cypriot financial crisis would require reflective identification and deconstruction of the processes of media representation which unfold the deliberate (dis)connectedness between public response and national and international governance, intertwined with the media politics of dissent, as a discursive and negotiated dimension, continuously constituting, maintaining and structuring the notion of a (European) public sphere and fundamentally, outcomes of democratic politics. In particular, this special issue explores

the interception between the functions and roles of traditional and new media and their portrayal of a range of issues including the economic, political and social factors responsible for both creating and resolving the financial crisis and political division of the country as a more historical and deep-seated crisis; the current state of the financial and regulatory system which has contributed to the crisis or has played a definitive role in the unfolding of key events of the crisis (as partially presented and criticised in the media); the bailout negotiations between the government and the Eurogroup; the public responses such as the March 2013 protests and the major challenges the government must tackle in order to afford realistic and effectual recovery strategies and measures. Analysis of these political actions is especially situated within discussion of the role of social media in generating public trust and that of community media in fostering reconciliatory conflict resolution and crisis management. This issue attempts to deepen understanding of the unique Cypriot experience in the Eurozone financial crisis as well as identify some underlying themes of the global capitalist crisis and the debates of economic and political alternatives and the potential of the (networked) public sphere to engage citizens in the democratic processes. In doing so, this collection contributes to critical and analytical interpretation of the contemporary significance of the public sphere as a contingent interplay of historical, social and political conditions and practices, particularly those concerned with the relationship between media and democracy, which is crucial to the utilisation of social conflict as a resource for political change.

Media Representation and Media Power in Times of Crisis

The Eurozone financial crisis has overall brought a return to the importance of political economy and further intensification of neoliberalism and public exacerbation with the lacking of political accountability. For example, since 2008, Europe has witnessed waves of protests and demonstrations in EU member states including Cyprus which have experienced a financial crisis. On 14 November 2012, the Day of Social Protest, workers' strikes took place in Portugal, Greece, Spain and Italy, and more recently in Belgium in 2014. This list is only a partial survey of the many social movements that have been described in the media as giving voice to the demands of 'the public' at a national and European level. Since the 2013 crisis, the Cypriot government has initiated and campaigned for through (social) media, some political and economic reforms, addressing issues in connection with the failure of financial institutions and their responsibility to develop and maintain a framework, supportive of a more balanced economic model beyond austerity measures. However, without providing the necessary enabling contexts to generate transparency and trust, there is no sufficient motivation among civil society to participate in any strategic restoring of the economy. So far, these reforms have produced little fundamental change in organisational functioning.

Similarly, established by the Irish government in May 2014, a national Joint Committee of Inquiry into the Banking Crisis has been investigating the factors and policies which impacted on or contributed to the systemic crisis in Ireland between 2002 and 2007, including the role of the media during the property boom.[1] The committee is formally empowered to conduct an inquiry by the Houses of the Oireachtas, the National Parliament, and all hearings have been broadcast live on TV and online in an attempt to engage the public. Regardless, the inquiry does not intend to provide solutions to the most critical challenges in government responsibility and accountability, but to act as a fact-finding mission to inform the restructuring implemented in the wake of the crisis and changes in approach after the crisis. In view of these developments, it must be asked how willing and capable democratic institutions are of responding to citizen's demands for policy change within concern about elite interests and the pluralist role of media and public opinion in politics. A critical issue at stake is to discern whose voice has been represented and legitimated in (the absence of) public dialogue in times of crisis.

This contention underlines the implications of media representation of social conflicts for progressive social change as it reflects upon the role of the media in structuring outcomes in democratic politics within the context that neoliberal politics has been particularly criticised for facilitating the dominance of media and financial institutions in the political sphere (Fenton, 2014). Nonetheless, it needs to be acknowledged that the current state of media in facilitating political dialogue and underpinning democracy is complex. Globalisation, Europeanisation, neoliberal market fundamentalism, consumer-driven politics, media pluralism and the accompanying social and technological trends of freer and wider access to information all impinge on media consumption and influence on forms and spaces of public deliberation and concerted attempts to invest in political transparency, citizen participation and credible journalism (Cottle, 2008). As such, the current financial crisis has provided a context attesting media's functions and capacities of providing resources for processes of information, analysis and deliberation of complex and differing economic and political policies, interests and voices that enable democracy to function.

Pertinent to these complex relations is the potential of new media in transforming certain aspects of political activism and civic agency. Evidenced by the role of social media in articulating citizens' actions in 'We are the 99%' Wall Street demonstrations and M15 protests in Spain, digital technology has challenged more traditional citizen participation in political life and public deliberation practices in recent years. Facilitated by Facebook, Tweeter and citizens' blogs, connective actions among citizens have demonstrated that

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1   Committee of Inquiry into the Banking Crisis. Available at: [https://inquiries.oireachtas.ie/banking], accessed on 20 April 2015.

civil society is a potentially powerful place for resistance and opposition (Bennett and Segerberg, 2011). In this sense, social media present great opportunities to foster citizen participation in society. However, for those who are willing and able to take advantage of the networked sphere, sustaining these participatory opportunities afforded by online media – beyond the significance of investigating concrete practices, ideologies and technological mechanisms – would principally require institutional support. Independent, new media are often connected to the ideal notion of public interest and democratic renewal, but critical to the understanding of (new) media and participation is the issue that participation through/in media will reach a limit circumscribing the exercise of power and its distribution and reproduction within a system of governance (Carpentier, 2011). Hence, the conceptual framing and immediate as well as broader societal contexts of participation need to recognise this political nature as 'a situation where the actors involved in (formal or informal) decision-making processes are situated towards each other through power relationships that are (to some extent) egalitarian' (Carpentier, Dahlgren and Pasquali, 2014, p. 124). In the process of strategic struggling for more participation and equality in each individual context within society of enduring political preconditions, one of which being the role of media, what matters is not whether society should have citizens willing to participate by means of technology or whether new media are capable of representing the voice of the public. What matters is whether 'political institutions are able and willing to enter into a dialogical relationship with the public' (Coleman, 2007, p. 375), providing opportunity structures that enhance citizens' participation and their potential public influence.

In relevance of political dynamics at work in contemporary protest and media reporting, citizen protests and demonstrations still largely depend on mainstream media to amplify and sustain their message as well as mobilise and encourage support. It should be noted here that protests or crises are often news-worthy items, when journalistic norms and practices concerning gathering and presenting information are taken into careful consideration. The 'watchdog' analogy, the nominal role of the media as a force of opposition to those in power and as a defender of the rights of the public are still valid in some circumstances. Conversely, in a media system dominated by financial reward and political influence, media representation of social protests does not necessarily ensure consequential and meaningful participation; rather, it can be understood as a politically constructed signal of the capacity of citizens to have their opinions represented in the public domain and challenge the control of the decision-making agenda.

Critical theorists have long viewed (mainstream) media as pervasive and potent ideological artefacts that tend to promote hegemonic values and ideas in order to create society-wide consent over specific constructions and definitions of reality (Fallows, 1997; Gitlin, 1981). The media have a direct role in legitimating existing power relations albeit not exclusively. Entrenched values and interests are becoming more embedded in everyday

practices and strategies through which 'normalcy' is defined and propagated (Miller, 2002). In these circumstances, the media themselves are implicated in the social reproduction and coordination of power and inequalities through exercising a more critical influence associated with the elite's capacity to shape the preconditions for decision making.

As 'the machinery of representation in modern societies', (Hall, 1986, p. 9), Stuart Hall argues that the media exercise great power to represent realities in certain definite ways and orient the public toward a set of limits and constrictions on knowledge. This understanding certainly assumes fairly powerful media effects in both generating and harnessing public opinion and sentiment. Correspondingly, power and resources can be distributed in a process where the media play a minimal role. Consent is not always needed to legitimate decision-making, or it can be obtained as described in Herman and Chomsky's (1988) model of propaganda or manufacturing consent. Powerful governments may, and can, ignore even the strong and popular protests portrayed in the media. That said, the hegemonic character of media plays a significant role in shaping public perception of dominance and opposition and political influence and participation. In addition to the importance of institutional ownership, political culture, the nature of the economy and the market, direct and indirect censorship and societal conditions of media plurality, media representation surfaces as part of the structure of access where the validity of a system of governance is maintained. A validity that is called into question particularly in times of crisis and requires reinforcement (also evolvement), not in a separate sphere of ideological struggle, but throughout daily discourse and narratives which ultimately define and redefine 'the area of what is considered as "reasonable talk" about anything, as the appropriate and inappropriate registers, as the intangible boundaries which rule the inclusion or exclusion of certain things' (Hall, 1986, p. 12). This opens up the possibility of a struggle for hegemony in representation and the multi-accentuality of a media and political discourse alongside the material facts of conflicting power and interests as evidenced in the 2013 financial crisis in Cyprus.

The 2013 Financial Crisis in Cyprus

The Financial Crisis in Cyprus did not just land on the island, unannounced, one fine day in March 2013. Additionally in trying to analyse the causes of the crisis different answers come from different people who played a key role in the economic and political governance of the island during the period 2008–2013. Ex-President, Dimitris Christofias, leading the first elected Communist government in Europe, blamed the crisis on bad decisions by banks.[2] Athanasios Orphanides, the Governor of the Central Bank of

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2   'President Christofias Attributes the Banking Crisis to Speculation and Wrong Moves', *London Greek Radio* available at: [http://www.lgr.co.uk/president-christofias-attributes-the-banking-crisis-to-speculation-and-wrong-moves/#sthash.RbdxG80j.dpuf], accessed on 20 April 2015.

Cyprus, in complete contrast blamed the crisis on Dimitris Christofias' government for a 'total reversal in fiscal policy' that increased public expenditure to unprecedented levels.[3]

Clearly this crossing of wires and swords did not help in the development of a different strategy. There was short-sightedness as well with regard to the global recession and the unfolding Eurozone crisis. Many people try to pinpoint the origins of the crisis in Cyprus in ways that can best be described as dogmatic and one-sided without considering a range of factors which led the island to the point of requesting a €10 billion 'bailout' on 25 March 2013 from the Eurogroup, European Commission (EC), European Central Bank (ECB) and International Monetary Fund (IMF): The triumvirate, more commonly known as 'The Troika' which is ironically a Russian noun meaning 'trio'. During the lead up to the bailout the term '*H Troika*' ['The Troika'] in media discourse was converted into '*Oi Troikanoi*' ['The Troikans'] which became a common word in the vernacular of the Republic of Cyprus. The appropriation of the term in everyday discourse carried diverse meanings. From the mouths of numerous politicians the 'Troikans' were 'our' last hope, and the essential bailout was the least painful option as 'Cyprus was one step away from collapse' according to newly elected DISY President Nicos Anastasiades.[4] Two days after his rather short Presidential address to the people of Cyprus, other voices of dissent regarding the 'Troikans' and what they had to offer could be heard through different media representations. 'Exo i Troika apo tin Kypro' ['Troika out of Cyprus'] echoed from a protest outside EU house in Cyprus with a familiar melody to the four-decade old chant against the occupation of Cyprus 'Exo oi Tourkoi apo tin Kypro' ['Turks out of Cyprus'].[5]

Returning to issues of 'blame' and 'responsibility' it would be simplistic and inaccurate to play out roles attributed to specific politicians and banking officials by repeating their opposite calls for who was responsible. Politicians, bankers, and media are all somehow connected, even if they blatantly deny their connectivity. The relationships between different sectors in ruling hierarchies that influence public opinion and manufacture consent have been well argued by Chomsky and Herman, and Cyprus, like many societies, is no exception to this. Indeed such an approach is pertinent in the context of the financial crisis due to the intricacies of governance and the clientelistic character of many interactions in Cyprus (Mavratsas, 2003; Faustmann, 2010;

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3   'If Christofias Had Only Taken Five Minutes', *Cyprus Mail*, 23 August 2013, available [on-line] at: [http://cyprus-mail.com/2013/08/23/orphanides-says-euro-zone-crisis-may-flare-up-again/], accessed on 20 April 2015.

4   'Cyprus Bailout: Anastasiades Speech to the Nation', 19 March 2013, available at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Elp-SEQ2meY], last accessed on 20 April 2015.

5   'Cyprus: Cypriots Call on Troika to "Get out of Cyprus"' RT Reportage, 24 March 2013, available at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RXheDHscJMo], last accessed on 20 April 2015.

Charalambous, 2014). Thus apportioning total blame to any one factor, person, institution, event or bad financial decision, runs the risk of inaccuracy, simplification and the creation of rhetorical one-sided dogma.

A further dimension is the subsequent relevance of Cyprus joining the EU in 2004 and the Eurozone in 2008. These two factors, whether one agrees/or disagrees with them ideologically or with hindsight are of high political and historic importance because they changed the way that governance and fiscal affairs operated, and brought Cyprus into a wider 'amalgamation' of countries, namely the European Union, along with the implementation of additional new laws, regulations, institutions and the decision-making bodies that resulted in the process. In vernacular terms, the 'ordinary' citizen was led to believe that there was much to 'gain' from both these historic events. Cyprus would become stronger in a geo-political sense, particularly in light of the fact that part of the island was, and still remains, occupied by Turkish military forces. Cypriots would be able to engage in EU-funded initiatives and programmes too. The Cyprus Pound would be replaced by a stronger more stable currency, the Euro, and generally the inhabitants of Cyprus would feel more secure, stable and prosperous as a member state in the EU. At the same time, little thought was given to the rhythm of politics and clientelism. Perhaps political parties (used inclusively here) thought they would simply carry on, business as usual. For instance, an institution like the Cyprus Central Bank – of which the Governor was often a political appointment from whoever ruled the Presidential Palace – was now accountable to the European Central Bank as well. This represented a significant change in personnel. The previous Governor of the Central Bank, Christodoulos Christodoulou, had a long political career, which included serving in three different ministries, Agriculture, Interior and Finance, until he was appointed Governor of the Central Bank in 2002 by President Clerides. In October 2014 Christodoulou was jailed for five months for tax evasion.[6] From the moment Cyprus joined the EU and Eurozone respectively, such crucial appointments needed to be perceived differently. Christodoulou had been a successful politician and businessman whereas others who followed were distinguished academics specialising in economics. Christodoulou began life as a teacher in 1962, qualified as a lawyer by 1972, and then graduated from the University of Wales by 1992 with a PhD in labour law. It was not the same educational path as that taken by Athanasios Orphanides who served as Governor of the Central Bank of Cyprus between 3 May 2007 to 2 May 2012 with a PhD from Massachusetts Institute of Technology University in Cambridge, USA. Orphanides also served as a member of the Governing

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6   'Former Cypriot Central Banker Begins Jail Term', *Ekathimerini*, 28 October 2014, available [on-line] at: [http://www.ekathimerini.com/4dcgi/_w_articles_wsite2_1_28/10/2014_544100], last accessed on 20 April 2015.

Council of the European Central Bank during his time as Governor of the Bank of Cyprus, a clear indication of how things had changed as far as fiscal accountability stood after Cyprus joined the Eurozone.[7] Similarly, Panicos Demetriades, selected to the post of Governor of the Bank of Cyprus following a series of public differences between the former Orphanides and newly elected President Dimitris Christofias, is likewise a distinguished academic with a PhD in Economics from the University of Cambridge. Demetriades served as Governor for two years (including the bailout period) after which he returned to being a Professor at Leicester University.[8]

Additionally, the bailout in Cyprus presents many questions around issues of legitimacy, which concern the role of the nation state in the EU as well as the role of the EU and a member state and the role of politics in that state. Loukas Tsoulakis explains this as a dilemma:

'One of the problems in Europe is that in some areas policy decisions are taken either at the European level, yet our political discourse at the national level takes place as if Europe did not exist. So there is an illusion, obviously. We talk as if our governments have much more powers than they actually have. And that is dangerous because it can also lead to enormous frustration and disappointment with the political system.'[9]

As a political issue the legitimacy of a newly elected political leader, Nicos Anastasiades, was questioned because he will always be remembered in history as the President who, on 12 February 2013, declared 'I will not sign a haircut' but then two weeks later actually did the opposite.[10] Many citizens questioned the wisdom of joining the EU and the Eurozone analogous to the aforementioned point about the 'gain' factor which now seemed more like a 'pain' factor. Questions were raised about the EU as an alliance of nations set up to avoid the conflicts and wars of the past. This unique partnership between 28 countries was now overseeing bailout projects financed by its own taxpayers to the further detriment of citizens throughout the EU, triggering rising

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7   Details from Central Bank of Cyprus profile page on Governor Athanasios Orphanides, retrieved 20 April 2015 from: [http://web.archive.org/web/20110628234911/http://www.centralbank.gov.cy/nq content.cfm?a_id=6656].

8   Panicos Demetriades Academic Profile page, Department of Economics, The University of Leicester, UK, retrieved 20 April 2015 from: [http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/economics/people/ pdemetriades].

9   Paul Rohan, 'The Nation State: Is it Dead?' *BBC World Service* available at: [http://www.bbc.co.uk /worldservice/theneweurope/wk18.htm], last accessed on 20 April 2015.

10   'Anastasiades: I Will Not Sign a Haircut', 12 February 2013, *Cyprus Economy* 'Stockwatch', available at: [http://www.stockwatch.com.cy/nqcontent.cfm?a_name=news_view&ann_id=166931&lang=en], last accessed on 20 April 2015.

unemployment together with significant welfare and spending cuts as a consequence. Some of the measures implemented in Cyprus had never been witnessed before in the EU. Immediately after the bailout was voted in the House of Representatives in Cyprus a maximum limit was imposed on cash withdrawals of €300 per day from any bank account in Cyprus; a move which lasted for two weeks. Moreover, banks were closed during this period as well. It was a strained fortnight for the 'ordinary' citizens of Cyprus who now experienced the 'pain' of a bailout. Some key factors in the crisis in Cyprus were interlinked with what happened in Greece. A badly managed high risk-taking banking sector and successive governments who relied on additional loans to pay back previous loans – rather like taking out a mortgage and then asking the bank for a second mortgage which would be paid back via a credit card – are two dynamics that both countries share. While many people claim that the countdown to doomsday in Cyprus was joining the Eurozone, what they fail to recognise is that joining the Euro itself was not the factor that steered Cyprus to financial meltdown in March 2013.

Cyprus joined the Eurozone on 1 January 2008 on the same day as another island in the Mediterranean, Malta. The two places have many commonalities in terms of a shared colonial past and heavy reliance on the tourism sector. However, aside from Malta not being a divided island, another key difference relates to banking sectors. The Governor of the Central Bank of Malta, Josef Bonnici stressed:

> 'The problems facing Cypriot banks included losses made on their holdings of Greek bonds, whereas Maltese domestic banks have limited exposure to securities issued by the programme countries.'[11]

In Cyprus the banking sector invested heavily on high risk assets abroad. Greek government bonds turned highly toxic following the bailout in Greece in 2010 making the Cyprus banking sector completely unstable. Reflecting on such realities one could pose the question that surely, Cypriot banks were not so naïve; could they not actually see this coming?

But as stated earlier, the bailout did not land in Cyprus one day in March led by an Alien species called 'Troikans', it was the culmination of many factors, events and poorly managed scenarios which reflect an overall lack of vision by political leaders and their parties, not only in Cyprus but more so in Greece, who for decades had worked on clientelistic relationships and manoeuvrings, dealing and exploiting their constituents. The demise, for instance, of the former leading party, PASOK, that won 43.9% of votes

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11   Kurt Sansone, 'Don't Compare Malta to Cyprus', *The Times of Malta*, 27 March 2013, available at: [http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20130327/local/Don-t-compare-Malta-to-Cyprus-bank-chief.463152], last accessed on 20 April 2015.

in the 2009 Parliamentary elections in Greece but then disintegrated to an astonishingly low 4.68% in the general Parliamentary elections of 2015, is indicative of a rejection of previous establishment politics.[12] Yet whether this shift is telling of a different, new Left wave, as expressed through SYRIZA (Coalition of the Radical Left), could be viewed as too pre-emptive. After all 'New Labour' under Tony Blair in Britain appeared consolidated in its power but declined in the space of just over a decade.[13]

SYRIZA is, nonetheless, very different contextually due to the economic crisis in Greece which is comparable only to the hardship and strife of the Great Depression of 1931. Indeed, in their fascinating analysis Chouliarakis and Lazaretou (2014) bring home a number of empirically validated comparisons on the crises in Greece which are expressed in the following terms:

> 'Comparisons with the interwar period show that the current crisis of the Greek economy should be classified a great depression rather than a great recession and that the inability of the national authorities to credibly adhere to their commitment to a nominal anchor was at the root of the country's failure.'[14]

Additionally, this kind of comparison would be interesting to explore through future research on the impact of the Great Depression on Cyprus, which was then a British Colony, although it must be noted that the severity and extent of the current debt is much higher in Greece.

Political shifting is likewise notable in Spain with Podemos – a movement established in 2014 – taking 8% of the votes in European Elections within 4 months of its creation, and likely to improve on its share of the vote in the near future.[15] But Cyprus, as is often the case, proves to be an exception as the 'left' alternative was actually in power, in the form of AKEL, the Communist Party, before the bailout was agreed. So while it is tempting to reflect on the rise of a new left in Europe that may be opening a new parliamentary road to socialism, it is also clear that people who are dissatisfied across the EU want results; they want to experience an improvement. Syriza, as a movement like its predecessors PASOK, will be evaluated by the Greek electorate at the ballot box, just as

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12 Statistics on Elections in Greece taken from 2009 and 2015 respectively from sources available at: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_legislative_election,_2009] and [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ Greek _legislative_election,_2015], last accessed both sites on 20 April 2015.

13 Justin Parkinson, 'The Rise and Fall of New Labour', *BBC News*, 3 August 2010, available at: [http:// www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-10518842], accessed 31 January 2015.

14 G. Chouliarakis and S. Lazaretou (2014) 'Déjà Vu? The Greek Crisis Experience, the 2010s versus the 1930s. Lessons from History', Working Paper No. 176, *Bank of Greece*, February 2014.

15 Presentation by Miguel Vicente, 'Political Disaffection, Media Coverage and Social Protests' at *The Media and The Crisis Cyprus Workshop*, Altius Hotel, 18 March 2015.

AKEL in Cyprus when Conservative DISY Candidate, Nicos Anastasiades was elected shortly before the bailout in March 2013.

What these parties do share, however, is a stigmatisation as 'extreme leftists' by numerous political opponents (in key positions of power in the EU) and this is similarly reflected through some international media outlets. For instance, a few days after the election of the Syriza government in Greece, conservative Derk Jan Eppink, a former journalist and author of the book *Life of a European*, drew a parallel between the rise of what he called the 'extreme left' and the 'extreme right' and how these form the core of today's Euro-sceptics.[16] In the same week in early February, the BBC journalist, Emily Maitlis, interviewed the newly appointed Greek Finance Minister, Yanis Varoufakis. The interview could be seen as an example of how not to conduct an interview, or a case of bias for Media Studies students to observe as a specimen study.[17] It is worth noting that this video literally went viral globally in the space of its first 24 hours with 357,985 plays on *YouTube*.[18] This statistic does not include the millions of people who may have viewed it through its original source via the BBC.

To close, it should be argued that both movements, SYRIZA and Podemos represent a spirit of citizens' indignation to austerity measures that are simply submerging debt-ridden economies into further debt upon debt, and these measures – a result of a succession of badly negotiated bailout agreements in different countries such as Greece and Cyprus – could well become a political boomerang. The disturbing upswing of far rightist and openly racist groupings in many countries across Europe has a certain historical resonance with the failures of the Weimar Republic in Germany and the rise of the Nazi party. What the EU created so that future war and division could be avoided may be in danger of making an unwelcome appearance. This is by no means scare mongering but a reality check. The neo-Nazi Golden Dawn are now the third largest party in Greece, and the prospect of them ever coming to power would have a dramatic impact also on Cyprus.

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16   Speech by Derk Jan Eppink MEP European Parliament, seminar on 'EU Journalism and the Way Ahead', 4 February 2015.

17   Greek Finance Minister interviewed on 'Newsnight' by Emily Maitlis, 30 January 2015, *BBC 2*, was available at: [http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b0512kdk], last accessed on 2 February 2015.

18   Yanis Varoufakis Newsnight interview hosted by Sphaera21 available at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BiIO4YciewU], last accessed on 2 February 2015, unfortunately the clip is no longer available but the interview can be accessed on Vimeo at: [https://vimeo.com/119911142].

This Special Issue

This collection of articles aims to investigate representations of the Cypriot financial crisis and complex political realities including the long-standing political division of the country in various media: national and international, mainstream and alternative, online and offline. Specifically, this issue explores media discourse on a range of issues such as citizens' articulation of discontent against the failing institutions and systems and lack of political representation in the context of the financial crisis, the bailout negotiations between the government and the EU, the public reactions including the March 2013 protests and institutional strategies to contain the crisis and the aftermath.

In the lead article, 'Overcoming the Protest Paradigm? Framing of the 2013 Cypriot Protests in International Online News Media', Tao Papaioannou examines whether portrayal of the 2013 Cypriot protests in international news media conforms to the protest paradigm, framing characteristics that are protective of dominant values and interests. A framing analysis of protest coverage by the New York Times (NYT), BBC News and Euronews reveals contrasting results. In consideration of media interactions with political elites and their representations of relevant social criticism, this article discusses the possibility of international news media conditionally deviating from the protest paradigm in favour of multi-perspective approaches, permitting a more functional discourse to emerge from social conflicts.

Juxtaposing a framing analysis of coverage of the crisis in national newspapers, Lia Spyridou analyses the dominant frames of 'drama' and 'inevitability' which diminish protestors' potential to affect policy-making. Although the political orientation of the papers proves a factor of diversification, media coverage is mainly elite-sourced, episodic and lacking in-depth analysis. Finally, the findings provide some insight on how the politics of futility and fear coupled by the 'responsible politics' discourse articulated in the media contribute to the development of modest protest dynamics.

Radio is actually an under-researched area in Cyprus, despite its pervasiveness as a media platform in our everyday lives. There are currently over 60 radio stations in the Republic of Cyprus, possibly one of the highest ratios in terms of population size in Europe. George Pavlides' empirical study on radio news broadcasts in the days preceding and following the bailout decision is a pioneering piece of research since it is the first time anyone has attempted to undertake a detailed analysis of radio news content. One of the major findings of this essay is the comparative lack of knowledge by radio stations on the terminology of 'the haircut' [*to kourema*] which was not referred to until it was announced on 12 March 2013. Pavlides' study also indicates a number of tendencies, for or against the 'bailout' and an overall absence of real alternatives.

Among many issues which will have significant influence on any possible solutions to the Cypriot financial crisis and their successful implementation is the political division of

Cyprus as the more persistent and deep-seated conflict and crisis. The Cyprus problem, the prevailing political discourse and public perceptions and even prejudices associated with the notions and processes of conflict resolution and crisis management, underline the public's dependence on the political system for solutions and the urgent need to seek theoretical and media alternatives. Beginning with a discussion on the material and discursive components of conflict transformation, Nico Carpentier argues for the need to complement the dominance of material and psychological approaches with a more discursive-cultural approach. Situated within Mouffe's theoretical understanding of antagonism and agonism, analysis of the broadcasts of three programmes by MYCYradio, the Cypriot web community radio station, reveals themes supportive of agonistic discourse.

Immigration is an important topic of contestation across Europe. Since the 1990s, the retreat of multiculturalism and the current financial crisis have resulted in pressures exerted on immigrants to conform and integrate. Dimitra Milioni, Lia Spyridou and Konstantinos Vadratsikas employ framing analysis of online articles and television news stories about third-country immigrants that appeared in the Cypriot media in 2013 when the consequences of the financial crisis were most strongly felt by the Cypriot population. The findings reveal the explicit discursive and sourcing mechanisms by which immigration is constructed as a problem and immigrants are 'othered' in the media discourse.

Online social media and the role they play in protest and during times of crisis have been explored extensively by many scholars such as Bennett, Castells, Valenzuela, Anduiza, Cristancho and Sabucedo. Yet their function in terms of Cyprus and the bailout has not been explored to date. The contribution by Vasiliki Triga and Venetia Papa is valuable in terms of the context of Cyprus and the formation of collective identities through the social media platform Facebook. They examine these constructions methodologically in terms of online identity, political formation and different notions of collectivity. The connections for action between online/'virtual' and offline/'reality' in terms of impact/effectiveness are also explored regarding the bailout in Cyprus and its aftermath. Their research raises important questions on passivity/activism and the stereotype that civil society is an aggregator for change, when in fact, very little change actually occurred in Cyprus with regard to questioning austerity and the authorities which advocate it as a remedy.

Furthermore, social media are becoming progressively more important in the role they play in increasing political participation nationally and internationally. In times of crisis, social media offer a different approach to stimulate citizen engagement in political life, reshaping creative structures and methods of contemporary political communication in the way that politicians and citizens can interact with one another. Marcos

Komodromos investigates the current role of the social media used by Cypriot Members of Parliament and politicians to reach out, communicate and network with their audiences in times of political change and crisis in Cyprus. A qualitative study is adopted using face-to-face interviews in order to explore the views, experiences, beliefs and motivations of individual participants in Cyprus.

Popular Music Studies has a limited bibliography in Cyprus to date and Mike Hajimichael re-addresses this imbalance with reference to three songs from Cyprus about crisis. Fort Bravo, Monsieur Doumani, and Haji Mike & Dub Caravan made songs from three different musical genres all of which have some connection contextually through their references and reflections on contemporary life in Cyprus. These links are explored through a number of themes relative to the economic crisis and understanding songs as commentary, narrative and alternative critique on everyday lived experiences as echoed by musicians. This, it is argued, empathises closely with Les Back's notion of sociology as 'the art of listening' (2008).

Looking backward and forward, the key issue regarding the economic crisis in Cyprus is why the system failed its citizens in such a tumultuous and catastrophic way. Interlinked with who is held responsible and what punitive actions were taken has led many people to raise countless questions on legitimacy, populism and political rhetoric and transparency. Nicos Pavlides poses these questions with regard to the legal and regulatory system, and how it allowed the banking sector to plummet in such a self-destructive manner. In his detailed article he addresses such critical concerns and questions what should be done, and what specific changes and improvements should be made to the legal and regulatory system to avoid the repetition of such calamitous events occurring again in Cyprus.

Finally, as an afterword, Suman Gupta takes the preceding different specificities of the Cyprus conjuncture to a wider context based on the exploration of what the two broad concepts, namely crises and media representation can mean. The key argument in terms of crisis and media is contemplated between issues of 'framing' (often associated with intended bias) and the 'watchdog' role assumed/expected from the media. Such an approach has certain catalytic qualities not so much by providing clear cut answers but through raising key questions on media as 'practice' and media as 'pedagogy'. That media have a 'watchdog' role is undeniable, the challenge is how can this be transformed into teaching media as a practice or even praxis – something which generally in a synoptic sense, this special edition, has contributed to.

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ARTICLES

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Overcoming the Protest Paradigm?
Framing of the 2013 Cypriot Protests in
International Online News Media

TAO PAPAIOANNOU[1]

Abstract

Earlier research on media coverage of social protests has yielded evidence of a protest paradigm: framing patterns that articulate support for entrenched interests and values. However, recent studies are detecting less predictable media responses, indicating the need to identify the extent of application of the paradigm and the underlying determinants within the changing media politics of dissent. This study investigates whether and how the protest paradigm is incorporated in the portrayal of the 2013 Cypriot protests in international online news media. A framing analysis of protest coverage by the news websites of the New York Times (NYT), BBC News and Euronews reveals contrasting results. NYT demonstrates the tendency to employ spectacle frames, privilege official sources and situate the protests within strict economic analysis. Alternatively, BBC News – more sympathetic than Euronews – constructs stories with frames legitimating protestors' perspective and questioning governing institutions. Finally, in consideration of the media's orientation to the destabilising elite consensus embedded in the crisis and their representations of relevant social criticism, this article examines the possibility of international news media conditionally moving away from the protest paradigm towards multi-perspective approaches, permitting a more credible discourse to emerge from social conflicts.

Keywords: news framing, the protest paradigm, media politics, online media, BBC News, Euronews, the New York Times (NYT), the 2013 Cypriot crisis

Introduction

From the Arab Spring to the 'Indignados', from Occupy Wall Street to the food riots, citizens living in authoritarian regimes as well as Western democracies are demanding social and political change through protests, strikes and revolutions. Exacerbated by the global financial crisis, there has been a steady increase in protests since 2008 in higher

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income countries, particularly those within the European Union (EU), against the adoption of austerity measures among other radical economic doctrines by the global neoliberal order. Using protests as a legitimate mechanism of political representation in democratic societies outside the more direct and conventional political channels, protesting citizens usually aim to achieve their objectives through either influencing particular target groups such as key decision makers and constituencies or communicating their agendas to as wide an audience as possible. In this process, protestors rely on the media to convey, amplify and sustain their messages in order to obtain validation in the public discourse, mobilise political support and broaden the scope of conflict (McCarthy, McPhail and Smith, 1996). Consequently, media portrayal of protests – or a lack thereof – influences the dynamics and outcomes of social conflicts.

As evidenced in the Egyptian revolution, the use of social media in articulating citizens' actions and mobilising social movements has challenged protestors' dependence on mainstream media to reach the public. Social media and other internet-based information technologies are indeed transforming certain aspects of political activism and civic agency as they provide access to far more information, the capability to reach out to larger audiences and the possibilities for a greater level of direct and personal involvement (Dahlgren, 2009; Papaioannou, 2013). However, despite the opportunities afforded by independent and alternative media platforms on the internet, mainstream news media especially in online format, are still largely relevant for protestors' politics of inclusion in the wider society. In the Arab Spring movement or protests in Spain and Greece related to the Eurozone financial crisis, social media proved crucial to the coordination of national and international collective actions and the promotion of new political values (Papaioannou and Olivos, 2013), yet mainstream media were essential for public recognition of the political causes (Khondker, 2011).

Nonetheless, critical theorists have proposed that representations of protests in mainstream media tend to follow a political process that is protective of dominant interests and values (Hertog and McLeod, 1995; Lipari, 1996). David Miller notes that 'Ruling ideas' (2002, p. 260) are embedded in daily practices and strategies through which normalcy is defined and propagated. In these circumstances, the media themselves are implicated in the social reproduction and coordination of power through exercising a more critical influence associated with the elite's capacity to shape the (pre)conditions for decision making within a system of governance. Media representations of social protests hence can be argued as politically constructed signals of the capacity of citizens to have their opinions represented in the public domain and challenge the control of the decision-making agenda. This contention underscores the role of the news media in structuring outcomes in democratic politics within the context that neoliberal politics has been particularly criticised for facilitating the rising power of media conglomerates and the dominance of corporate interests in the political sphere. In today's society where politics

has become extensively mediated (Cottle, 2008), how the news media depict protests and the contention that surrounds them are integral to the media politics of dissent and are consequential for overcoming (or not) possible disconnects between publics, opinion formation and policy-making. In this sense, it is critically necessary to explore the news media's coverage of protests in the Eurozone crisis which has revealed political dynamics contributing to social conflicts within a member state, among EU countries and between citizens and elites over the willingness and capacity of governments to enter into political dialogue and maintain public accountability and transparency.

Embedded in the processes of producing news on protests, the media often specifically resort to the 'protest paradigm', framing characteristics that articulate support for the legitimacy of the existing power structure. In the context of public protests in the 2013 Cypriot financial crisis, this empirical investigation examines whether protest coverage by three international online news media conforms to the protest paradigm. This study proceeds as follows. First, it reviews the literature on the protest paradigm within the realm of news framing and the increasingly more complex media politics of dissent. Then, it briefly describes the bailout negotiations in the Cypriot financial crisis and the public protests as a response. Following a framing analysis of protest coverage by the news websites of the New York Times,[2] BBC News[3] and Euronews,[4] the findings indicate varying applications of protest paradigm frames among these media outlets. To close, this article considers the possibility of international news media relaxing some conventions of the protest paradigm in favour of more constructive forms of protest coverage, contributing to the maintenance of the public sphere and underpinning democracy.

News Framing and the Protest Paradigm

The mass media constitute a crucial discursive site for the construction of reality that influences the process of public opinion formation. Media representation, particularly news framing of protests is no exception. Derived from Goffman's (1974) concept of schemas, frames are heuristic tools allowing individuals to define, interpret or construct information. Based on his research on the conceptualisation and application of news framing, Entman (1993) proposes that the process of framing entails selection, emphasis and elaboration:

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2   The New York Times, available at: [nytimes.com].
3   BBC News, available at: [bbc.com/news].
4   Euronews, available at: [euronews.com].

> 'To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating context, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described' (p. 52).

Journalists organise news stories within certain frames in the effort to simplify, prioritise and structure the presentation of opinions and facts. By presenting sociopolitical issues and controversies within selective frames, the news media legitimate – simultaneously limit the range of – the foundational causes and potential consequences of a social problem as well as possible remedies. Rather than setting the agenda, frames prompt the readers to think about these issues in a desired frame of mind (Iyengar, 1990, 1991).

This understanding certainly assumes fairly powerful media effects in both generating and harnessing public opinion and sentiment. Issues of public concern are not only represented in the news media; distinctions and connections need to be made between representation in general and that in the news media in particular. Also, frames not only overlap and reinforce each other, but also compete with each other. However, if media can be considered a key location of contestation between different social actors presenting their understanding of social conflicts in an effort to gain social currency on the topography of public discourse, news organisation's norms and values that undergird news production as a process of media hegemony shape representation of dissent.

Critical theorists have proposed that mainstream news media support the interests of the existing power structure (Chong and Druckman, 2007; Fallows, 1997; Gitlin, 1981; Tuchman, 1978). This pro-establishment orientation usually manifests in media bias both in the selection of 'newsworthy' protests for coverage and in the description of the events they choose to report (Scheufele, 1999; Weaver and Scacco, 2013). Shoemaker and Reese (1996) argue that media support for the status quo is embedded in processes of gathering and presenting information from the perspective of the elite. These informational biases lead to episodic framing of news, rather than thematic framing of news, which serves to obscure a richer, wider understanding of social problems that acknowledges political complexity – social problems that protest groups aim to bring under public scrutiny.

Support for the status quo in mainstream news coverage of protests has been well documented (Brasted, 2005; McLeod, 1995; McLeod and Detenber, 2006; McLeod and Hertog, 1992, 1998), and a set of framing patterns that articulates this support has been identified as the protest paradigm (Chan and Lee, 1984). The protest paradigm is essentially a template for the construction of a protest story, focusing on limited features of social protests to portray protestors as the 'other'. This selection process serves to filter which protests are reported, and which are ignored and separate protestors from mainstream society. Characteristics of this reporting paradigm include the following categories:

1. use of narrative structure/emphasis of police confrontation;
2. reliance on official sources and definitions;
3. invocation of hostile public opinion; and
4. techniques of delegitimation, marginalisation and demonization.

McLeod and Hertog (1992, 1998) observe that it is common for journalists to use a violent crime story narrative that positions a protest as a battle between the protestors and the police/authorities, rather than as an intellectual debate between the protestors and their intended target. Violence, social disorder and the spectacles are typically prominent features of such coverage, even if they remained an insignificant part compared to the social criticism itself. Another major aspect of this paradigm is the inclination of journalists to rely on official sources – information from channels within the establishment including official proceedings, government or agency press releases and quotations of public officials. This reliance on official sources, as opposed to providing space for the protestors to express their opinion, gives news stories factualness and prestige and practically facilitates the dominance of the voices of those in power. The dependence on routine, official sources could reflect also issues of expediency, adherence to the rituals of objectivity, lack of reporting initiative, or a movement's inability to establish liaisons and procedures to ensure the transmission of their own frames (McLeod, 2007).

The third framing category is invocation of antagonistic public opinion. News stories can both inform and influence public understanding of social protests through symbolic use of hostile public assertions. These voices are framed as mainstream public reactions to the protestors, often spotlighting the appearance and behaviours of protestors in a way that draws attention to their violations of law or opposition to mainstream values. By focusing more on the disruptive activities organised by social movements and the deviant characteristics of participants and less on the social criticism and the context that informs it, the mass media depict protests in ways that can undermine the agendas of these movements.

As a final point, certain news frames are employed in the effort to delegitimate and marginalise the protestors. The media often fail to adequately explain the intention and context of protest actions, leading the audience to perceive them as futile, unreasonable or irrational. Ignoring many of the potential functions of protests such as generating resources and ideas for social change, journalists may further delegitimate protests by exaggerating threats such as the violence, property damage, traffic congestion and counter-cultural elements of protests. Overall, as some of these protest paradigm frames are interrelated, and in some instances they overlap, collectively they serve to reinforce each other and can be a challenge to disentangle. Nevertheless, these practices and values, when put into use, coalesce into biased news coverage.

Conversely, it needs to be acknowledged that recent research is detecting less predictable media coverage of protests, suggesting complex mitigating factors and the changing media politics of dissent (Cottle, 2008; McLeod, 2007). A number of social, political and technological transformations might have contributed to this phenomenon. First, public demonstrations are increasingly moving from the political margins, aligned to traditional political ideologies, towards mainstream acceptance as a legitimate representation mechanism for an expanded range of causes, in the form of single issue campaigns or transnational advocacy. The politics informing these protests are becoming less confined to partisan agendas than the recent past. Globalisation, Europeanisation (alongside the tugging of re-nationalisation), the global financial crisis and the war on terrorism have also produced a new world order in which geopolitical interests and outlooks have shifted and news reporting of demonstrations taking place in different parts of the world has become more intricately interconnected and relevant to domestic politics and audiences. Such changing dynamics in turn lead to more complex media interactions with political elites and representations of dissent, dependent on the political circumstances. Further, accompanying the social and technological trend of freer and wider access to information, today's complex media ecology – comprising mainstream, alternative and independent media formations and increased communication flows and interactional capabilities – has made possible new forms and spaces for the broader dissemination of contentious politics. These improvements have opened up new possibilities of public deliberation and encouraged attempts to invest in credible journalism. Finally, with the rising of consumer-driven politics and intense media competition, it needs to be taken into consideration the media's own agenda in championing certain causes and issues, evidenced in more public ideological posturing, for example, by American cable news networks such as Fox News and MSNBC (Weaver and Scacco, 2013).

In view of these developments, research on news coverage of protests requires exploration of the complex determinants, mechanisms and meanings of the media responses. Considering the preceding literature regarding incorporating the protest paradigm in protest coverage, this study investigates how mainstream international news media frame the 2013 Cypriot protests. Specifically, this study examines protest coverage by three established, international news outlets including the New York Times, BBC News and Euronews, all of which represent preeminent mainstream news media with extensive readership/audienceship. This choice is made also because the Cypriot protests express objection particularly against international elites, and these three media organisations represent, in varying degrees, political interests and positions in connection with influential governments, corporations as well as the political elites and major issues in consideration. Last but not least, the Cypriot protests can be considered a form of

transnational advocacy, raising issues concerning several EU member states and bringing into focus the complex national and European deliberate interconnectedness – the conflict between the protesting citizens, the state and various international elites against the background of the Eurozone crisis. In asking whether and how the protest paradigm is applied in international news media coverage of such protest, it is possible to identify the extent of application, the more robust characteristics of the paradigm as well as the possible underlying determinants within the changing media politics of dissent.

The questions this research attempts to answer are the following:

RQ1: What frames are employed in the coverage of the 2013 Cypriot protests by the news websites of the New York Times, BBC News and Euronews?[5]

➢ What is the narrative emphasis of the news coverage?
➢ Does the news coverage reflect reliance on official sources and definitions?
➢ Does the news coverage convey cues to public opinion and social norms?
➢ Does the news coverage (de)legitimate protestors and their claims?

RQ2: How do frames vary in the protest coverage of these media outlets?

Finally, the following section briefly explains the background of the three chosen media organisations. The New York Times is an American daily newspaper with a broad domestic and international audience through the on-line International New York Times website. It delivers content across digital platforms including mobile, social networking sites and other e-reader applications. The New York Times is part of the New York Times Company, a global media corporation which is also affiliated with numerous businesses and corporations in the news, database and research service and television, film and broadcast industry.[6]

The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) is a UK-based international public service. Funded mainly by the British government, the BBC's extensive radio, TV and online services cover national and international news and broadcast in 28 languages.[7] Around one-quarter of BBC revenues come from its commercial division BBC Worldwide Limited which distributes the BBC's international 24-hour English language news services BBC World News and BBC.com.

Euronews is a news television channel that covers European and world news from a pan European perspective and broadcasts in 13 languages.[8] In reaction to the growing

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5   Available on-line: the New York Times [nytimes.com]; BBC News [bbc.com/news]; and Euronews [euronews.com].
6   The New York Times Company. Available at: [http://www.nytco.com].
7   BBC, available at: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/BBC].
8   Euronews – The European Perspective on International News, available at: [http://publicdiplomacy. wikia.com/wiki/Euronews].

influence and success of CNN, Euronews was established in 1993 with the support of public broadcasters from ten European countries among which were Belgium, Cyprus, Germany, Italy, Portugal and Spain. The four major shareholders of Euronews include France Télévisions (23.93%), Radiotelevisione Italiana (RAI, 21.54%), All Russia State Television and Radio Company (VGTRK, 16.94%) and Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (TRT, 15.70%). As the European Commission provides a significant portion of the channel's funding, Euronews in the past has received criticism for perceived bias towards the EU authorities.

The Bailout Negotiations in the 2012–2013 Cypriot Financial Crisis

The Republic of Cyprus is located in the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea, and most of its population is Greek Cypriot. Cyprus has been historically plagued by power struggles and political conflicts and division between the Greek and Turkish communities on the island. The Republic of Cyprus joined the EU in 2004 and joined the Eurozone in 2008. Around that time, the financial crisis set in motion in the United States had begun adversely affecting both the financial stability of the region and the Euro itself. The 2012–2013 Cypriot financial crisis in particular resulted from a number of factors and events including exposure of Cypriot banks to overleveraged local property companies and the Greek government bond default, the downgrading of the Cypriot government's bond credit rating to junk status by international credit rating agencies, the consequential inability of the government to refund its state expenses from the international markets, the reluctance of the government to restructure the overdeveloped and troubled banking industry and public sector as well as the EU authorities' doubtful ability to cope with financial crisis.

Within the EU, Cyprus is the fifth country, after Greece, Portugal, Ireland and (partially) Spain, which has declared a financial crisis and reached a financial assistance agreement between the government and the Eurogroup (the European Commission, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund). On 16 March, 2013, a €10 billion bailout plan by the Eurogroup was announced. As part of the conditions, a one-off bank tax of 6.7% on deposits up to €100,000 and 9.9% on higher deposits was to be imposed. Unlike previous bailouts, this plan involved having depositors in Cypriot banks partially fund the bailout. It was brought into question whether such a controversial measure would even be feasible since Cypriot bank deposits were insured and thus implicitly guaranteed not to be subject to loss of value. There was also concern among other EU member states that such a bailout implementation could become the norm although the Eurogroup had stressed that the tax proposal was unique to Cyprus alone. Taxing Cypriot bank accounts initially appeared preferable to raising regular taxes because a significant number of high-value depositors in Cypriot banks were Russian

investors. Even before the March negotiations, there was the view expressed most forcibly by German politicians that the Cypriot banks had grown too large in relation to the scale of the economy, particularly with reference to Russia–Cyprus money flows which implied laundering activities.[9]

Despite public objection, the Cypriot government tried to move forward the bailout proposal which was vetoed by the parliament, and depositors started a run on the banks in order to avoid a potential bailout tax. Upon a series of negotiations, on 25 March, 2013, the officials announced a new plan to preserve all insured deposits of €100,000 or less, but shut down the Laiki Bank, the second largest bank in Cyprus, and tax all uninsured deposits there. There would be an approximate 47.5% tax on uninsured deposits in the Bank of Cyprus, the largest bank in Cyprus, which was to acquire Laiki Bank and its massive debt. Also agreed in the negotiation was the forced sale of the facilities of three major Cypriot banks in Greece within the period of a few days, costing the Cypriot banks €3.4 billion. These drastic measures no doubt were taken to reduce the size of the banking industry, but they also threatened its very viability, not only internationally but also domestically.[10] The final conditions for activation of the assistance package were outlined in the Eurogroup's Memorandum of Understanding on Cyprus' Macroeconomic Programme and the Loan Agreement which was ratified by the Cypriot House of Representatives on 30 April, 2013.

Beginning on 19 March, 2013, Cypriot citizens staged protests outside the House of Representatives in Nicosia, the capital. On 21 March, hundreds of people, mostly employees of the Laiki Bank, gathered outside the House of Parliament, holding placards against the restructuring of the bank. In the following days, the protests expanded as civil servants and young people also joined in, many of whom were students and school teachers on contract. Much of the protestors' anger was directed to the Eurogroup and the German government who was viewed to be behind the bailout conditions. The protests lasted until 25 March when the Cypriot parliament voted in favour of the bailout.

Method

All news items concerning 'the Cypriot protests/protestors', 'bank staff and student demonstrations', 'reaction to Cypriot bailout', and the 'police clash' that appeared on the

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9   M. Greene, '*To Get a Bailout, Cyprus Needs to Launder Its Reputation*', 3 February 2013. Available at: [http://www.bloombergview.com/articles/2013-02-03/to-get-a-bailout-cyprus-needs-to-launder-its-reputation], accessed on 14 April 2015.

10   *The Economist*, 'Haven Sent: The Effects of Cyprus on Other Tax Havens', 30 March 2013. Available at: [http://www.economist.com/news/finance-and-economics/21574509-effects-cyprus-other-tax-havens-haven-sent], accessed on 14 April 2015.

news websites of the New York Times, BBC News and Euronews[11] during the period of analysis are examined. A total of 41 stories in the form of news reports, feature stories, editorials/analyses and commentaries are included in the analysis – the New York Times (n=14), BBC News (n=12), Euronews (n=15). The unit of analysis is the individual news story. Some photographs accompanying the news stories are also used in support of textual analysis. The time frame of data collection is from 16 March 2014 when the Eurogroup publicly announced the first bailout plan to 31 March 2014; six days after the Cypriot government accepted the final bailout conditions. To address the questions about the use of the protest paradigm, a framing analysis is performed, using the method of constant comparison against the coding schemes/categories to locate frames in the news items.

The coding schemes are derived from the definitions and descriptions of protest paradigm frames (McLeod, 2007) and they are as follows:

> ➢ Narrative emphasis: descriptive themes or positioning of the protestors and the causes/demands/drama of the protests. Spectacle frames are usually associated with the protest paradigm which focus on police confrontation, violence and civil disorder of the protests and describe the protestors as 'hooligans', 'deviants', 'angry', 'irrational' and 'powerless'. Sympathy, injustice and debate frames are less common in protest coverage. Sympathy frames are descriptions used to provoke compassion for the protestors, injustice frames are used to convey moral outrage and the significance of the problems and debate frames focus on issues rather than events, providing description of contentious demands and their justifications.

> ➢ Reliance on (un)official information sources and definitions: All the human voices quoted directly or paraphrased are considered. Sources are considered official if they are government or authority figures, experts, or part of the media. Sources are considered citizen voices if they are quoted simply for their 'man on the street' perspective (i.e., protestors).

> ➢ Invocation of public opinion: References of norm and legal violations (or not), opinions of official/institutional sources, symbolic use of bystanders and the use of 'they' vs. 'we/us' in assertions.

> ➢ (De)Legitimation frames: (Episodic) description of contentious demands, justifications and contexts; (little) in-depth history, background and analysis within a story or claim; the protests being (or not) described as futile, unreasonable or marginal and (little) coverage of any criticism, explanations or remedies for the social problems (individual vs. institutional responsibilities).

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11   *The New York Times* [nytimes.com], *BBC News* [bbc.com/news] and *Euronews* [euronews.com].

Results

The framing analysis reveals contrasting results of the New York Times (NYT) largely adhering to the protest paradigm but not BBC News or Euronews. The findings indicate the tendency of NYT to construct stories by using spectacle frames, relying on official sources and situating the protests in critical analysis of economic issues. Alternatively, BBC News, more sympathetic than Euronews, offers a legitimating view of the protests and criticising the role of political elites in the bailout negotiations.

The New York Times (NYT)

The results suggest that to a great extent, NYT incorporates the protest paradigm into its news coverage. The dominant narrative structure features the clashes of angry protestors with the police and authorities. Embedded in a heavy use of elite sources and invocation of negative opinions of financial analysts and government figures, the news situates the protests within economic analysis and portrays them as side effects of bailing out an insignificant economy.

Narrative Emphasis

Spectacle frames were mainly used in the news items including attention to the size, clash and despair of the protests. The majority of the articles emphasised events rather than issues by focusing on the anger of the protestors and their confrontations with the police. The reports largely ignored the causes of these protests, without much consideration of the protestors' perspective. Through the use of fight metaphors and phrases such as 'turmoil', 'angry', 'enraged', 'shouting' and 'pushing through', the stories created the image of the protestors battling against the police. For example, one story reported

> 'About 200 protestors faced the police Thursday in front of Parliament amid rumors that Cyprus Popular Bank could be shut down. The mood in the streets turned increasingly dark as police officers clashed with protestors'.[12]

Another report contained descriptions such as

> 'Thousands of students protested Tuesday outside the presidential palace in Nicosia .... big banks bereft of money, a government in disarray and citizens filled with angry despair'.[13]

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12   Liz Alderman, 'Mood Darkens in Cyprus as Deadline is Set for Bailout', [NYTimes.com] 21 March 2013.

13   Andrew Higgins and Liz Alderman, 'Europeans Planted Seeds of Crisis in Cyprus', [NYTimes.com] 26 March 2013.

A commentary on the public response to the first bailout proposal remarked:

> 'The proposal has understandably caused turmoil and anger in that part of the world. A bailout deal that was supposed to calm a financial crisis in an economically insignificant Mediterranean nation spread it wider'.[14]

Nearly all of the news stories were accompanied with photographs of the protests. Some of these photographs showcased confrontations between the protestors and the police and the disruptive, dark and angry mood. Others focused on the professional and political backgrounds of the protestors, isolating them from mainstream public. These photographs emphasised the appearance of the protestors, illustrating they were either well-paid bank employees (not members of mainstream society) or Russian expatriates (reminder of the connection between a greedy, opportunistic banking industry and Russian oligarchs and a chaotic Cyprus being caught in geopolitical struggles).

Police officers clashed with protestors as about 200 gathered outside parliament. 'Mood Darkens in Cyprus as Deadline is Set for Bailout' by Liz Alderman, 21 March 2013. Photo: Andreas Manolis/Reuters

Protestors hold a banner reading 'Hands off Cyprus' at a rally against the bailout in Nicosia, the capital, on Sunday. 'Stricter Rules but Signs of Disarray in Cyprus Deal' by Steven Erlanger and James Kanter, 25 March 2013. Photo: Petros Karadjias/Associated Press

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14   William Alden, 'Assessing the Cyprus Bailout' [NYTimes.com], Deal Book Column on 19 March 2013.

At a rally outside Parliament on Friday to protest the bailout terms, a Russian woman who lives in Cyprus holds a sign written in Russian, English and Greek. 'Russian Ties Put Cyprus Banking Crisis on East-West Fault Line' by Andrew Higgins, 23 March 2013. Photo: Petros Giannakouris/Associated Press

Reliance on Official Information Sources and Definitions

The news reports used mainly financial experts and official sources from the USA, Germany, the UK, the EU, the Cypriot government and EU member states also in crisis such as Spain and Greece. In addition to quoting politicians particularly from Germany and the EU, the majority of the stories centred around discussions among financial analysts from prestigious institutions such as UniCredit, Goldman Sachs, the Peterson Institute for International Economics, the University of Hannover, Global Macro, Oxford Analytica and Lombard Street Research in London. The protests were framed with economic analysis from the perspectives of financial analysts and officials, considering the protests as reactions to restructuring a troubled banking industry, unique to Cyprus alone (some experts did claim that the open breach of depositors' guarantee by the first bailout proposal would lead to further expropriations, not 'unique' to Cyprus). For example, in discussing the controversy of the Cypriot bailout which the protestors objected as taxation injustice, the issue was often presented from the officials' perspective:

'When European finance chiefs explained their harsh terms for rescuing Cyprus this week, many blamed the tiny Mediterranean nation's wayward banking practices for bringing ruin on itself.'[15]

This opinion was reinforced by some financial analysts:

'From an economic standpoint, the European Union's decision to impose a 6.75 percent levy on deposits in Cyprus (9.9 percent for accounts exceeding 100.000 Euros) seems sound since bankruptcy is a matter of debtors and creditors, not a taxpayers' concern.'[16]

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15   Andrew Higgins and Liz Alderman, 'Europeans Planted Seeds of Crisis in Cyprus' [NYTimes.com] 26 March 2013.
16   Stefan Homburg, 'The E.U. Went Back on Its Guarantee' [NYTimes.com] 19 March 2013.

In an article titled 'Cyprus Passes Parts of Bailout Bill, But Delays Vote on Tax', only the opinions of German officials and economists were included:

'When you consider that there was massive resistance against involving the savings, then it is not easy to see how tapping the pension funds, which we view as socially a much more drastic step, is a very good idea.'[17] 'The German reaction to such suggestions (protests against Germany) quickly becomes emotional ... . But looking at it rationally, it must be said that the German reaction is not stupid.'[18]

Furthermore, the taxation proposal was discussed in many articles by presenting strong opinions of prominent financialists without sufficient context. Below are excerpts from two articles on public response against the bailout proposal breaking the bank depositor's insurance:

'I would assume that anyone in Spain, Portugal or elsewhere who knows about the taxation of Cypriot depositors also would know that the Cypriot banking system is a very different animal than anywhere else in the euro zone.'[19]

Mr O'Neill of Goldman (Sachs) also acknowledged: 'I am sure it will not set a precedent'.[20]

Stephen J. Lubben, the Harvey Washington Wiley Chair in Corporate Governance and Business Ethics at Seton Hall said:

'Cyprus can't really be about Cyprus, can it? After all, the banking sector in that country pales in comparison to things like the London Whale trade and the amount of capital the big banks have to raise to meet Basel III. Some will say it is about depositor insurance. Fair enough. But by now, I would think investors would be smart enough to know that when you start chasing yield in small countries with outsize banking sectors, bad things will happen. And deposit insurance is only as good as the sovereign standing behind the insurance .... Why exactly did we restrict the Federal Reserve's powers under Section 13(3), which used to allow the Fed to lend to all kinds of financial firms? Cyprus also shows that even an allegedly "safe" banking system can be too big and quite dangerous.

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17 Steffen Seibert, a spokesman for the German chancellor, Angela Merkel, talking to reporters. See Migalhas International [migalhas.com].

18 Comment by Bernd Raffelhüschen, a professor of economics at the Albert-Ludwig University in Freiburg [NYTimes.com].

19 Erik Nielsen, chief economist at UniCredit, in a note written to clients on 15 March 2013.

20 Andrew Ross Sorkin, 'A Bank Levy in Cyprus, and Why Not to Worry' [NYTimes.com] 18 March 2013.

After all, the banks in Cyprus were noted for their reliance on deposits rather than other forms of dodgy short-term finance like repo and conduits and what not.'[21]

The media did not provide protestors with an equitable voice, elucidating their perspective on the issues. When protestors were occasionally quoted in the articles, it was usually in the context of expressing anger and frustration. This approach in effect served to minimise the protestors' claims and elevate the importance of political and economic elites. Additional supportive evidence can be seen in the examples of the invocation of negative public opinions and delegitimation frames that are to follow below.

The Invocation of Negative Public Opinion

The analysis provided evidence of invocation of norm violation, legal transgression of the Cypriot banks and negative opinions of government authorities, financial experts and bystanders. NYT's treatment marginalised the public's motives to protest by heavily focusing on the role of the Cypriot banking industry in the crisis, ascribing Cypriot banks as greedy and weak, thus in need of restructuring (the shutting down of the Laiki Bank had trigged the protests). Many articles quoted officials reproaching the banks as 'failing banks', 'so big', 'inadequate', 'chasing high-yielding', 'dangerous' and 'bring ruin on itself.' These negative assertions highlighted the malfunction of the Cypriot banks but also implicitly supported the policy of drastically downsizing the industry regardless of its social ramifications. The Cypriot economic model was often referred to as the 'casino economy' although few articles offered concise and well researched analysis on this topic or how to improve the banking system. Overall, negative opinions of the American and European financial communities on allegations of Cyprus being a tax haven obscured, if not giving rise to ignore, protestors' advocacy of tax justice and accountability of financial and regulatory systems at both national and European levels. This can be seen, for example, in an article with comments as follows:

> '... there is a strong message that if the euro zone is going to work, with a banking union that has credibility, there will be no more "casino economies," little islands like Cyprus with banking sectors many times larger than their gross domestic product, that do not follow the rules and make everyone else vulnerable.'[22]

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21 Stephen J. Lubben, 'Cyprus Shows How Not to Do A Bailout', In-Debt DealBook column [NYTimes.com] 20 March 2013.

22 Steven Erlanger and James Kanter Stricter, 'Rules but Signs of Disarray in Cyprus Deal' [NYTimes.com] 25 March 2013.

The news stories provided little coverage of the causes and social criticism of the protests, which facilitated the dominance of institutional views. Furthermore, the financial criticism was often presented in a dismissive or indifferent tone, reflected in descriptions of Cyprus as an 'insignificant nation', 'a tiny nation' or 'pales in comparison to things like the London Whale trade'. Collectively, the invocation of negative opinions of institutional representatives diminished the protests and weakened the political significance of the Cypriot crisis. Another example is presented here:

> 'As proponents of the Cypriot losses argue, just as it was fair that the large depositors that bankrolled IndyMac's subprime excesses in 2008 pay the cost for the bank's failure, so it is right that Cypriot savers – the largest of whom were Russian billionaires chasing high-yielding deposits – suffer a similar fate. "There were stories of pain, too, at IndyMac, but in the U.S., we paid little attention to it," Mr. Kirkegaard said. "This will impose a lot of pain on Cypriot society, but the outcome will not be that much different."'[23]

Delegitimation Frames

The coverage did not offer much description of the protestors' claims as the entire crisis was portrayed significant only for its possibility of setting a precedence of asking private depositors to finance troubled economies. Few stories provided details or analysis of the protests or the problems which were deep seated in the Cypriot financial and political systems and intertwined with the political dynamics revealed in the bailout negotiations. On the contrary, the coverage was dominated with harsh financial analysis from a perspective which was generally supportive of the German stance of limiting Russian Control of Cypriot banks albeit critical of the EU by highlighting its chaotic management of the crisis and tolerating Cyprus being a tax haven for Russian investors. For example, in a story titled 'Second Thoughts in Europe as Anxiety Rises in Cyprus', a bystander, an employee at a trading company, was quoted questioning 'How can I trust any bank in the Euro zone after this decision?' An American financial analyst remarked:

> 'Cyprus does show that, for all the faults with the financial crisis rescues in the United States, the European Union still finds ways to show us how poorly a bailout can be handled.'[24]

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23   Landon Thomas Jr., 'Calculating the Impact of Cyprus's Bailout', Global Business [NYTimes.com] 31 March 2013.

24   Stephen J. Lubben, 'Cyprus Shows How Not to Do A Bailout', In-Debt DealBook column [NYTimes.com] 20 March 2013.

The same attitude was expressed in other stories with descriptions as follows:

'But the path that led to Cyprus's current crisis – leads back, at least in part, to a fateful decision made 17 months ago by the same guardians of financial discipline that now demand that Cyprus shape up.'[25]

Several stories and editorials clearly offered support for the German authorities and contradicted the view of the protestors that Germany was imposing an unfair taxation. On 26 March 2013, NYT reported in a story 'Cyprus Deal Sparks Anti-German Mood – and Defenders':

'Germanophobia has become a persistent leitmotiv in the crises that have enveloped the most vulnerable, and predominantly southern, economies of the 17-member currency zone. As Rendezvous wrote last June, "All the old stereotypes about the Germans are rising to the surface as frustration grows over their refusal to sign what they regard as a blank check to their less disciplined European neighbors." Gideon Rachman, writing in the Financial Times, argued that the latest wave of Germanophobia provoked by the Cyprus crisis was unfair. "Behind all the shouting and the wrangling, German taxpayers will once again be funding the biggest single share of yet another euro zone bailout", he wrote. "It seems a bit harsh that Germany is extending loans of hundreds of billions of euros to its neighbors – only to be accused of neo-Nazism in return." Mr. Rachman believed the phenomenon was as much to do with the weakness of Germany's European partners as with that country's strength. He highlighted the diminished role of France, where President François Hollande "has let it be known that he disapproves of Germany's insistence of austerity but he has not proposed a coherent alternative." Brendan Simms, a Cambridge University history professor, wrote earlier this month that a surge of political and popular Germanophobia was not surprising. Professor Simms said there had been widespread calls over the past three years for Germany to take the lead in resolving the escalating Euro crisis. "That is the dilemma of German power today," he wrote. "Germany is damned if it does and damned if it doesn't."'[26]

Immediately the next day, on 27 March 2013, amid criticism of Eurogroup's doubtful ability to contain the situation, another report once again endorsed the German policy:

'Ms. Merkel's justice minister, Sabine Leutheusser-Schnarrenberger, broke new ground on Wednesday by calling directly on European Union leaders in Brussels to do more to

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defend Germany's role in helping the weaker members. According to the German Finance Ministry, Germany has contributed more than 220 billion euros, or $280 billion, pledged through loans and financial support packages for Greece, Ireland, Portugal and Spain, all negotiated with those countries' Euro zone partners. "Germany acts in solidarity so that crisis countries will have a perspective in the future," Ms. Leutheusser-Schnarrenberger, a member of the Free Democratic Party, the junior partner in Ms. Merkel's governing coalition, said in an interview with the newspaper Münchner Merkur. "I wish that those people at the top – the president of the E.U. Commission and the E.U. president – would defend Germans against unfair allegations." Critics, however, say the Cyprus bailout was so haphazardly handled that it underscored the chaotic nature of European decision making more than it sent an unmistakable message about a new approach to bailouts.'[27]

BBC News and Euronews

BBC News and Euronews mainly deviate from the protest paradigm, portraying the protestors sympathetically and legitimating the protests as expressing grievances against national and international governance. On the latter point, BBC News is more critical than Euronews of the political elites. The protestors are depicted as having suffered economic and political injustice, not deviants against authority or mainstream social norms and values. Much of the coverage contains both official sources and perspectives of the protestors, questioning the manner in which Germany and the EU have managed the bailout negotiations. However, within an overall positive approach, spectacle frames are used to accentuate the protestors as fearful and hopeless victims rather than citizens demanding dialogue about institutional responsibility and solutions. Also, few stories offer deeper understanding of the Cypriot crisis – there is sparse discussion of issues in areas of developing alternative economic models and improving political transparency, accountability and social rights of citizens.

Narrative Emphasis

Sympathetic frames were used to provoke compassion and draw attention to unfair personal loss and job insecurity. Instead of presenting the protests as understandable side effects of bailing out a small, troubled economy as NYT did, most of the reports conveyed the severity of the austerity measures and the pending impact on the entire society – 'A Small Mediterranean Island with Big Problems' as headlined by Euronews. For example,

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27 Melissa Eddy, 'Cypriots' Criticism of Bailout Rattles Nerves and Raises Ire in Germany', [NYTimes.com] 27 March 2013.

Euronews interviewed students who took part in the demonstrations and complained:

> 'Obviously many of our parents will lose their jobs, all of us will lose income, some of us will even find it hard to go and study at university.'[28]

Another story reported:

> '"Sales are down by around 50 percent, people don't buy the goods they used to, just the basics, mainly potatoes", one trader explained. The island's banks have been hit hard, there is no trust and the rescue plan means they stand to lose huge amounts of money. Stavros Zenios, a professor of economics at the University of Cyprus, said: "The Cypriot economy is sailing into unchartered waters. The decision has had a positive effect in terms of cleaning up the banking system, however it has hit services that amounts to some 20 percent of the country's GDP."'[29]

Contextualising the significance of the crisis within the country's history of political division and power struggle, the social and personal instability led by the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in the 1970s were referenced against the anticipated consequences of the bailout plan. In one of the feature stories on the protests by bank employees, BBC News described the bailout as yet another looming injustice upon Cypriot citizens:

> 'Cypriot savers are furious with their banks, but staff at the now-defunct Laiki Bank have been affected worse than most. Many borrowed money to buy shares in the bank – now worthless – and fear losing both their jobs and their pensions. "You wouldn't wish this to happen to your worst enemy", says Andreas Chrysafis. "All this anxiety, seeing your staff desperate, your kids not understanding what is happening. Everybody's thinking about themselves", he says. "Everybody has to figure out how to feed their family, how to send money to their children who are studying, how to pay for schools." Fadula Voskou, who fled Northern Cyprus after the Turkish invasion in 1974, is once again bracing herself for a period of political and personal instability. "I have another two kids here", she says. "I'm trying to keep smiling, explaining to them that everything will be OK, but I'm not sure if I believe it"'.[30]

The protestors, particularly bank employees, were positioned against the corruptive Cypriot banking system and the government's approach of shifting the burden onto bank

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28   'Troika Go Home': Angry Students Protest Cyprus Bailout, *Euronews,* 26 March 2013.
29   'Fresh Fruit and Veg Sales Halved as Cypriots Feel the Squeeze', *Euronews,* 27 March 2013.
30   'Laiki Bank: The Cyprus Bank Staff Hit Worst of All', *BBC News*, 27 March 2013.

employees. Feature stories of BBC News on protesting bank employees shed a sympathetic light on the predicament they were in:

> '"Nobody cares about the bank. They have accused us of getting a lot of money, of being highly paid – they say we are bad." "As employees we were unofficially forced – we were told that it was a good thing – to buy shares in your bank to support your bank."'[31]

In another report, BBC News exposed in more detail the intimidation and malfunction within Cypriot Banks:

> '"Quite a few people saw this coming", says Andreas. "A big change occurred when the Greek company Marfin Investment Group (MIG) took over Laiki Bank in 2006," he says. "They transformed the Bank from a conservative bank to a bank that was ambitious and expanding all over the place," says Chrysafis. "The first thing they managed to do – they gave everybody a 2,000 euro (£1,700 or $2,500) bonus because we 'did a good job'. And we wondered: 'What did we do?' The bonus was followed by big salary increases", he says. In the brave new world of the MIG-owned Laiki, nobody dared complain. "If you complained then you are considered to be a loser or to be a conservative or not to be part of them – so, all in all, nobody talked about it." "Over the years, there were rumours that loans – big loans – were given in Greece without enough security," says Voskou.'[32]

Similar to BBC News, Euronews portrayed the protests as expressing public demand of political accountability and articulating citizen's social rights. Grievances and anger were directed toward the banks and members of the government as the government was the legitimate policy-making institution that should respond to citizens. The protestors were framed as asking policymakers to take public responsibility for economic failures –

> 'A man protesting outside the presidential palace told Euronews: "They have forced us to take these austerity measures and the people have done nothing wrong. The banks, the banks should pay, not the people."'[33]

In a story on the Laiki Bank being merged with the Bank of Cyprus as part of the bailout deal, Euronews reported:

> 'Governor of the Central Bank of Cyprus Panicos Demetriades said this would create a "very strong bank," but enraged employees tried to push past police lines to call for his

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31 *Ibid*.
32 Corruptions in the Banks: Cyprus 'To Limit Funds That Can Be Taken Abroad', *BBC News*, 27 March 2013.
33 'Government, Banks and EU Taste Cypriot Wrath', *Euronews*, 27 March 2013.

resignation. Andros Ioannou of the "Wake up Cyprus" group said: "The major demand of the people is that a referendum is held, nothing should be passed unless the people pass it."[34]

In another story titled 'The Right to Protest: Bank of Cyprus Staff Protest at Nicosia Headquarters', the protests were described as lawful citizens exercising their social rights:

'Another employee Andreas Vassiliou explained what the gathering at the Nicosia headquarters was all about. "It is a big demonstration. The workers of the Bank of Cyprus have shown once again that they are demanding their rights. We are carrying out a very dignified and peaceful protest and it is only to secure the rights of the employees of the Bank of Cyprus" he said.'[35]

Contrary to the theme of greedy Cypriot banks facilitating money laundering for Russian millionaires, reports of BBC News followed an approach of presenting facts and differing opinions. In the report 'Russian Money in Cyprus: Why There Is So Much?', various statistics on Cyprus bank deposits of Russian origin were given alongside analysis of the German position on a close financial relationship between Cyprus and Russia. In an editorial, Editor Paul Mason analysed the political labelling of Cyprus being a tax haven:

'Offshore finance is not a crime but a business model. Like it or not, it's an essential part of globalised capitalism: it's what allows rich people from heavily taxed countries avoid tax; it's the conduit for massive business deals, and massive trade.'[36]

The article stipulated some of the overly simplified arguments advanced by EU officials including the Cypriot banks must be restructured as they were running a banking system leveraged to three times GDP. A distinctive narrative in Euronews' reports expressed the view that 'It is not only the super-rich who are affected', but also other segments of the wider society including the Russian community in Cyprus:

'There is concern among the Russian expatriate community, which has contributed a lot to the Cypriot economy. Maria, who owns a Russian supermarket in Limassol, feels cheated that she may end up having to pay: "Cyprus is our country – we believed it was our country. I have lived here for 16 years. But this country has deceived us, stealing our money. Yes, stole it."'[37]

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34   'Work Continues to Shield Cypriot Small Savers', *Euronews*, 19 March 2013.
35   'The Right to Protest: Bank of Cyprus Staff Protest at Nicosia Headquarters', *Euronews*, 26 March 2013.
36   'Cypriot Crisis: Will Germany's Tough Stance Backfire?', *BBC News*, 22 March 2013.
37   'Cyprus: Mixed Reactions among Islanders To Bailout Chaos', *Euronews*, 20 March 2013.

Also, these sentiments were expressed in the photographs/videos which accompanied the reports.

'Shame'
'Laiki Bank: The Cyprus Bank Staff Hit Worst of All'
BBC News, 27 March 2013

'Work Continues to Shield Cypriot Small Savers'
Euronews, 19 March 2013

However, similar to NYT's reporting, spectacle frames were present, emphasising the size of the protests and the protestors as powerless victims of irresponsible politics.

'My wife has been crying for three or four days now saying: "Why should we pay and not them?"'[38]

Through such quotes, BBC News accentuated the protestors as 'angry', 'outraged' and 'helpless' while Euronews used phrases such as 'blood boiling', 'wrath', and 'panic' and published several stories with video clips depicting the protests as inflamed with nationalism by showing the Greek and Cypriot flags and anti-Germany and anti-Troika slogans. One example is shown here:

'Answering a call put out on social networking site Facebook, thousands of young people in Cyprus took to the streets to protest against the bailout accepted by the government.

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38   'Laiki Bank: The Cyprus Bank Staff Hit Worst of All', *BBC News*, 27 March 2013.

Marching through Nicosia, the banners clearly show what they think of the deal struck with the EU, IMF and European Central Bank – known together as the "troika". Some of them read: "Troika Go Home", "Your mistakes, our future" and "Merkel, Hitler – the same s * * *."[39]

'Troika Go Home': Angry Students Protest
Cyprus Bailout'
Euronews, 26 March 2013

'Cyprus: Blood Boiling over the Banks'
Euronews, 27 March 2013

In one report, Euronews quoted protestors expressing the feeling of uncertainty and helplessness:

'We are trying to raise our voice to save our country. But Europe has turned its back on us, Russia has turned its back on us and Israel has turned its back on us. We don't know, we are alone, we are a small country in the Mediterranean.'[40]

In another feature story, a Cypriot architect voiced his vulnerability to the arbitrariness of Eurogroup's decision making:

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39   "'Troika Go Home": Angry Students Protest Cyprus Bailout', *Euronews*, 26 March 2013.
40   'Protest amid Cyprus/Brussels Talks', *Euronews*, 25 March 2013.

'Architect Michael Orphanides has saved over 200,000 euros for his retirement. "You don't save your money to the end of your life and then suddenly have it taken away from you. This is daylight robbery – in its worst form," complained Orphanides. "Nobody knows at this present time whether it's going to be a 40 percent, a 60 percent or a 65 percent haircut. This is the range they are talking about. I understand that it's going to be decided in the next few days. I am completely helpless. All these events are beyond my control. We have to pay our hard earned money to bail out the banks and the politicians here," he said.'[41]

Inclusion of Both Official and Citizen Sources

The coverage of BBC News did not reflect reliance on official sources; attention was also given to the voices of the protestors which was illustrated in a number of news and feature stories (examples shown above). When government officials were included in the stories, their opinions were often placed in a context of offering alternative perspectives. The reports contained the opinions of EU officials such as presidents of the European Commission and Eurogroup and Head of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), but they also provided remarks from opposition politicians. For example, in a story on how home politicians perceived the Cypriot protests, British conservative MP Andrew Tyrie said:

'There couldn't be a more vivid illustration of the Eurozone's capacity for self-harm than its chronic mishandling of the Cypriot financial crisis over the last few days.'[42]

In another story, BBC News quoted:

'EU Commissioner for Economic Affairs Olli Rehn said "The depth of the financial crisis in Cyprus means that the near future will be difficult for the country and its people." The chairman of the Cypriot parliament's finance committee, Nicholas Papadopoulos, said the agreement made "no economic sense". "We are heading for a deep recession, high unemployment"' he told the BBC.[43]

Furthermore, BBC News used a reporting format that allowed input and participation of the public, permitting more diverse views on many of the issues underlying the protests and crisis. Through feature reports such as 'Q&A Cyprus Deal' or 'Cyprus bailout: Your questions to Robert Peston – BBC Business Editor Robert Peston

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41   'Cyprus Bank Levy Hits Not Only the Super-Rich', *Euronews*, 26 March 2013.
42   'Treasury Committee Chairman Condemns Eurozone Cyprus Plan', 20 March 2013.
43   Tim Wilcox, 'Cyprus Bailout: Deal Reached in Eurogroup Talks', 25 March 2013.

answers your questions on the Cyprus bailout plan in a live Twitter Q&A', members of the general public had the opportunity to ask questions or express their opinion on the subject matter albeit the content was rather brief. Also, these discussions were accompanied with background information often in graphics on the Cypriot crisis including the timeline of the bailout negotiations, levy basics, industrial profile of Cyprus and statistics on the Eurozone financial crisis.

Similarly, Euronews tried to present opinions both supportive and antagonistic of the EU policies such as a substantial report by the IMF which referenced that the increasingly common practice of imposing austerity in the middle of an economic depression 'has turned out to be much more damaging for those countries' economies than policymakers (though not many economists) had anticipated'.[44]

Lastly, in addition to including opinions of politicians and international financial experts, protesting students, local traders and academics within the Cypriot community were also given a voice (examples shown above).

The Invocation of Sympathetic Public Opinion and Legitimation Frames

The analysis of coverage of both news provided evidence of invocation of sympathetic opinions that economic and political injustice had been imposed. Instead of using delegitimation frames, the coverage of BBC News mainly justified the protestors' claims and that of Euronews framed the protestors as having valid reasons to protest. The reports portrayed the protests as articulating economic grievances over austerity measures, issues related to taxation justice, job security and drastic restructuring of the banks. Also used in the stories were frames of political injustice by powerful elites including Germany, the Eurogroup and the Cypriot government and banks. BBC News was more critical of Germany than Euronews, questioning the proper functioning of international governance:

'The Eurozone is really turning the screw on Cyprus, and it's being led by Germany ... There is huge irritation with the way the Cypriots have handled things, and that has led to the imposition of deadlines which mean big decisions need to be taken very quickly – like it or lump it'.[45]

In another story, BBC News further challenged the German stance in the bailout negotiations:

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44   'Cyprus's Negotiations with the EU and IMF Have Provoked Anger among Cypriots', *Euronews*, 28 March 2013.
45   Chris Morris, 'Cyprus Crisis: Pressure Grows over Bailout', *BBC News*, 22 March 2013.

'In Germany, the citizens feel aggrieved. They perceive their country as a generous donor of hard-earned cash to peoples who have let their finances go to ruin ... In Britain, the Daily Mail newspaper talked of the way the events in Cyprus were handled as "one of the nastiest and most immoral political acts in modern times". It likened Germany to a common criminal because of the way the deposits of savers were initially targeted: "People who rob old ladies in the street, or hold up security vans, are branded as thieves." The UK's Daily Telegraph alluded to a new German empire – or "Imperium" as it put it.'[46]

Also criticising the EU no longer acting as a unified and competent crisis manager in relation to the dominance of Germany, one editorial remarked:

'... but the Eurozone bankers and politicians were quite happy to renege on promises and hammer the little guy. And let us remember it is not the IMF that was overseeing emergency lending to Laiki, effectively funding its management to destruction: it was those stern faced central bankers in Frankfurt. And it was the European Banking Union that signed off both Laiki and Bank of Cyprus in the July 2011 stress tests (no-one who was at that press conference can forget the dismissive tone used to those of us who suggested the tests might be wrong). ... There is a growing fear ... that Germany is running the Eurozone in its own national interest. At every juncture where compromise, statecraft, guarded language and a care for outcomes rather than principles are called for, somebody German pops up – be it Merkel, Weidmann, Asmussen or Schäuble – and points out "the rules" dictate otherwise.'[47]

Albeit expressing criticism of the international political actors, Euronews adopted a more subdued approach as illustrated in descriptions such as

'... Berlin wants a quick answer. Analysts say Cyprus differs from previous Eurozone bailouts in that there is little sympathy among German politicians for the plight of the island's banks.'[48]

Further, the reports revealed the internal dissent between the Eurozone finance ministers and German politicians regarding the first bailout proposal:

'Germany, which has attracted much of the blame insists the Cypriot government, the European Commission and the ECB agreed on the levy. Eurozone finance ministers have

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46 'Cyprus Bailout: Feeling Unloved in Germany', *BBC News*, published 31 March 2013, last updated 1 April 2013.
47 'Cypriot Crisis: Will Germany's Tough Stance Backfire?' *BBC News*, 22 March 2013.
48 'Mixed European Leaders Reaction to Cyprus Crisis', *Euronews*, 20 March 2013.

asked Cyprus to move the burden away from smaller investors. Luxembourg Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker told reporters that taxing the deposits of small savers by starting with the first euro is socially unjust.'[49]

This theme of incohesiveness among the political actors was also present in the coverage of BBC News. For example, one report depicted the Cypriot government, the European Central Bank and German politicians shifting public blame onto each other:

'The Cypriot government was trying to secure a new agreement after an unpopular levy on bank deposits was rejected by parliament, amid stern warnings from the European Central Bank President Dijsselboem .... Mr Dijsselboem said he was "open to a more fair approach to the way the levy is structured". German centre-right MEP Markus Ferber accused Mr Dijsselboem of "organising a massive loss of confidence in Europe", a claim rejected by the Eurogroup chief.'[50]

Finally, most stories framed the protests as expressing frustration with politics as usual and lack of trust in the existing political systems and actors. Euronews reported:

'Anger in Cyprus is on the rise ... the government, the banks and the European Union have become hate figures. Many Cypriots are suspicious that their country has become a financial experiment in anticipation of future Eurozone bailouts.'[51]

The coverage described the discontent among Cypriot citizens against exclusion from the decision making – what prevented economic issues from being addressed in a more democratic manner – and the bitter disillusionment that the policymakers have not prioritised them but betrayed them. This theme was emphasised in many remarks of the protestors and bystanders in the stories:

'As well as anger against the government and the banks, Cypriots are furious with the EU: "Why are we angry? Because this is not a Europe of solidarity, this is not a Europe of support. This is not the Europe we believed in" explained one woman.'[52]

After the Cypriot government accepted the final bailout conditions, one report from BBC News outlined the policy issues still unsolved:

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49   'Work Continues To Shield Cypriot Small Savers', *Euronews*, 19 March 2013.
50   'Treasury Committee Chairman Condemns Eurozone Cyprus Plan', 20 March 2013.
51   'Government, Banks and EU Taste Cypriot Wrath', *Euronews*, 27 March 2013.
52   'Cypriot Cash Controls Spark Protests', *Euronews*, 27 March 2013.

'So Is the Crisis Over? Not necessarily. In the short term, the risk of the Cypriot banking sector collapsing has receded, and the bailout funds will allow the government to pay its own debts and undertake the restructuring of the banks without facing economic collapse or exiting the euro. But in other respects the outlook is less certain. Cyprus must enact tough austerity measures to rebuild its economy, and regain trust among investors in its banking sector and government. It is unclear whether the Cypriot public, angered by how the crisis has been handled so far, will support that. It is also unclear how much trust is left in Cyprus's banks, and so when fears over a bank run will recede. Finally, the whole episode has damaged confidence in European authorities' ability to handle economic crises. ... the deal provoked outrage in Cyprus, parliament promptly voted against it, and it is increasingly seen as a blunder by European and Cypriot authorities.'[53]

However, within this legitimating discourse, the articles generally lacked historical, social and communication contexts as well as critical depth. Also, some of the news coverage of Euronews contained frames of personal sacrifice to give an uplifting touch to the grieving situation, justifying the bailout plan. For example, Euronews reported in one story:

'Many in London's large Cypriot community appeared to be resigned to losing some of their deposits, as long as their sacrifice has a positive outcome. "If it's to save the country and to save the economy, we all have to bear it," said one man.'[54]

Once the Cypriot government accepted the bailout, BBC News promoted the notion that the political actors have managed to prevent Cyprus exiting from the Eurozone although at a heavy price. An example is shown here:

'Eurozone finance ministers have agreed a 10bn-euro bailout deal for Cyprus to prevent its banking system collapsing and keep the country in the eurozone. IMF head Christine Lagarde said the bailout deal agreed was "a comprehensive and credible plan" to help restore trust in the banking system. Cypriot Finance Minister Michalis Sarris said he believed the possibility of bankruptcy had been averted. "It's not that we won a battle, but we really have avoided a disastrous exit from the eurozone," he said. There will be relief in Cyprus that small depositors have been protected, but the deal comes at a heavy price, BBC correspondents say.'[55]

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53 'So is the Crisis Over?' *BBC News*, 28 March 2013.
54 'Cypriots Face up to Savings Tax Challenge', *Euronews*, 17 March 2013.
55 Tim Wilcox, 'Cyprus Bailout: Deal Reached in Eurogroup Talks', 25 March 2013.

Discussion

This study examines whether portrayals of the 2013 Cypriot protests in three international online news media conform to the protest paradigm. A framing analysis of protest coverage by NYT, BBC News and Euronews reveals the different extent of application. NYT mostly adheres to the protest paradigm in contrast with BBC News or Euronews. NYT's reporting mainly emphasises spectacle frames, privileges official sources over citizen opinions and situates protestors' grievances within strict economic analysis. BBC News on the other hand is more supportive than Euronews, and constructs stories with frames legitimating protestors' perspectives and questioning national and international governance. This study demonstrates the possibility of international news media relaxing some conventions of the protest paradigm and conditionally moving towards multi-perspective approaches, hence offering more credible coverage of social conflicts.

In general, NYT's reporting has followed the protest paradigm which supports past research on mainstream media coverage of protests. Specifically, spectacle frames are mainly used in the news, emphasising the size, clash and anger of the protests, pitching Cypriot banks against financial conventions and isolating protesting bank employees from the public. Much of the coverage is framed with critical analysis of economic issues which are presented as unique to Cyprus alone, bearing little to the rest of the EU and the USA. In this regard, spectacle frames serve to hype up the geopolitical drama surrounding allegations of Cyprus being a tax haven for Russian investors and obscure the role of institutional policies and failures in the Cypriot crisis. This framing practice indicates that the struggle between political players and the excitement of EU decisions being questioned by the public are more newsworthy and have added importance than the underlying causes of the Cypriot crisis or protests. Similarly, within an overall supportive discourse presented by BBC News and Euronews, spectacle frames are present to accentuate the sheer size of the protests and describe the protestors as inflamed with nationalism and at the same time, vulnerable and powerless victims of irresponsible politics. This evidence suggests that among protest paradigm framing patterns, spectacle frames emerge as a more robust characteristic, difficult to overcome. Peaceful protests that focus on articulating issue positions are not likely to fit established news conventions for what makes a good story of conflict. As such, media coverage tends to seek out certain aspects of events and activities that provide the kind of drama, physical, emotional or political, that garners public attention. In essence, spectacle frames within the protest paradigm contribute to delegitimation of protestors and an escalation in social tensions when activist groups do not obtain the intended public visibility, leading conflicts away from healthy discourse but towards destructive outcomes.

Through invocation of negative opinions of EU and government officials and financial specialists, NYT presents the protests as understandably angry reactions to a

crisis of an unimportant and weak economy. Protestors are not given much voice or perspective, suggesting NYT is endorsing the notion that institutional sources are more legitimate and reliable. The protest coverage of NYT is largely framed with discussion among prestigious financial analysts, highlighting economic issues which separate Cyprus from the USA and other member states of the EU. This practice may be due to NYT's understanding of the role of proximity in news reporting – telling the story from the perspective of an American audience and market. NYT frames events in terms of a distant and small economy exerting little impact on the Eurozone or global crisis, therefore, a lack of relevance and significance to the American economy. The reports mainly illustrate the chaotic decision making within the EU in the context of supporting the dominance of Germany and America's management of its own financial crisis. This reflects possibly NYT's need to cater to domestic politics by distancing the American economy from the EU crisis and ignoring the notion that failures of the Cypriot banking industry had raised concerns with the functioning of international financial and political systems and ultimately neoliberal capitalism that is also challenging American society.

In comparison, BBC News and Euronews demonstrate the possibility of conditionally deviating from the protest paradigm. Using multi-perspective approaches, reports of both BBC News and Euronews mostly validate the protests and question the political actors. Contrary to the tendency of NYT to privilege and affirm elite opinions, much of the coverage contains perspectives of both official sources and the protestors, opinions both supportive and critical of the bailout in the process. The tone of coverage is not dismissive but favourable towards the protestors. Through reports featuring protesting bank employees, both media portray the protests as expressing economic and political grievances, not battles against social order. On the whole, not only is attention given to some controversies surrounding the protests and crisis, but the coverage offers a platform for alternative perspectives, particularly those of the protestors by interviewing protesting bank employees, students and Russians as well as opposition politicians and analysts in the local community. The reports put a human face and a voice on the mass of protestors even when the voice is critical. In presenting the protestors' viewpoints, the media direct their grievances to relevant players in the crisis, identifying police issues and explaining their underlying implications. Yet, the coverage does exhibit certain protest paradigm characteristics – spectacle frames are used to draw attention to the protestors as fearful sufferers rather than to the political issues at stake. Despite quoting local sources who could have provided a historical perspective on the Cypriot financial crisis and the (failure of the) protests, few stories include in-depth and well-supported analysis of issues in areas of improving the financial and legal systems both in Cyprus and in the EU and implementing reforms as long-term and alternative solutions to austerity measures.

From a theoretical standpoint, this study has found evidence that the news media under certain conditions have more latitude to deviate from the protest paradigm. The relatively positive coverage of the protests may have resulted from several factors. The size of the protests and the significance of the Cypriot bailout in relation to future austerity policies of the EU make it difficult for the media to ignore the phenomenon. At the same time, the peaceful tactics of the protests do not lend them to typical protest paradigm coverage. The absence of civil disorder or a massive bank run does not render the protestors as 'demons' provoking social unrest, hence the spectacles are limited to the sheer size and the emotional drama of the protests. And most importantly, the social criticism and geopolitical reach of the protests are consistent with the interests of the media in the context of media interactions with the political elites and issues under consideration. In examining the media's own agendas and agency in championing certain causes, the political contingencies and dynamics at work in contemporary protest and media reporting inform media interactions with political elites and their representation of relevant issues. In other words, the news media's stance towards social protests are contingent upon the immediate political circumstances, the wider surrounding political culture as well as the certainty of policies involved. These interactions often manifest in terms of the news media gauging their responses to the degree of elite consensus (Bennett, 1990; Cottle, 2008). Elite consensus or dissensus, at both national and international levels, is an outcome of economic processes of globalisation that has produced disruptive and differential impacts on national-based interest groups, which mitigates the imposition of one dominant economic or political view and opens up new representational possibilities. In the Cypriot protests, the political grievances are more relevant and acceptable to BBC News and Euronews than NYT, leading to the more progressive coverage which is aligned with the media's orientation to the destabilising elite consensus embedded in the crisis. In the struggles of reaching an agreement, the Cypriot government, the Eurogroup and Germany all attempted to defend their own positions and interests by shifting policy blame onto each other. When the first bailout proposal was rejected by the Cypriot parliament and public and had generated widespread concern within the international community, the disordered decision making of the EU in relation to the geopolitical interests of Germany and incohesiveness within the Eurogroup revealed and exacerbated policy uncertainty among the elites and made them targets of criticism of varying nature and magnitude. Regarding this point, as a public broadcaster with considerable economic interest in the European audience and funded by a politically influential state outside of the Eurozone economy, BBC News takes a more critical stance than Euronews. BBC News portrays the Cypriot protests as angry reactions to undemocratic decision making imposed by EU authorities to the interest of Germany. The Cypriot crisis has perhaps provided an occasion for validating the British

government's reluctance to join the Euro zone economy and challenging the political leadership of Germany in the EU. Euronews employs a more subdued approach, and this difference might be explained by the political dynamics within it. Supported by the European Broadcasting Union and the European Commission, Euronews was founded by public broadcasters from ten European countries, among which were Germany, Cyprus, Portugal and Spain. The last three countries have been in financial crisis and in conflict with Germany and the Eurogroup in their respective bailout negotiations. To make the matter more complicated, on the supervisory board of Euronews, there is the public broadcaster from Russia which is also one of Euronews's four major shareholders. The coverage of Euronews reflects the ambivalence of offering visibility to both sides of the arguments and a more tolerant view of allegations against Russian investors.

Lastly, the varying applications of protest paradigm frames among the media reveal a different understanding of what constitutes credible protest coverage. The reporting of NYT illustrates the approach that media credibility resides in their ability to rely on official sources and remain detached (Finberg and Stone, 2002). Most reports come from authors who serve as distant, rational observers of the protests and crisis, seeking out mainly financial issues from institutional perspectives. On the contrary, writers of BBC News and Euronews take on the dual role of commentators and observers, with BBC News juxtaposing side by side on its website news reports on protests with analysis of the events by multiple authors and from different perspectives. Furthermore, adopting a grass roots approach to invoking public opinion, through reports inviting members of the public to ask questions and enter into brief dialogue with the editors on Tweeter, BBC News encourages interaction and participation of the audience and permits more diverse and representative views in the process of public deliberation. With mainstream media outlets struggling to compete with blogs and social media as well as to maintain credibility and readership, perhaps the ongoing protest movements in the EU will offer a context for improvement. In this regard, NYT's inclination to follow protest paradigm coverage could diminish credibility by focusing mainly on institutional views and not enough on social conflicts. This suggests that one way in which mainstream media could strengthen their credibility would be to offer more perspectives on the news, thus providing their audience with more insight and engaging them in more meaningful and shared communication. More significantly, this raises a question about news media adhering to strict standards of credibility while also facilitating appreciation of protest as a viable form of democratic expression. The practices followed by BBC News and Euronews illustrate the possibility of deviating from the protest paradigm and offering not just a space for protestors' perspective but also a conditionally participatory approach to news coverage that could prompt greater credibility, social equality and fundamentally democracy.

Conclusion

This article examines how international mainstream media frame the public protests in the 2013 Cypriot financial crisis, thus offering insight on the possibility of the news media conditionally breaking away from the protest paradigm towards more constructive protest coverage. This study has shown that NYT, to a great extent, constructs protest coverage within the protest paradigm. Alternatively, the reporting of BBC News and Euronews gives the protestors a voice that could be heard within the international community. However, the coverage highlights the political drama and the emotional responses of the protestors, which generate interest among readers and as a result have news value. Contrary to the anticipation shared in the international community and fuelled by the international media, disorder and unrest did not occur in Cyprus. Nonetheless, these expectations demonstrate the 'spectacle' approach still embedded in news construction of social conflicts.

Also, both news media – quoting frequently from local citizens – are in a position to better contextualise and explain the social, political and cultural factors leading up to the protests. In this sense, many critical issues with mobilising consequences are largely overlooked. Beyond representing the public's direct response to austerity measures, the media organisations could more adequately address the issue that every protest, regardless of the particular demands put forward, is a critical reaction to established mechanisms of representation, a pre-condition for citizens' inclusion and identification as members of a political community, national or within the EU.

Finally, within the context of the Eurozone financial crisis at a time of global uncertainty, never before has the need of both the public and news organisations seeking and fostering informed public discourse been more important in nurturing the national, European and global public sphere. If it is the wish of society to promote informed citizenry, society must provide institutional support for democratic representation of contentious actions, recognising the significance of media portrayals as potential instruments of elite discourse and movement self-representation. An issue perhaps more critical than whether media are capable of conveying the voice of the protestors – which is not debated by any of the media examined – is whether political institutions are able and willing to enter into a dialogical relationship with the affected public. Only such consideration will principally improve media representation of protesting citizens in order to ensure that their concerns and visions are integrated in decisions made at all relevant levels, thus shaping new forms of democracy in Europe; the current state of which has been questioned by the public protests in the 2013 Cypriot financial crisis.

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Producing Protest News: Representations of Contentious Collective Actions in Mainstream Print Media

Lia-Paschalia Spyridou

Abstract

When covering protests, evidence suggests that the media tend to resort to the 'protest paradigm', a routinized template to produce protest stories, downsizing the scope, claims and mobilisation effects of the protest movements. This article examines the representations of protests by Cypriot mainstream media on the occasion of the recent economic remedies imposed by the EU/IMF. Framing analysis has indicated that media coverage adheres to the protest paradigm as the dominant frames of 'drama' and 'inevitability' signal an explicit effort to marginalise and delegitimise their claims, and therefore discredit their significance and potential to affect policy making. And yet, the findings suggest that the political orientation of the media does affect the representation of protests as the left-wing media provide empowering representations of the protests. Overall, however, media coverage is elite-sourced, episodic, lacking in-depth analysis and alternative policy suggestions. This study contributes to the protest paradigm thesis, and argues that recent evidence claiming a repair of the paradigm are counterbalanced in the case of protests that radically question the status quo. Finally, considering the moderate protest movement that developed in Cyprus, the findings are discussed in conjunction with specific traits of the Cypriot political culture providing some preliminary interpretation on how the politics of futility and fear coupled by the 'responsible politics' discourse articulated systematically in the media, can offer a degree of insight into the development of modest protest dynamics.

Keywords: news reporting, protest movements, representation, protest paradigm, responsible politics, protest dynamics, framing

Introduction

Contentious politics exemplified in terms of protests, various forms of social resistance, social movements and actions in the direction of social change, roughly defined 'as collective political struggle' (McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly, 2001, p. 5), is steadily on the rise since the 1960s. Since the outburst of the global financial crisis in 2007 and the remedies taken to solve it, protests have intensified in the western world (King and

Waddington, 2013). Although not explicitly clear from the onset of the crisis, few would disagree that six years later the recent financial crisis and, especially the implementation of 'urgent' austerity measures bearing extensive and in some cases unpredictable social cost (Tsoukalas, 2014), reflect and, at the same time, contribute to a crisis of representative democracy (Del Savio and Mameli, 2014) clearly disclosing a European democratic deficit (Demetriou, 2013).

Protest groups against austerity tend to be sensitive to the ideas and practices of democracy (Gitlin, 2012) bringing forward participatory and deliberative conceptions of democracy (Della Porta, 2012) that question the neoliberal turn of global capitalism. In more practical terms, organised protest activities introduce news ideas and suggest novel ways of seeing and doing things (Melucci, 1996) elevate issues onto the political agenda, provide critical feedback to policy plans and decisions, enhance the diversity of the marketplace of ideas and, ultimately, to be able to affect policy and policy reforms (McLeod and Hertog, 1999). In the case of anti-austerity protest activities, protestors largely condemn the neoliberal concept of democracy which reduces the role of citizens to that of electors (Crouch, 2004; Streeck, 2011), and claim for more justice and equality, both material and discursive (Della Porta, 2012; Body-Gendrot, 2013), hence challenging the status quo in a very broad and deep manner.

In a mediatised democratic era, institutional politics, social demands and policy change claims intersect heavily with the media (Strömback, 2008). The crucial role played by the media when covering protest news certainly is not new. Media attention proves a very important indicator of a protest's success (Gitlin, 1980). The news media has the means for channelling people's attention, constructing meaning and influencing public opinion (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989) and tends to greatly affect three core purposes of protest activities: (a) mobilisation, (b) validation and (c) scope enlargement (Gamson and Wolfsfeld, 1993). In a similar vein, the 'mediation opportunity' argument put forward by Cammaerts (2012) posits that all protest and social movements attempt to understand media practices, and partially adapt to them or appropriate them in an effort to attract and sustain (favourable) exposure.

Drawing upon the notion of ideology (Hall, 2005 [1982]) and the 'protest paradigm' thesis, this study examines the representations of protest by the Cypriot mainstream print media on the occasion of the recent economic remedies imposed on the country by the Troika (European Commission, European Central Bank and International Monetary Fund). The purpose of the research is threefold: First, to provide empirical evidence of how the mainstream media covered protest activities in Cyprus and to contribute to the broader and long-standing tradition of the protest paradigm by unfolding potential discursive schemas (both narrative and resonant) that adhere to the basic tenets of the protest paradigm. Ideological discursive mechanisms, articulated in dominant coverage frames leading to specific meaning construction and subsequent reactions (Hall, 2005

[1982]; Scheufele and Tewksbury, 2007) prove to be of utmost importance in the case of anti-austerity protests, as protests' coverage is an indicator of a vital democracy. Second, the study attempts to situate the public grievances over economic remedies in a wider context of claims of failing political and financial institutions and failure of political representation in the decision-making process, thus critiquing media representation of citizen articulation of participation in social change, or rather the lack of it, as a condition within the broader political and hegemonic power structure for sustaining and enhancing democracy. Finally, considering the moderate protest movement that took place in Cyprus, the findings are discussed in conjunction with dominant traits of the Cypriot political culture.

Ideology and the Legitimisation of Economic Policy

Ideally a news media system suitable for a democracy ought to provide its audience with adequate and accurate information of the broader social forces that affect the conditions of their everyday lives as well as check up on policy decisions and government ruling (Curran, 2007). In Europe the design and implementation of bailout and fiscal adjustment programmes developed along the lines of two main strategies: '*emergencisation*' and '*technocratisation*' of politics. The former refers to a state of emergency, in which there is little time to properly consult the people. The latter claims that the situation and subsequent decisions are too complex for the people to understand. Both strategies aid the screening of political decisions from popular control (Del Savio and Mameli, 2014). Exadaktylos and Zahariadis (2012) conceptualise policy implementation as a negotiation game between the government, state agencies and citizens. However, bailout programmes involve asymmetric negotiations between the deciding unit (the government), the means that execute decisions (state agencies) and target populations. They are asymmetric because information and compliance is imposed from the top (the government in agreement with the Troika). They are 'negotiations because they involve a series of decisions based on assumptions and results' (*ibid*., p. 4). That being the case, and given the uncertainty and complexity of economic development during the crisis, it can be argued that it was particularly difficult for the public to comprehend the situation and to judge policy options based solely on first-hand experience and proper reflection. From this perspective, media coverage should have two major consequences: It should be exceptionally influential as a source of information and judgment for the public. Also, (favourable) media coverage should be a crucial precondition to the gainful legitimacy of economic policy by justifying and placing an independent stamp of approval on the actors' policy (Quiring and Weber, 2012).

In that context, Stuart Hall's (2005 [1982]) conception of ideology premised on the 'politics of signification' (p. 64) proves extremely relevant. Hall, in his influential work on

the 'Rediscovery of Ideology' (2005 [1982]) emphasises the role of the media as 'signifying agents'. The media not merely reproduce reality, but actually define it. 'But representation is a very different notion of reflection. It implies the active work of selecting and presenting, of structuring and shaping' (p. 60). In that sense, the media – as institutions operating within the general boundaries of legitimacy as set by the political system (in its broad sense) – 'become part and parcel of the dialectical process of the production of consent' (p. 83). The production and diffusion of consent develops through a process of meaning and reality construction. A set of predominant values, beliefs, rituals and institutional procedures that operate systematically and consistently to the benefit of certain groups and persons at the expense of others are sustained by the media, which both define and reflect reality. The formation of consent, according to Hall, comprises a crucial ideological mechanism, and as a result the media may become powerful agents of social control. Deviance from the consensus, or in other words to be outside of the dominant norms, renders one 'normless, therefore anomic' (p. 58). To make sense of this, the less one can assume a 'natural meaning' the more important becomes the manner in which certain events are signified. 'The power involved here is an ideological power: the power to signify events in a particular way' (p. 65).

The Protest Paradigm Thesis: Selection and Content Bias in Mainstream Media

Often enough, social protests represent a threat to entrenched interests and values, which in turn attempt to implement policies and ideas serving those interests and values. When covering protests evidence suggests that the media tend to resort to the 'protest paradigm', a routinized template to produce protest stories (Gitlin, 1980; Chan and Lee, 1984; McLeod, 2007). The protest paradigm as an analytical framework posits three main ideas: First, the media treat the protest in a very critical way (Boyle *et al.*, 2012), often emphasising deviance and violence (McLeod, 2007). Second, the media try to obscure the protest's social and political concerns and claims in order to underplay its scope and importance (Weaver and Scacco, 2013). Third, the media tend to 'normalise' the protest by neutralising dissent and ultimately reducing the scope and disruptiveness of the protest (Oliver and Maney, 2000). The latter practice is probably the gloomiest, as this approach tends to downsize the essence of protest activities in general while at the same time sustaining hegemonic ideas and legitimising elite discourses and policies.

Scholarly contributions on the protest paradigm thesis revolve around two strands of work. Under the label 'selection bias', the first approach studies the factors triggering media coverage of protests. Empirical research (Oliver and Maney, 2000; Jennings and Saunders, 2014) concludes that contextual factors, namely protest size, together with the aggressiveness of police and protestors and the presence of a counter-demonstration, all

lead to greater media coverage. Dalton (1996) argues that as protests proliferate they are prone to become less unconventional, and subsequently less noticeable and newsworthy for the media. Regardless, even in the case of a dynamic protest, although demonstrations increase media coverage, 'this effect decays quickly over time, so that the time window for exerting pressure is short' (Jennings and Saunders, 2014, p. 2).

The second approach, under the label 'content bias', refers to the broad system of news production processes and norms influenced by organisational, professional and personal/ideological traits (Reese, 2001; Hanitzsch, Hanusch and Lauerer, 2014) which affect news coverage, and in the case of demonstrations and protests are more likely to trigger coverage that adheres more closely to the protest paradigm. Within this strand of academic work, research found that when journalists viewed the protestors' tactics as more radical (radical in terms of either being provocative or posing serious threats to the status quo), they were probably anticipated to employ negative and marginalisation narratives (Shoemaker, 1984; McLeod and Hertog, 1999; Boyle *et al.*, 2012; Lee, 2014). 'Simply put, groups that use more extreme tactics are treated more critically, indicative of the social control function of the media' (Boyle *et al.*, 2012, p. 13). McCluskey, Stein, Boyle and McLeod's (2009) work provided a structural pluralism explanation when coverage conforms to the protest paradigm. It was found that in low-pluralism communities the media deal with protests in a more critical manner compared to more pluralistic communities. Recent work by Lee (2014) provides further insight in relation to professional constraints affecting protests' coverage. It is debated that when the protest target responds to the media, news stories are more likely to mention violence or disruption. Also, the study concludes that the political orientation of the news organisation acts as a predictor for the protest paradigm narrative style. Politically conservative newspapers were discovered to engage in more critical coverage, especially in the case of political topics.

Recent literature, however, contends an emerging pattern of 'paradigm repair' (Cottle, 2008; Tenenboim-Weinblatt, 2014). As a wider range of groups are protesting over a wider set of issues, a 'cacophonous field of protest' is emerging (Cottle, 2008, p. 857), against which the media exhibit less predictable coverage. Evidence suggests that media organisations can be selectively supportive over specific protest activities when the latter are consistent with their own positions and ideologies. The protest movement in Israel in 2011, which critiqued the mounting cost of living of the middle class and the implementation of neoliberal policies, received positive coverage as journalists identified with the protest 'as a result of their own demographic profile and socioeconomic status' (Tenenboim-Weinblatt, 2014, p. 412). Conversely, at later stages, coverage did shift to the protest paradigm. A decline in both media visibility and positive portrayals was explained as a consequence of decreased interest in a story that was no longer new and exciting, and

also because of reduced advertising revenue caused by the unsettling effect of the social protest on major advertisers (*ibid*., p. 412). Consequently, it can be argued that although the protest paradigm thesis is still valid, 'fractures in the protest paradigm have become increasingly apparent in the contemporary media landscape' (*ibid*., p. 412). Against this background, it becomes meaningful to examine potential variations in the applicability of the protest paradigm.

Contextualising the Financial Crisis in Cyprus

A series of unfolding events starting in 2011 along with the 'silent' and extensive mismanagement of the country's banking sector (Panayiotou, 2013), led to growing economic problems, resulting in the need for financial aid. The first major shaking of the economy occurred in summer 2011 as a result of a major accidental explosion in the naval base 'Evangelos Florakis'. Although the preliminary findings of the Special Committee responsible to assess the overall damage at the naval base concluded that the final cost could not be estimated precisely until a five to six-year period had elapsed, rough estimations pointed to €700 million (amounting to 4% of the country's GDP[1]). Two months later the Cypriot economy was downgraded by the major credit rating houses as the spread of long-term bonds rose above 12%. Then, frozen out of international debt markets at the end of 2012, and following reservations regarding European financial aid, stemming primarily from the harsh austerity regime imposed on Greece, Portugal and Ireland, the Cypriot state under Christofia's governance, agreed on the main fiscal bailout terms, which included cuts in civil service salaries, social benefits, allowances and pensions plus increases in VAT, tobacco, alcohol and fuel taxes, as well as taxes on lottery winnings, property, and higher public health care charges (MoU, 2012).[2]

The EU/IMF Deal

The newly elected Government of Nicos Anastasiades (elected in February 2013) subsequently found itself in the difficult position of negotiating the final terms of the bailout agreement. In the meantime, rumours and speculations in the media referred to a prospective 'haircut' in bank deposits above €100,000 considering that deposits below €100,000 are protected. On Friday 15 March 2013, President Anastasiades embarked on

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1   See: [http://www.politis-news.com/upload/20111003/1317637265-10749.pdf] (audit findings for Mari) in Greek, accessed on 17 March 2015.
2   Memorandum of Understanding on Specific Economic Policy Conditionality, available at: [http://www.politis-news.com/upload/20121130/1354292326-07337.pdf], accessed on 17 March 2015.

an aircraft to attend the Eurogroup meeting to finalise the Agreement's terms. As he walked up the steps to the plane, he blatantly denied any scenario for a deposit 'haircut'.

On 16 March 2013, the Eurogroup, together with the European Commission, European Central Bank and International Monetary Fund agreed on a €10 billion deal with Cyprus. As part of the deal, a one-off bank deposit levy of 6.7% for deposits up to €100,000 and 9.9% for higher deposits was announced on all domestic bank accounts. Savers were due to be compensated with shares in their banks (*BBC News*, 17 March 2013). The rationale of the bail-in programme – its terms breaking the taboo of hitting bank depositors – was to minimise the loan considering the country's small economy. As such, the savers would raise almost €6bn. Furthermore, in return for the emergency loans, Cyprus agreed to increase its corporate tax rate by 2.5 percentage points to 12.5%, and the final sum of the loan would total around €4bn. This plan was aimed to boost Cypriot revenues, thus limiting the size of the loan needed from the Eurozone and keeping down public debt. A very interesting piece of information came out in the open at this point in time and was used as a strong argument to justify the proposed rescue plan. Laiki Bank had been hugely exposed to Emergency Liquidity Assistance (ELA) having received loans of €9.5 bn approximately.

The deposit 'haircut' measure was to be taken for the first time. Serious objections were raised with regard to imposing a levy on deposits below €100,000. A communication war broke out, as the Troika and the Cypriot government interchangeably used the media to blame one another for the 'haircut' below €100,000. The deal required the approval of the Cypriot parliament, which was due to debate it on 18 March 2013. According to President Nicos Anastasiades, failure to ratify the measures would lead to a 'disorderly bankruptcy' of the country (*BBC News*, 17 March 2013). Among vivid domestic reactions and discontent from Russia – as the levy would affect its numerous depositors in Cypriot banks – the Parliament rejected the deal on 19 March 2013. Cyprus turned to Russia for help, asking in vain for a further €5bn loan,[3] while Eurozone ministers were openly discussing a potential Cyprus exit from the Eurozone. On 24 March 2013, a new deal was proposed; it abandoned the raid on savings below €100,000 which had made a mockery of the European deposit-guarantee. Instead, it involved a – later finalised – 47.5% 'haircut' of all deposits above €100,000 in the *Bank of Cyprus.* In the case of *Laiki Bank*, depositors with over €100,000 credit had lost everything above that amount when the banks re-opened. The *Popular Bank* (Laiki), the second largest bank on the island was shut-down

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3   Source: 'Eurozone crisis as it happened: Cyprus scrambles to secure new bailout', *The Guardian*, 20 March 2013, available at: [http://www.theguardian.com/business/2013/mar/20/eurozone-crisis-live-cyprus-new-bailout-russia?commentpage=2#block-51498c8d95cbaf64024f63d0], accessed on 17 March 2015.

(*The Economist*, 30 March 2013). After clear warnings that that the emergency liquidity payments for the banks would be stopped on Monday if Cyprus did not agree, the Parliament voted in favour of the second plan on 25 March 2013. The banks re-opened on 28 March 2013, after being closed for 12 days. On 30 April 2013 the Cypriot Parliament ratified the agreement. The bail-in agreement shook the economy in a manner commonly encountered when austerity measures are implemented. Unemployment doubled, escalating from 8.9% in the last trimester of 2011 to 16.9% in the first trimester of 2014. Economic activity was disrupted, due to recession (5.4% in 2013[4]) and extensive liquidity problems.[5] Many small-medium enterprises closed down (Tsissios, 2013), while non-performing loans are estimated to be 46%.[6]

Methodology

Framing

Media makers apply a range of persistent frames, and as such they tend to control the interpretive patterns available to the receivers when they are constructing social reality (van Gorp, 2007). According to Entman's well-known definition '[t]o frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation' (Entman, 1993, p. 52). Frames thus stress certain aspects of reality and push others into the background; they have a selective function. In this way, certain attributes, judgments, and decisions are suggested (Lecheler and de Vreese, 2013). Frames embedded in media discourse and public communication are difficult to discern; their use seems normal and natural and the process of social construction remains invisible (Gamson *et al.*, 1992), hence more powerful. Frames may, in that respect, be regarded as a power mechanism influencing the apprehension, classification, and understanding of messages (Meraz and Papacharissi, 2013).

News framing is important to study within the context of collective social action as audiences may have no direct experience with the event and therefore, depend on media

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4   Source: Available at: [http://www.mof.gov.cy/mof/cystat/statistics.nsf/economy_finance_11main_gr/economy_finance_11main_gr?OpenForm&sub=1&sel=2], accessed on 17 March 2015.

5   Source: The Cypriot Economy, Ministry of Finance, 17 October 2014. Παρουσίαση του Υπουργού Οικονομικών στην Κοινοβουλευτική Επιτροπή Οικονομικών, κατάθεση του Προϋπολογισμού 2015.pdf [Presentation of the Minister of Finance to the Parliamentary Finance Committee, budget lodging 2015.pdf], available online.

6   Source: See tovima.gr (1 July 2014), available at: [http://www.tovima.gr/finance/article/?aid=611206], (in Greek), accessed on 17 March 2015.

accounts to stay informed and make rational decisions (Entman, 1991), and secondly, because the media are largely relevant for protesters' politics of inclusion, aiming at raising awareness, influencing understanding and mobilising support in the wider society. As such, the significance of framing lies in the fact that it can affect both individuals and society at large. An individual-level consequence may result in altered attitudes after exposure to certain frames. On the societal level, frames can affect processes such as political socialisation and collective actions (De Vreese, 2005). According to Davies (2009), frame sponsors – namely interest groups, spin doctors, advertisers, spokespersons and so forth – are proliferating and influencing the media agenda by strategically trying to convince the media to cover a situation in accordance with 'their' frame in an attempt to manipulate and direct the perception and subsequent framing of news stories. It becomes pretty clear, therefore, that the framing building process is shaped by the complex and dynamic interactions among communicators, audiences, media content norms, and social and political actors. 'Looking for systematic bias in media framing of issues, actors and events, more thoroughly illuminates the media's political effects' (Entman, 2010, p. 333). As a consequence, frames as important determinants of how a news story is told, affect the audience's cognitive, evaluative and behavioural responses (Papacharissi and Oliveira, 2012).

Research Questions

Considering the preceding literature, the questions this research will answer are the following:

RQ1: What major frames are employed in the coverage of the protests in the national press? Does media framing change over time?

RQ2: How do frames vary among the media?

RQ3: Which other variables related to news content can be studied in the context of the protest paradigm thesis, and how were they handled by the Cypriot Press?

Method

In designing the framing analysis, the study relied on van Gorp's (2007) constructionist approach. 'Each frame that a journalist applies in a text can be represented as a "frame package", a cluster of logical organized devices that function as an identity kit for a frame' (p. 64). The frame manifests itself in media content through various framing devices, which provide the frame package with a coherent structure and point at the same core idea.

Scholarly work on protests' coverage begins with providing a toolkit containing variables which correspond to aspects of the protest paradigm template (see Harlow and

Johnson, 2011; Weaver and Scacco, 2013; Tenenboim-Weinblatt, 2014). In order to identify the framing devices, the study combined variables used in the literature of protest coverage along with the variables proposed in Entman's (1993) definition of framing: problem definition, causal interpretation, policy solution, and moral evaluation. Open framing analysis was then performed to identify the framing devices that indicated the existence of a frame package. The frame matrix was considered complete when no new frames could be identified in the texts.

The study uses both qualitative and quantitative content analysis. The frame matrix resulted from seven framing devices, while another four variables corresponding to aspects of the protest paradigm template were studied.

Table 1: Variables of the Study

	The framing devices	Variables corresponding to aspects of the protest paradigm template
1.	Portrayal of the protest (how the protest is described, e.g. massive, dynamic, peaceful, violent)	Portrayal of protest tactics (scale 1-3) (Boyle *et al.*, 2012)
2.	Portrayal of the protestors (how the protesters are described (e.g. indignant citizens, the people, students)	Timing of the coverage (Mattoni, 2012)
3.	Claims/demands of the protest: what the protest is all about, what the protestors ask for?	Sources used: elite, non-elite, non-mentioned (Harlow and Johnson, 2011)
4.	Problem source/cause: how is the problem defined?	Type of coverage: episodic/thematic coverage (Iyengar, 1991)
5.	Responsibility: who is responsible for the situation?	
6.	(Alternative) policy recommendation/solution	
7.	Moral and emotional basis for the protest	

Portrayal of Protest Tactics. Following Boyle *et al.* (2012, p. 7), this variable is a measurement indicating how the protestors attempt to accomplish their goals. This measure used a scale from 1 to 3, where 1 equals 'no civil disobedience', 2 equals 'non-violent civil disobedience', and 3 equals 'violent civil disobedience'.

Timing of the Coverage. Considering the role of the media not only in channelling attention, but also in mobilising society to participate in the demonstrations, Mattoni

(2012) argues that the timing of coverage is an indication of the mobilisation effect of the media. The study uses the 'before' and 'after' scale ('during' is eliminated) as the sample comprises of print newspapers.

Sourcing. Sourcing practices are major shapers of news content. The amount and type of sources has been extensively studied in journalism studies generally (Manning, 2001, 2012; Philips, 2011) and the protest paradigm in particular (Harlow and Johnson, 2011). The study identified up to three sources mentioned in each news item. Sources were distinguished between elite (official) sources and non-elite (citizen voices) quoted simply for their 'man on the street' perspective (i.e., protesters).

Type of Coverage: Episodic/Thematic Coverage. Episodic framing depicts public issues in the form of concrete instances or specific events without locating them in a broader social context. Thematic coverage situates events in a context of general causes and outcomes. This distinction is important as it influences perceptions of attributed responsibility (Iyengar, 1991).

Time Frame of the Study

The time frame of the study is from 16 March to 31 March 2013. This 16-day period can be divided into two phases: the first phase spans from 16 March – when Eurogroup's proposal for a deposit 'haircut' below €100,000 was publicly announced – until 19 March 2013 when the Parliament rejected the deal. The second phase ran from 20 March until 31 March 2013 and includes the heavy negotiations between the Cypriot government and the Troika which resulted in the Parliament's approval of the second bail-in plan (25 March 2013) and the aftermath of the final decision.

Sampling

The sample comprises of three legacy newspapers[7] including Phileleftheros (considered as centrist-conservative), Simerini (a right-wing newspaper) and Haravghi (a left-wing newspaper). The unit of analysis was news items referring to protests taking place in Cyprus (including news reports, feature stories, editorials, analyses and commentaries). The sample comprises of 50 news items (graph 1), most of which were news reports (graph 2).

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7   In regard to sampling it ought to be mentioned that despite the tremendous diffusion of social media heralding a shift in the allocation and management of symbolic power, mainstream media still play a significant role in both framing and providing visibility at protest movements and crisis conditions. Mainstream media tend to set the 'tone', which is often reproduced and/or contested in the social media, and also mediate publicity beyond a circle of sympathisers, the like-minded and the already convinced (Cammaerts *et al.*, 2013; Zeri, 2014).

Graph 1: Total Sample – 50 News Items
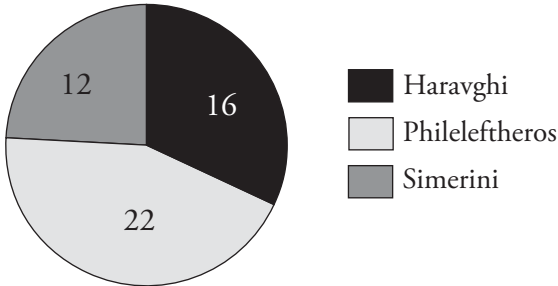
Findings

The Frame Matrix about Protest Coverage

Following the method described earlier, six main frames were identified in the press: (1) the 'proletariat' frame, (2) the 'national sovereignty' frame, (3) the 'drama' frame, (4) the 'mockery' frame, (5) the 'deviance' frame and (6) the 'inevitability' frame. As shown in the abbreviated frame matrix (see table 1), some constituent parts of the dominant frames present some variations among different newspapers. For instance, in the 'national sovereignty' frame the policy recommended is to 'hold a referendum' in the case of Phileleftheros and Simerini, while Haravghi suggested the idea 'of alternative measures, but certainly not those proposed by the Troika'. Additionally, as the crisis climaxed after the Parliament rejected the first bail-in plan, and as negotiations peaked before the final decision on 25 March 2013, the 'deviance' and 'inevitability' frame became more frequent.

Graph 2: News Genres of the Sample
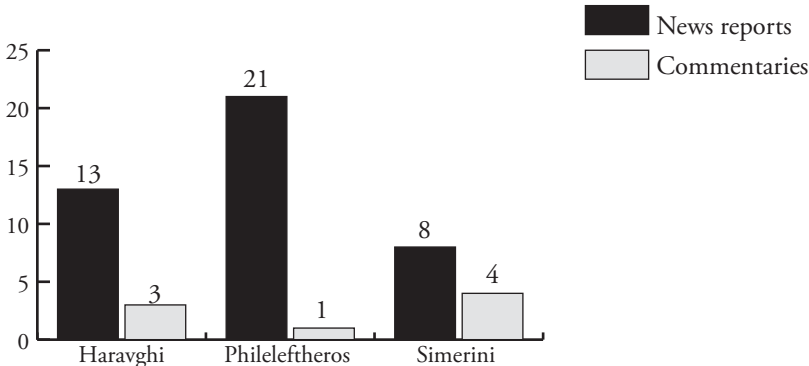
The articulation of the inevitability frame conveying a critical and delegitimising representation of the protests became more robust in the aftermath period studied. Furthermore, the development of coverage following the protest activities shows that preventive demonstrations peaked before 19 March 2013, when the Parliament rejected the first Plan, while remaining limited before the crucial voting on 25 March 2013 which reveal that reactive protesting is deemed less effective and thus society is less mobilised (Hartleb, 2011).[8] Coverage peaked on 26 and 27 March 2013 when bank employees demonstrated against the restructuring of banks and potential job losses (graph 3).

Graph 3: Amount of Coverage per Day
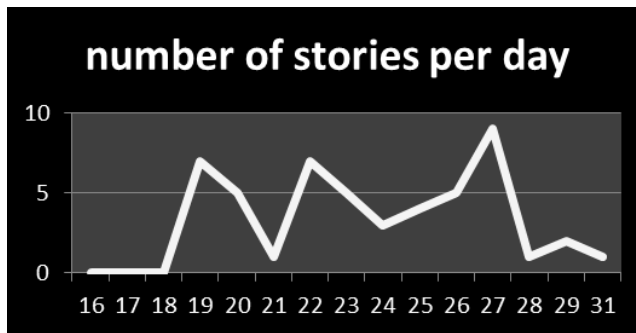
Frame Differences among the Media

Differences were found among newspapers highlighting their ideological cleavages, but mostly drawing a distinction between the left-wing newspaper and the other two. As shown in table 3, Haravghi employs a focused discourse stemming from its left-wing ideology connoting a positive representation of the protests. Phileleftheros and Simerini on the other hand, adopt a wide range of frames oscillating between a positive representation articulated in the 'national sovereignty' frame, and negative representations expressed in the 'drama' and 'inevitability' frames (Phileleftheros and Simerini) and the 'mockery' and 'deviance' frames (Simerini).

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8   On 12 December 2014, large demonstrations and a general strike took place in Italy to protest against the Jobs Act, a bill contributing to more flexible labour conditions. Apparently the Rentzi government succeeded in passing the Law using the Fast Track method. The latter diminished the protest movement of Italians. In late October as many as one million people had protested to prevent the Law, but December's reactive demonstration mobilised some forty thousand (Source: 'Italians on the Streets', 13 December 2014, available at: [http://www.kathimerini.gr/795737/article/epikairothta/kosmos/oi-italoi -stoys-dromoys], accessed on 17 March 2015.)

Table 2: Abbreviated Frame Matrix

Main frame	Portrayal of protests	Portrayal of protestors	Problem definition/source	Claims	Responsibilities (who)	Alternative solution	Moral and emotional basis
the 'proletariat' frame	massive and dynamic; peaceful demonstrations attempting to mobilise the people and to express the people's will to fight against the Troika and plutocracy	the (working) people fighting for the people	the implementation of detrimental policies and measures that will destroy the people, the economy and will enslave the Cypriot people	to reverse the haircut decision and the Memorandum	primarily the Troika which pressures the country	not mentioned	special emphasis on the idea of 'resistance' used to convey moral outrage and reinforce solidarity and support for the 'struggle' of the Cypriot people
variation of the 'proletariat' frame					as the negotiations go on both the Troika and President Anastasiades	Russian aid	
the 'national sovereignty' frame	massive, dynamic and angry; demonstrations and marches attempting to express the protestors' opposition, very light instances of civil disobedience	indignant citizens	the Troika exerts pressures to implement policies and measures that violate Cyprus' sovereignty and are detrimental for the economy	to turn down remedies and policies that jeopardise Cyprus' sovereignty and future	The Troika	changes, even sacrifices, but not the ones proposed by the Troika	anger and indignation as a result of Europe's lack of solidarity towards Cyprus. The Troika tries to enforce irrational remedies that by no means serve the interests of the country and its people

variation employed by Simerini and Phileleftheros		angry and disappointed students		to secure a decent future for the young generations and not to destroy the efforts and achievements of their parents	the Troika and the political system of the country	referendum	
the 'drama' frame	massive and spontaneous	desperate bank employees equipped with will and concern about their future	the closing down of Laiki and the restructuring of the banking sector perceived as dangerous, unjust and bearing contagious policies	not to close down Laiki Bank, to secure job positions and decent labour conditions	Troika and Panikos Dimitriades	not mentioned	unemployment will go up, the families of the bank employees will find themselves in a terrible situation. Cypriots should bear in mind that 'now it's us, tomorrow it will be you'
the 'mockery' frame	massive; protests, signs of civil disobedience	bank employees, students, member of associations; weird people saying and doing incomprehensible things	the irrational and cruel remedies proposed by the Troika	Troika go home	Troika, EU, Germany, Anastasiades, Merkel	not mentioned	people perceived as the 'crowd' are protesting for the sake of protest; they are not committed to their demands, not holding strong beliefs. Their claims and demands touch upon everybody and do not carry an alternative proposal/solution

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the 'deviance' frame	protests engaging in deviant behaviour and activities; Evidence of violent civil disobedience actions (e.g. burn the German flag, attempt to violate the police line, throw bottles, fruit, and sheep hair in front of the Presidential Mansion, attempt to illegally and violently enter the Parliament, aggressive behaviour towards MPs and other officials averted by the police)	angry citizens prone to prospective violence	wrong policies proposed by the Troika and the government	to reverse the haircut, to reject the memorandum; to secure jobs, to save Laiki bank, to preserve the youth's future	Troika, EU, Germany, Anastasiades, Merkel	not mentioned	People are angry and ignorant and thus vulnerable to the will of the crowd; as a result violent and illegal behaviour occurs or can potentially occur. For that matter the intervention of the police is deemed necessary to stop aggressiveness and prevent even worse violent behaviour.
the 'inevitability' frame	pointless protests; protests and demonstrations	supporters and politicians of AKEL; people who do not understand the seriousness of the situation	the imminent bankruptcy of the country; the incompetence the ex-government resulted in a €17billion debt	Cypriot people must be strong and prepared, and work hard to rebuild the economy	Christofias and AKEL	there is no alternative	The measures are painful but necessary to avoid bankruptcy. Cyprus is asking for help because the country is in a very bad situation as a result of AKEL's governance. The EU is lending Cyprus money, which is a sign of solidarity, and Cyprus needs to implement harsh remedies so that the country is saved.

Although both Phileleftheros and Simerini overall promote the idea of 'responsible politics' as opposed to the idea of 'irresponsible politics' conveyed by the protests and their demands to reject the Troika's aid, Simerini adheres more closely to the protest paradigm by employing stereotyped representations based on instances of (potential) deviant behaviour and weird incidents.

Table 3: Frames Employed by Different Media

Newspaper	Frames employed		Role/function of representation
Haravghi	❖	Proletariat	empowering
	•	National sovereignty	positive
Phileleftheros	•	National sovereignty	positive
	–	Drama	marginalise
	▪	Inevitability	delegitimise
Simerini	•	National sovereignty	positive
	–	Drama	marginalise
	➢	Mockery	discredit, trivialise
	o	Deviance	delegitimise
	▪	Inevitability	delegitimise

Haravghi, the left-wing newspaper, adopts a positive and empowering representation of the protests by employing the **'proletariat'** and 'national sovereignty' frames. The former derives mainly from the rhetoric of the Communist party perceiving society as divided between the people and the 'plutocracy'.

> 'Greece, Cyprus, Spain: plutocracy should pay for the crisis', (*Haravghi*, 25 March 2013, p. 3).

Protestors are portrayed as the

> 'people fighting for Cyprus' against the 'unjust and antipopulist measures to be implemented by the EU and the IMF' (*Haravghi*, 20 March 2013, p. 11).

> 'Pensioners, young people, families, shouted a thundering "no" to the mandates of Merkel, the IMF and the EU, and critiqued President Anastasiades' (*Haravghi*, 20 March 2013, p. 11).

In that sense, protesters are primarily viewed as (working-class) people struggling against capitalist exploitation.

> 'People united, never defeated; The people do not owe, they are not paying; We are not becoming the slaves of the 21st century' (*Haravgh*i, 20 March 2013, p. 11).

'People fight, they are sucking your blood' (*Haravghi*, 25 March 2013, p. 3).

According to the proletariat frame the bankers, the plutocracy, the EU and President Anastasiades are responsible for the crisis, and now they are attempting to remedy the situation by implementing unjust and catastrophic measures to the detriment of the Cypriot people. The 'proletariat' frame contains special emphasis in relation to the idea of mobilisations and 'resistance' used to convey moral outrage and reinforce solidarity and support for the 'struggle' of the Cypriot people.

> 'They [the people] shouted loudly 'Come on people, don't duck your head, with the Left, resistance again' (*Haravghi*, 20 March 2013, p. 11).

> 'The people and the working class have no option but to resist and fight against the catastrophic policies and schemes of the Troika at the detriment of Cyprus. The aim should be to liberate ourselves from the Memorandum in order to protect the interests of the working people' (*Haravghi*, 26 March 2013, p. 7).

> 'The people talked. The sea of people shouted NO to the remedies of the Troika, and invited the Cypriot people to fight for new politics, without Memorandums, to protect the semi-public organisations, to protect the working class and its conquests. [...]. There are citizens who know how to fight for their rights, to assert a better future for their children. [...]. In contrast to some others whose names are known and who possess wealth, and who were notified before the haircut and withdrew their large amounts of money out of the banks' (*Haravghi*, 29 March 2013, p. 4).

Consistent with the proletariat frame, the problem is not solely the unorthodox remedy of the deposits' 'haircut', but the bail-in arrangement in its totality including austerity measures, privatisations and labour flexibility laws. Finally, the proletariat frame uses the protests as a tool for political contestation by targeting President Anastasiades for agreeing with the Troika to implement harsh and detrimental measures.

> 'Really Mr. President, where are your "friends" that would support us? Where is the loan you had secured and frequently referred to during your pre-election campaign? For the inaccuracies and the lies, for his hypocritical stance during the pre-election period, Mr. Anastasiades owes a big sorry to the citizens' (*Haravghi*, 25 March 2013, p. 4).

The **'national sovereignty'** frame encountered in all three newspapers studied is a positive representation premised on the idea to preserve national sovereignty against the Troika's irrational demands that violate Cyprus' sovereignty and jeopardise its future. Protests are portrayed as 'massive and dynamic', while protestors are described as 'indignant and angry'.

'With the slogan "Troika go away from Cyprus" dominating, thousands of citizens demonstrated yesterday outside the Presidential Mansion' (*Haravghi*, 25 March 2013, p. 3).

The 'national sovereignty' frame contains the notions of patriotism and war.

'We expect MPs to come out and show their patriotism and stand by the people' (*Simerini*, 19 March 2013, p. 18).

'What is happening right now in Cyprus is outrageous and unacceptable. In my opinion, we are at war. Since Saturday, a war has broken out. We are not talking about a war with guns, but an economic war' (*Simerini*, 19 March 2013, p. 18).

'The people demonstrating characterized what is happening as outrageous, awful and illegal, saying that we are in an economic war, and that Cyprus can make it on its own' (*Haravghi*, 20 March 2013, p. 12).

Additionally, the 'national sovereignty' frame depicts the need of the country to let Europe know that the proposed solutions are deemed irrational and against the country's interests.

'The goal of the demonstration is to send the message inside and outside Cyprus that decisions made by some central decision-making bodies outside Cyprus won't be accepted without strong reactions by the people' (*Phileleftheros*, 19 March 2013, p. 5).

Following this line of thought, Haravghi on 25 March 2013, the day the Parliament would vote for the second plan, defines the rejection of the Plan as a national issue and presents demonstrations as a negotiating tool.

'... resistance to the Troika and support to the President at his negotiations. [...] The goal of the demonstration, according to AKEL is the expression of resistance of the Cypriot people against the detrimental policies of the Troika and the EU and the demand to reconsider their stance on today's Eurogroup. [...]. AKEL has shown that despite its objections on how the matter has been handled, the protests' aim is to reinforce the negotiating power of the President in the direction of defending our national interests' (*Haravghi*, 25 March 2013, p. 3).

Regarding the policy recommendation, the 'national sovereignty' frame is differentiated between the left-wing newspaper and the other two. In the case of Haravghi, the need for reforms is acknowledged – attaching thus more rationality to the protests – but in no case those suggested by the Troika.

'The Cypriot people has shown that [it] is ready to make sacrifices, the society is ready to make sacrifices, but under one condition: without selling out our national sovereignty, without accepting enslavement from anyone who covets Cyprus, who wants to impose remedies that are not serving the interests of the Cypriot people' (*Haravghi*, 25 March 2013, p. 3).

In the case of Simerini and Phileleftheros the idea to hold a referendum is suggested:

'Hundreds of citizens [...] demanded either to vote down the proposed measure or to hold a referendum so that the decision is made for the people by the people' (*Simerini*, 19 March 2013, p. 15).

'The citizens asked for a referendum' (*Phileleftheros*, 19 March 2013, p. 5).

Finally, this frame evokes a euro-scepticism rationale and an anti-German sentiment. The former is expressed through a 'lack of solidarity' discourse on the part of the European Union. In that sense, citizens are angry and indignant, as the Troika tries to enforce remedies and policies that by no means serve the interests of the country and its people, while at the same time violating Cyprus' sovereignty and jeopardising its future. The latter follows the idea of Germany's hegemonic position in the EU.

'It is worth mentioning that a group of the demonstrators headed to the German embassy. A demonstrator climbed up the wall of the building, took down the German flag and threw it on the street' (*Simerini*, 19 March 2013, p. 15).

'A huge banner made waves, and attracted the attention of foreign media. The banner depicted a recent photograph of President Anastasiades with Angela Merkel. Merkel was presented as Hitler and the caption said: Yes man again' (*Simerini*, 20 March 2013, p. 10).

The third frame **'drama'** is a common practice in journalism (Fenton, 2009) commonly encountered in the so-called human-interest stories (Gripsrud, 2000) which tend to decontextualise events from broader structural causes and limit coverage to emotional and case-specific narratives. Within the 'drama' frame the protestors are 'desperate bank employees', trying to secure their job positions.

'Anger and anxiety outside the Parliament [...]. Desperate bank employees, who in the last days have been living under the question of whether they will lose their jobs, burst into tears' (*Phileleftheros*, 23 March 2013, p. 1).

'We won't have food ... The pain and the anger of Laiki employees was that intense, that a woman crying and sobbing started to shout: "Let us in. Let us prevent them from voting it. Do they know we are losing our jobs? We won't have food. Stop them. Don't they feel sorry for us? Let us in", she was telling the police. [...]. A father received a call from his

son. Where are you dad, asked the child? I am at a demonstration, answered the father. Why? Because they are firing me from my job, and I have to prevent that. Who asked the son? Our MPs, my dear' (*Simerini*, 22 March 2013, p. 13).

The 'drama' frame targets the banking system as the main culprit of the crisis, and is premised on the moral basis of rising unemployment and a warning towards the society: "today it's us, tomorrow it will be you". However, the acclaimed sympathy for people who are about to lose their jobs is counterbalanced by four latent features of the drama narrative: First, bank employees were considered as particularly privileged employees in Cyprus. Second, in a way they are part of the banking system which has committed many mistakes, and third, the country has realised that it is in deep trouble, which means that the bail-in plan cannot be rejected because of the consequences on specific target groups. Finally, in times of crisis characterised by rising unemployment and disruption of the economic activity, which is prone to threaten large numbers of the population, the public sentiment can become hardened against social groups who fight for their 'privileged' rights.

The fourth frame **'mockery'** is a common pattern in the protest paradigm literature that highlights the strange appearance or theatrical incidents taking place during protests (McLeod and Hertog, 1999). In the study it was adopted by Simerini. Protestors are portrayed as 'the crowd' or as 'weird people saying and doing weird things'.

'The ... millionaire rescuer. In yesterday's protest Mr. Iraklis Thrasivoulou, being among the crowd held a placard [on] which [he] wrote: 6,634 billion dollars are immediately offered to the State, while in 6 months' time 4 more billions will be offered, plus 180 million euros on a monthly basis. Mr. Thrasivoulou mentioned that he keeps this money abroad, and if the government wants it, they should call him. Furthermore, he claimed his offer [was] to help Mr. Anastasiades, but to no avail' (*Simerini*, 23 March 2013, p. 11).

'We give you everything. The old man, carrying a tape recorder playing patriotic songs, was saying: The fighters and heroes of EOKA gave their lives for freedom. We have money at the banks, we give it to you. Leave our children and grandchildren alone. We have the power. We can make it on our own. We don't sell our country, take our money' (*Simerini,* 23 March 2013, p. 11).

'The most characteristic case of protest was that of two young people who laid down and pretended to be dead. With that move they wanted to convey the message that austerity measures kill' (*Simerini*, 20 March 2013, p. 11).

The coverage neglects any substantive issues of the protest, as the protestors' claims are summarised in the 'Troika go home' slogan, while protestors address responsibility to all possible parties involved (Troika, EU, Germany, Anastasiades and Merkel). Overall, this

frame trivialises the protests by emphasising the presence of weird people, and at the same time it downsizes its essence at a time when the country needs to find a viable solution. Instead, general claims are made accusing everybody, and without proposing any alternative solutions connote impracticable ideas which may well be considered as 'irresponsible politics'. The impractical and irresponsible aspect of the protests' demands is further reinforced by the moral and emotional basis of the frame perceiving people as the crowd protesting for the sake of protest; in reality these people are not truly committed to their demands – and that is why the crowd was easily dispersed by the rain.

> 'However, their effort [to unite all bank employees] failed as after 14:00 bad weather conditions emerged. [...]. Many demonstrators left saying they would come back after the "evil" had passed. At the end because of the chilly weather, the number of bank employees was reduced from 1,500 to some hundreds' (*Simerini*, 23 March 2013, p. 10).

The fifth frame **'deviance'** employed by Simerini is also a common discourse in the protest paradigm (Gitlin, 1980; Boykoff, 2006). Protestors are defined as angry citizens engaging in deviant behaviour and activities. Contrary to the 'proletariat' frame which portrays the demonstrations as 'peaceful', in this case the news reports provide detailed evidence of deviant acts.

> 'The demonstrators left sheep hair in front of the Parliament building' (*Simerini*, 19 March 2013, p. 15).

> 'The deputy President of DYSY was jeered by the crowd' (*Simerini*, 20 March 2013, p. 11).

> 'The negative events of yesterday's protests include the tension caused by approximately ten young people. The young people, after throwing a big stone, which could have hurt the policemen and the journalists, threw eggs' (*Simerini*, 20 March 2013, p. 11).

> 'The tranquillity of the bank employees turned into anger as soon as they were notified that the President of the Central Bank had sent bills concerning the restructuring of Laiki Bank. The crowd tried to break the police line' (*Simerini*, 22 March 2013, p. 13).

> 'Verbal attack against Koulia. The independent MP was jeered' (*Simerini*, 22 March 2013, p. 13).

The moral and emotional basis of this frame is premised on the idea of people being angry, ignorant and prone to civil disobedience and violent acts. A very interesting point to be made in this frame is that because during the 15-day period truly deviant protest tactics did not take place (as shown in graph 7), the deviance frame emphasises *potential* incidents of violence as protestors are normally inclined to engage in violent behaviour.

For this reason, the intervention of the police is deemed necessary to stop aggressiveness and prevent violent behaviour from worsening. News reports provide detailed accounts of all measures taken by the police in order to prevent potential violent behaviour and establish law and order.

> 'In [a state of] alert for criminal acts. As the police have the responsibility to watch all demonstrations taking place, the Police Body is in a state of alert due to information about potential organised criminal activities or citizens' outbreaks against party offices, banks and embassies. The police have increased measures, while setting new plans of action in order to prevent potential violent acts' (*Simerini*, 25 March 2013, p. 5).

> 'Another characteristic of yesterday was the discrete presence of the police, which was ready to intervene if deemed necessary' (*Simerini*, 19 March 2013, p. 15).

> 'According to our information, the Force recruited to preserve legality was estimated at 80 members and was further reinforced after nine o' clock at night because MPs were about to come to the Parliament' (*Simerini*, 22 March 2013, p. 13).

> 'The head of the Security Guard asked for extra backing, which he got, and the members of the Police formed a double human wall' (*Simerini*, 22 March 2013, p. 13).

Finally, the **'inevitability'** frame employed by both Phileleftheros and Simerini differentiates itself from the other frames as it provides a different definition of the problem. While in all other frames the problem is defined as the ramifications stemming from the bail-in plan (deposits' 'haircut', unemployment, austerity, violation of national sovereignty), the inevitability frame defines the problem as the imminent bankruptcy of the country:

> 'The support mechanism has many negative elements. [...]. But with it we avoided bankruptcy. [...]. We asked for the loan because we created a huge debt. And we created this debt because we had chosen an incompetent government. [...]. Back then no one did anything. Demonstrations, protests. Instead of happening then when the problem was rooted, they happen now. [...]. It is very late to protest against the memorandum, the Troika, even the euro' (*Phileleftheros*, 31 March 2013, p. 25).

At the same time it stigmatises resistance as pointless and unadvisable:

> 'Leaving the Parliament, Mr. Mappourides, was saying in strong tones, that somebody owes these people the truth in order not to keep their hopes high and be prepared' (*Simerini*, 23 March 2013, p. 11).

'Although we empathise with the students' feelings of bitterness and indignation, however it does not serve to be on the streets, reported to Philelefeuros, the Director of Secondary Education, Zina Poulli. [...]. The students who left classes will get absences, according to regulations. What they can do, she went on, is to be good students, achieve a good level of education and compete with the European students' (*Phileleftheros*, 27 March 2013, p. 19).

The 'inevitability' frame designates AKEL as bearing the most responsibility for the crisis and the accumulation of debt, while claiming Europe's solidarity, which will help Cyprus recover from its own mistakes.

'The raised fists of their audacity ... You saw them on TV. With their fists raised to protest against Europe, Merkel. Who? [...]. The MPs and officials of AKEL have quite a nerve. They think, obviously, that citizens suffer from amnesia. Otherwise, their audacity to yell, to protest and to raise their fists for what their government and their President did, cannot be explained. [...]. As soon as the nightmare they put us in is over, the matter should go to courts. Political and penal responsibilities should be laid. The country was not destroyed by ... aliens' (*Simerini*, 22 March 2013, p. 8).

'Although the Pancypriot Committee of Students (PSEM) usually avoids making statements in order not to cause opinion divisions, we cannot ignore the fact that AKEL has left a 17 billion euros debt, has invited the Troika to Cyprus, has negotiated and agreed for the Memorandum with the Troika, and now invites students to demonstrate to dismiss the Troika' (*Phileleftheros*, 27 March 2013, p. 19).

'Citizens are disappointed and indignant and that is understandable. [...]. The President had committed that no haircuts would be made [...]. But it is necessary to give him some credit. Anastasiades inherited a crushing economy from his predecessor Christofias, [...], which he had to restructure within a few days' (*Simerini*, 21 March 2013, p. 8).

'The President did the best he could to avoid bankruptcy and secure the dreams of thousands of young people. Things may be tough, but it is in our hands to work hard, stay strong and move on. Right now, sobriety and unity on all levels of the society are necessary' (*Simerini*, 27 March 2013, p. 9).

News Content Variables Related to Aspects of the Protest Paradigm Thesis

Regarding the four quantitative variables related to aspects of news coverage assessing adherence to the protest paradigm thesis, the findings demonstrate that news content was basically episodic (graph 4), elite-sourced (graph 5), it concerned events of the previous day (with a few exceptions mostly by Haravghi) (graph 6) and depicted the protests as mostly peaceful, while in some instances engaging in non-violent civil disobedience tactics (graph 7).

This set of results demonstrates that despite the framing differences documented among the newspapers, there are indeed similarities articulated in stereotyped protest coverage which has the propensity to offer episodic coverage, resort to official sources and abstain from suggesting viable solutions or critiquing aspects of the problem and its potential solutions in a constructive and truly informative manner. The findings illustrate that even in the case of Haravghi, which at the first level engages in positive representations of the protests, yet its content can hardly be effective or at least appealing on a large scale as the dominant narrative is infiltrated by traditional leftist discourses while providing no space for self-criticism. More importantly, official voices attempting to politically capitalise on the situation are featured (especially after 20 March 2013), while most coverage attempts to create impressions and mobilise the public, but does not suggest any kind of treatment on how the economic suffocation of the country can be resolved. Panayiotou (2011) shows that during the protests following the Mari events, Politis and Phileleftheros (positioned in the centre) held the opposite discourse to the one publicised during the bailout period. In an attempt to hold President Christofias personally accountable for the explosion and to isolate him, the media not only supported the demonstrations but contributed to the construction of guilt and acted as if threats against the President were 'understandable'. The findings, hence, offer a variation of the protest paradigm thesis, in cases where strong ties exist between the media and the political system. It may be argued that differences in media coverage are not necessarily linked to ideological cleavages, but are a result of 'sponsor frames', generated on occasion and aiming to serve the vested interests of political parties affiliated with the media.

Graph 4: Type of Coverage
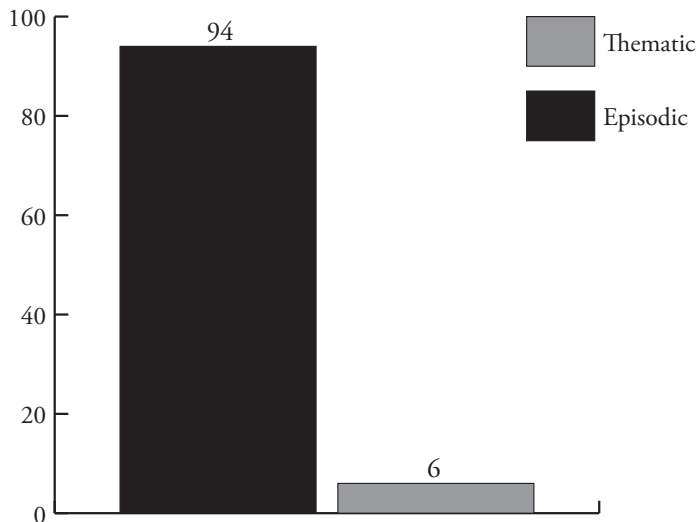
Graph 5: Sourcing Practices
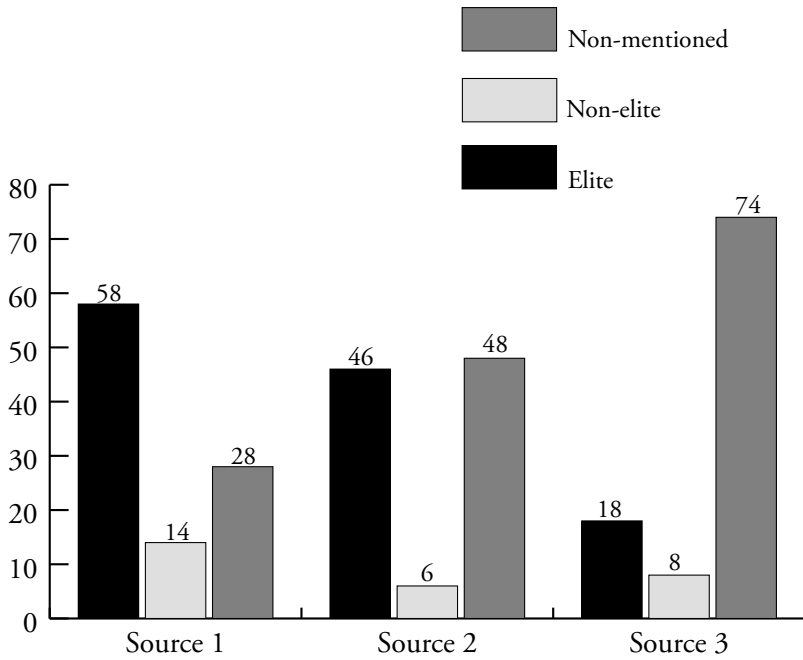
Graph 6: Timing of Coverage
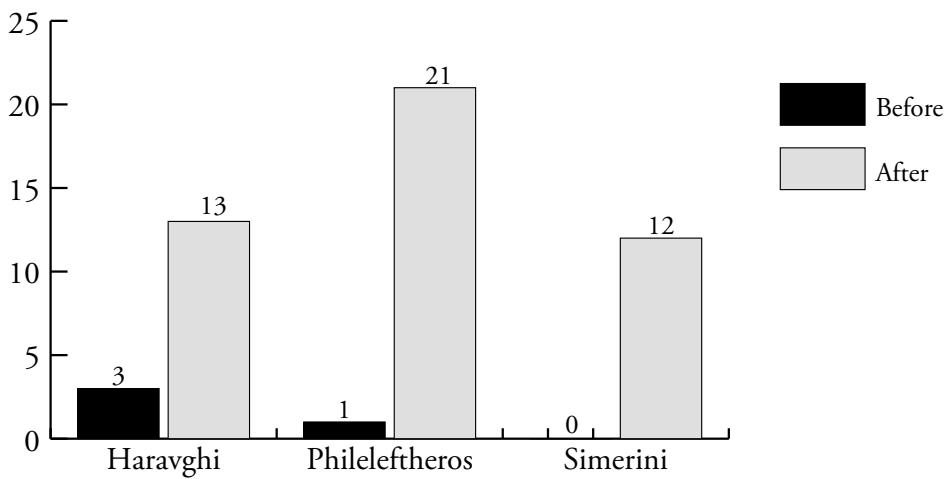
Graph 7: Portrayal of Protest Tactics
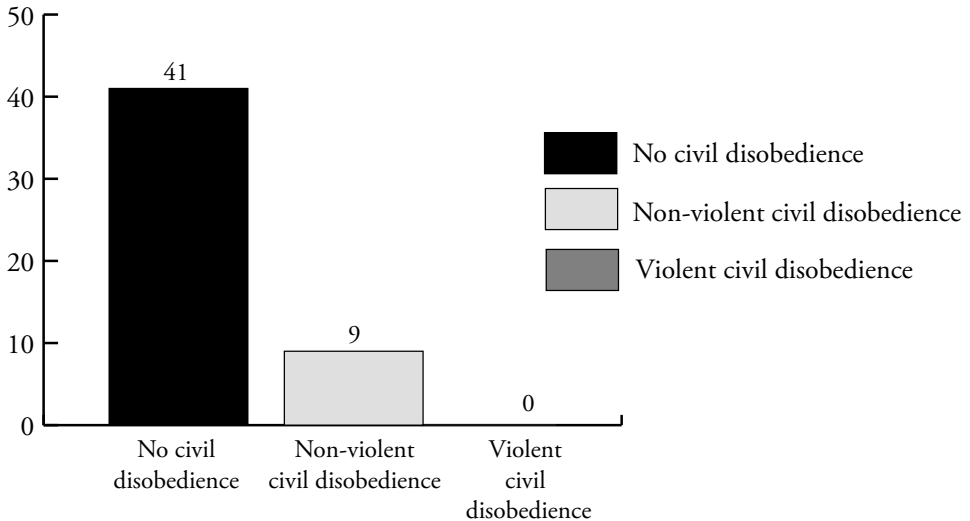
Conclusions

The present study contributes to the relevant scholarly work stemming from the protest paradigm thesis. The findings confirm that when covering protests, the political orientation of the medium does matter in terms of the use of frames as the right-wing newspaper was found to engage in more critical coverage (Lee, 2014). Furthermore, the study establishes content bias related to sources cited (Harlow and Johnson, 2011; Rafter, 2014), episodic coverage (Iyengar, 1991), as well as selection bias resulting in limited coverage because of mostly peaceful protest tactics (Oliver and Maney, 2000; Jennings and Saunders, 2014).

Haravghi, the left-wing newspaper, adopts an empowering representation of the protest and the protestors, yet is fully imbued by the Communist rhetoric. Although the coverage fully legitimises the protests, and at times contributes to a mobilising effect, it remains episodic, lacking in-depth analysis, elaborate policy solutions and self-criticism (AKEL was governing the country from 2008 until February 2013). In the case of Simerini and Phileleftheros, news coverage of protests during this two-week period is premised on a dipole of 'irresponsible' versus 'responsible' politics. The former idea is articulated through the 'national sovereignty' frame, which perceives protests as comprehensible reactions towards policies that disrupt the economic life of the country; their efficiency is not guaranteed, while being imposed from the outside. The latter idea

is conveyed mainly through the inevitability frame, and is further supported by a fixed repertoire of frames – such as the 'drama', 'deviance' and 'mockery' frames that attempt to marginalise the protests and are commonly encountered within the protest paradigm template. In that sense, the positive representation of the 'national sovereignty' frame is counterbalanced by two elements: first, a latent euro-scepticism seed which connotes fears of a potential Eurozone exit, and second by the presence of negative frames. Through the negative frames the protest is 'naturalised', being the product of 'normal reactions' of people experiencing loss and frustration. Yet, their demands cannot be met as 'there is no alternative'. The bail-in agreement comprises a painful, but necessary solution given the mistakes the country has made itself. Comparing Simerini and Phileleftheros, the findings show that Simerini adheres more closely to the protest paradigm employing a wider pattern of frames that tend to downsize the protests character and essence. Here, part of the ideological project is to stigmatise resistance by appealing to character and asking people to make painful but necessary sacrifices. The similarities documented in Simerini and Phileleftheros enhance the persuasive power of the frames, 'because the media appear to address the audience with a single voice' (van Gorp, 2007, p. 68). All three newspapers, however, privilege official sources and abstain from any kind of analysis, contextual information and, of course, any solid discussion on alternative policy solutions, confirming the notion of 'sponsored frames' which reflect carefully designed framing to shape news narration in a favourable direction (Davies, 2009). In the case of Cyprus, 'sponsored' frames traditionally originate from political parties having strong ties with the media, which in turn attempt to manipulate events and information in order to serve the vested interested affiliated to them. Overall, it can be argued that the protest paradigm thesis is confirmed 'unrepaired', being congruent with relevant evidence (McLeod and Hertog, 1999; Boyle *et al.*, 2012; Lee, 2014), which demonstrates that the greater the challenge to the status quo, the more likely media are to perform their social function of producing consent through critical coverage.

Discussion

To a certain degree the severe financial crisis that erupted in 2007 seems to be different compared to previous ones, due, among other reasons to the powerful role of mediated communication in portraying and explaining the complex economic, political, and social factors responsible for both creating and solving the crisis (Chakravartty and Schiller, 2010). The notion of social reality construction through the media by framing and promoting hegemonic values and ideas predominantly used to create society-wide resonance over specific constructions and definitions of reality is not new. Against this background this article has sought to examine media representations of protests during the critical phase of deciding upon Cyprus' bail-in agreement. Following the protest

paradigm thesis, the study has shown that news media tend to discredit protest movements and their claims and legitimise policies coming from the top.

A very interesting question to pose at this juncture relates to the moderate protest movement that developed in Cyprus and was documented in the study. Generally speaking, the issue of protest dynamics throughout Europe is an issue addressed by several scholars. According to Lapavitsas and Politaki (2014) 'the answer seems to be that the European youth has been battered by a "double whammy" of problematic access to education and rising unemployment'. As young people seek greater financial help from parents for housing and daily life their rebellious energy vanishes. Graeber (2014) provides a moral explanation premised on the idea that 'working-class people are much less self-obsessed [than the rich]. They care more about their friends, families and communities'. Roos (2014) advocates that a viable explanation is rooted in three elements stemming from financialised capitalism: (a) the precarious nature of work which inhibits the development of a sense of solidarity; (b) the pervasive sense of anxiety wrought by the neoliberal mantra of permanent productivity and constant connectivity, which keeps people perpetually preoccupied with the exigencies of the present moment and thereby hinders strategic thinking and long-term grassroots organising; and (c) the overwhelming sense of futility that people experience in the face of an invisible and seemingly untouchable enemy (finance capital). Evidence that recent mobilisations failed to produce any immediate change at the level of political outcomes or economic policy, reinforce a perceived pointlessness of street protest. Hence, a strong sentiment of futility premised on the conviction that 'there is no alternative' to capitalist control becomes a powerful ideological weapon inhibiting protest movements.

Roos' (2014) argumentation may well apply in the case of Cyprus. The sentiments of precariousness and futility may become even stronger in a small and divided country that exhibits a high level of dependence upon the EU on economic, military and identity issues. The 'inevitability' frame used by the media is very much compatible and supplementary to this line of thought. The ideological basis offered is coupled by specific traits of the Cypriot political culture and civil society that prove helpful in understanding the lack of radical or massive protest movements. Discussing the dynamics of protest, Teune (2010, p. 4) maintains that 'the carriers of protest interact with several actors in resonant fields, such as public institutions, economic players, mass media, potential allies and adversaries, but also a rather indefinite public of citizens who might support public struggle'. Cyprus conforms to the tenets of a Mediterranean or southern European political culture exhibiting elements of traditionalism and fatalism, elitism, a low degree of institutionalised societal pluralism, as well as persistent and extensive family networks (Charalambous, 2014). Political competition – traditionally stemming from the Cyprus problem – has been levelled, as materialist issues at times of crisis have become just as

important as the national issue (Ellinas and Katsourides, 2013). The political arena is overwhelmed by the bipolarisation between the left and the right (Christoforou, 2006), generating 'a socio-cultural bi-polarity that is difficult to break' (Charalambous, 2014, p. 45). The hegemonic role played by the main parties is deep-rooted in terms of the bonds between parties and civil society. Although many civil society organisations (CSOs) exist, political transformation through direct action is scarce, as most CSOs afford limited autonomous politicisation. The organisations that truly intervene between citizens and the state are few but strongly affiliated to parties. The penetration of parties into society, largely because of inclusive clientelism, are inclined to affect mobilisation activities which take place mostly at a sectorial level with very limited horizontal cooperation or collective action (Charalambous, 2014). As the study unveiled, the bail-in agreement did create an arena for political contestation, with the left accusing Anastasiades of lying to the Cypriot people. On the other hand, the inevitability discourse, shifting the problem and the actors responsible from the terms of the Troika's aid to the imminent bankruptcy as a result of AKEL's economic mismanagement, endorses the politicisation of the crisis and the role of bi-polarisation. During the period studied the mobilisation of trade unions was restricted due to strong ties with parties. Right-wing leaning trade unions and CSOs identifying with the governing party did not engage in any serious mobilisation activities (Charalambous and Ioannou, 2014). The media, generally exhibiting low levels of accountability (Milioni, Spyridou and Koumis, forthcoming), did not break this tradition, but rather reinforced it as the potential escalation of social discontent evoked the social function of the media. To conclude, the case study presented demonstrates how the media as 'signifying agents' through the *responsible politics* discourse contributed to the disempowerment of social protest. The politics of futility and fear, inherent in the notion of 'responsible politics', and the subsequent obstruction of open social conflict, not only sustain the ideological force of austerity and the implementation of urgent economic remedies, but also 'mask a fundamental re-ordering of the relationship of states to societies and markets. In that regard, the "there is no alternative" frame provides ideological cover, for the concerted politico-economic restructuring that is of critical importance' (Downey *et al.*, 2014, p. 882).

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A Content Analysis of How Radio Stations in Cyprus Covered the Bailout of March 2013

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Abstract

This is an empirical analysis of how radio news programmes discussed, reported and reflected on the 'haircut' decision in Cyprus in the crucial days of March 2013. The research focuses on four Pancyprian radio news shows which vary according to their style and content. One of the main objectives of this research is to contribute to studying radio in Cyprus from an empirical content analysis perspective, and to investigate the depth of knowledge (or lack of it) by said radio stations on the economic and political climate that prevailed during those turbulent days when the 'haircut' decision was taken.

Keywords: radio, content analysis, Cyprus, news, bailout, haircut

The subject of this article is to equate how specific radio stations in Cyprus covered the events that preceded and followed the crucial Cyprus Eurogroup meeting of 15 March 2013.

To facilitate this research my primary method of investigation was the study of radio content which was used to reflect and compare how the media in the sample described events. It is important to emphasise from the outset that this study is empirical in character and due to the sheer volume of material encountered while undertaking the content analysis it was not possible to include a huge amount of data in the sample in terms of a wider time frame. It is also important to stress that the focus of the study was not to evaluate the opinions of journalists although this would have been an interesting task and will form the basis of an additional future study. My main focus was to study the presentation of the facts as they were unfolding live on the bailout in Cyprus as a commentary from political and key persons hosting a selection of morning radio shows.

The survey sample centred on the morning zones (7a.m.–10a.m.) with four Pancyprian radio magazine-style informative programmes which differ radically in terms of style and personality, and it is important to highlight these by way of introduction:

The 'Morning Route' on the Third Channel of the public broadcaster CyBC RIK-3: The show is presented alternately by Eleni Vrettou and Paula Sponta. Based on all the

available audience surveys this show holds the first position in audience ratings.[1] RIK-3 is considered to be a serious, pluralist station, with talk shows that underpin and follow a code of conduct regarding opinions and the standard and behaviour of journalists. As a rule, public broadcasting takes a more friendly position to the government of the State except perhaps when the governance of the country was led by the government of the Left (2008–2013) when CyBC manufactured a more neutral stance.

'First Show' Radio Proto: This show carries the stamp of its maker, journalist Lazaros Mavros, who does not hide his ethnocentric, anti-memorandum, antifederalist views. The journalist's views are also in line with those of the owner of the radio station, Costis Hadjicostis. Each Saturday this show is presented by journalist Kostas Konstantinou, who in contrast to Lazaros Mavros focuses on coverage of events rather than on presenting biased commentary.

'The Rhythm of the Day' Channel 6: A broadcast with an interactive character including free comment by three producers Michalis Papaevagorou, Nitsa Pavlou and Charis Panagiotou plus live audience interventions. The specificity of the Channel is that on the morning show they give a voice to citizens, but not to the political factions on the island.[2]

'Winged Words' ASTRA Radio: A station connected to AKEL, the Communist Party of Cyprus. While it is affiliated ideologically it can also be perceived as a station with a far-reaching left influence in terms of audience scope. Despite the political identity of the station it provides an emphasis on all aspects/viewpoints, and is not exclusive in the process. It is generally considered a serious, responsible and pluralist radio station. In March 2013 the content for the said radio show was the responsibility of three journalists, Zoi Tilegraphou, Neofytos Neofytou and George Pavlides (myself).

The quantity of the material analysed from these four radio shows accounts for 60 hours and covers a total of five days from 14 to 18 March 2013.

It is imperative to note that 18 March coincided with a public holiday (Green Monday) and as a result, two of the four channels, Channel 6 and ASTRA had scheduled

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1 Audience Ratings Research (2013) IMR/Symmetron Market Research/University of Nicosia.

2 Daily (Monday–Friday) from 9 a.m.–10 a.m. on the show, 'The Citizen's Microphone', listeners of the station are able to intervene by telephone and express their own opinions, raising questions about current issues or matters that concern them. Also, throughout the morning news programme, listeners are able to send messages (SMS), which are read out live 'on-air'.

talk shows. By contrast, RIK-3 and Radio Proto progressed extraordinarily in producing the breakfast information programmes. On Sunday 17 March none of the stations had morning informative talk shows but on Saturday 16 March Channel 6 was the only station with no talk show due to the local Carnival celebration coverage.

The meeting of the Eurogroup and the decision on imposing a 'haircut' on bank deposits coincided with the Carnival festive weekend, and because of the public holidays radio stations limited the number of talk shows. However, due to the significant political developments, two of the radio stations under investigation in our sample study, namely, RIK-3 and Radio Proto did not limit talk shows but added extra ones. The same applied to ASTRA on Saturday 16 March. But on Green Monday, 18 March 2013, ASTRA observed the public holiday by not broadcasting talk shows. With regard to Channel 6, this station had scheduled mostly entertainment broadcasts devoted to carnival throughout the weekend and did not address the timeliness of issues. This was to be expected, considering that Channel 6 is based in Limassol, one of the main towns where Carnival is celebrated.

On 7 March 2013 a meeting was called at the Presidential Palace. This was to inform editors and news directors of Cypriot Mass Media on a number of urgent matters. I was present at this briefing as Chief Editor of ASTRA Radio. During this meeting, President Nicos Anastasiades with assistance from the government spokesman Christos Stylianides briefed reporters on the condition of the Cyprus economy in general and on banks in particular, besides talks with 'The Troika' delegation. At this gathering the journalists present were requested not to make references to a potential 'haircut' of deposits. Explaining his position, the President repeated this message several times to emphasise that this possibility had neither existed nor had it been raised by anyone. Moreover, he assured reporters that even in the very remote possibility that this request was made at a Eurogroup meeting, the Cypriot delegation and the President personally would reject it out of hand. Therefore, he said, there was no reason to refer to a non-existent possibility, which would cause both confusion among citizens and panic among foreign depositors, forcing them to withdraw or transfer money from Cyprus to foreign banks.

These assurances from the most formal mouthpiece, that of the President of the Republic of Cyprus, influenced journalists as well as financial analysts and politicians alike. This was made clear from research on radio content prior to 15 March where references to a potential 'haircut' of deposits were sparse or non-existent. Even if a reference was made, it stressed that the idea of a 'haircut' was an absurd impossibility.

For example, in a comment on Radio Proto on 14 March, the economist, Stelios Platis, claimed that representatives of the Troika placed on the table the extreme scenario of a 'haircut' by way of blackmail in order to achieve acceptance on the part of the official State of increasing corporate tax by 2.5%.

After describing the claim as absurd, Platis invited the relevant officials not to succumb to blackmail, and referred to a need for political negotiation without pre-disposition for continuous concessions. Supporting this position he said:

> 'So tomorrow when we negotiate the Cyprus Problem is this what we will say? If you say come Europeans and put on the table the possibility of invasion by the Turks in our AOZ (Economic Offshore Zone) and that it will be unless we accept A or B, will we accept A or B? We know that the Turks, given their interest in our region, cannot invade our AOZ, so for the same reason there could not be a haircut on deposits. And this is something that when repeated feels as extreme as fish raining from the skies. They put it on the table in order to achieve their goal of increasing corporate tax.'[3]

After the intervention by the economist, the journalist and producer of the radio show concluded and agreed that Mr Platis completely excluded the possibility of a 'haircut' which was as remote as a 'Turkish invasion of Cyprus' AOZ'.[4]

The week preceding the Eurogroup decision a parliamentary delegation from the Cyprus Parliament went to Berlin to brief German parliamentary parties and officials on the economic situation in Cyprus. On 15 March, DISY MP economist, Marios Mavridis, was interviewed by phone on ASTRA.

It was clear from the start of his dialogue that Mavridis implicitly acknowledged that the climate in Germany was not very favourable for Cyprus. In his view this was because Greece had not complied to the extent that satisfied the Germans regarding the Memorandum contract, which made them sceptical of countries seeking financial support mechanisms. The member made reference to a further economic agreement of an approximate €7 billion shortfall to meet the financial needs of Cyprus, noting that this money could be found either from external resources (i.e. a new loan from Russia or from the sale of annexes – Cyprus Banks in Greece) or from internal resources. He proposed as an example the imposition of a special tax on interest on deposits, even noting that due to the high credit rate, then at 4%, depositors would still make a profit. Mr Mavridis did, however, consider it appropriate to exclude a 'haircut' on savings deposits, even claiming that this was understood by the Germans whom the delegation had spoken to. 'What we and the Germans have rejected is a haircut on savings' Mavridis stated. 'This haircut' he continued 'is not going to happen. They realise that it is a silly idea, which was on the table as an option, but eventually there is no such issue. I say this not to worry depositors'.[5]

The attitude of Germany towards Cyprus was also referred to by the Director of the

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3   'First Broadcast', Radio Proto, Thursday 14 March 2013.

4   *Ibid.*

5   'Winged Words', Astra Radio Station, Friday 15 March 2013.

Limassol Cooperative Savings Bank, Nearchos Ioannou. He said on Astra: 'On German TV, they very rarely refer to Cyprus. The German press itself is not as concerned as we think.' Based on the information received, Ioannou was under the impression that 'Germany is not as negative towards Cyprus, as the IMF. At the same time, of course', he added, 'the rulers in Berlin are making moves and statements aimed to alleviate the fears of German taxpayers.'[6]

When asked about the market prospects of branches of Cypriot banks in Greece, Ioannou estimated that the costing fluctuated around €2 billion, but that it would be 'hard to find an interested buyer unless this price was divided between different buyers'.

In connection with what possible incentives Moscow could ask for in return for a new loan to Cyprus, Nearchou speculated on whether the Russian authorities would seek a re-qualified list of Russian companies registered in Cyprus under review of possible tax evasion. Seizing upon this question the officer of the Cooperative Movement expressed the view that 'there is no evasion issue and that companies operate legally on the basis of an agreement to avoid double taxation. What could happen here is Vladimir Putin might seek the repatriation of Russian companies operating in Cyprus corporate tax, which in Russia is 23%.'[7]

Reporting on the critical Eurogroup meeting of 15 March 2013 the then Parliamentary Spokesman of AKEL, Nicos Katsouridis, was interviewed on ASTRA. Citing regret over missing information Mr Katsouridis stated that 'before the European Union body sessions are held, numerous consultations between the Members concerned are needed. It is not right' he stressed with emphasis 'for the Eurogroup to meet to take such serious decisions without some key issues being pre-agreed.'[8]

The previous examples were the only references to a 'haircut' and similar issues raised by journalists featured in the media. In all of these cases a universal impression was generated that the potential 'haircut' on deposits was out of the question, or at least that it was considered a very remote possibility. Yet, media coverage from abroad was not so reassuring.

In reportage from New York on 14 March 2013 ASTRA correspondent Panicos Panayiotou citing reliable sources conveyed the following information:

> 'the IMF does not insist on a haircut if Nicosia commits to privatisation of public entities and other measures that would bring [in] the required funds. Ten billion [euros], would be given by the Troika. But the other seven billion will have to be secured from Cyprus without excluding any other possibilities.'

6   *Ibid.*, Thursday 14 March 2013.

7   *Ibid.*

8   *Ibid.*, Friday 15 March 2013.

The same response, according to Panikos Panayiotou, was mentioned in the statements of the Deputy General Manager of the Fund, who said that the IMF has to achieve a bank balance sheet leaving open the possibility to request closure of banks if they are not outweighing their costs with revenues in countries with which the Fund works.[9]

Information from Brussels was even more revealing. Two days prior to the Eurogroup meeting, the head of the finance minister's group, Jeroen Dijsselbloem, said the Troika could earmark a sum of around €10 billion for Cyprus. 'Since Cyprus', he noted, 'requires a seventeen billion bailout so an extra seven [billion] is needed with all options [remaining] open.'[10]

Thanos Athanasiou, ASTRA correspondent in the Belgian capital, echoed a similar tone. Focusing on the immediate ways of finding the short fall of approximately €7 billion, the correspondent referred to contacts made at the time in Brussels with the technical bodies in Greece and Cyprus for the sale of branches of Cypriot banks in Greece. Athanasiou said that the talks appeared to be progressing satisfactorily and in order to substantiate the argument relied on the statements of the Greek Minister of Finance Mr Stournara, who denied that any general discussion on this topic had taken place. Moreover, sources close to the ASTRA correspondent confided that Russia indicated in Brussels that they had very little interest in purchasing the Laiki Bank market, and with regard to the granting of a new loan to Cyprus, they presented themselves as fairly sceptical. 'With all these uncertainties', stated Thanos Athanasiou, 'the package for Cyprus does need to add up'.[11] He even cited an authoritative source who knew the banking scene inside out who confessed the view that 'once regional efforts are expended, the spotlight turns back to increased borrowing scenarios as well as a possible haircut and various other things, tougher measures etc.' Going even a step further Athanasiou explained that there are various stages to a 'haircut'. 'He notes that bonds are clipped first and after that notes; the debt then leads to intervention in the financial sector.' However, he added that relying on information that had appeared confidentially 'intervention in the financial sector will certainly happen!' At the same time he noted that 'the tax that would be levied on income from interest on deposits would be enough'. Not completing the response, the correspondent reiterated some twelve hours before the start of the critical Eurogroup meeting that he considered certain that the depositors would be invited to contribute and they would rescue the banks by giving a single capital injection.[12]

CyBC's correspondent in Brussels, Panos Demiris, was very careful and avoided

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9   'Winged Words', Astra Radio Station, Thursday 14 March 2013.

10   *Ibid.*, Friday 15 March 2013.

11   *Ibid.*

12   *Ibid.*

making assumptions similar to those by Athanasiou. However, he also indicated that many alternative suggestions, ideas, solutions and scenarios would enter the table in the Eurogroup discussions. At the same time he expressed the view that after the Cyprus presidential elections there was a more favourable climate in Brussels toward Cyprus after rounds of meetings seemed to satisfy the Troika with regard to commitments undertaken by the new Government in relation to the working Memorandum agreement.

Particularly interesting were the reports by the CyBC and ASTRA correspondents from Berlin. On 14 March 2013 CyBC's correspondent, Giorgos Papas, considered that 'thoughts in favour of a haircut are repulsed although Government circles said until yesterday that all options are on the table. Perhaps' he added, 'all this was part of a negotiating tactic.' Wanting to obviously support his optimistic assessment Papas focused his attention on the assurances given by the Government of Cyprus that there will be no 'haircut' and that this 'may offset the requirement for haircut from other taxes.' On the day of the Eurogroup meeting ASTRA's correspondent in Berlin, Pantelis Valassopoulos, reported that Germany during the session 'will be very hard on Cyprus' and that they intended to put back on the table the alleged issue of 'money laundering'. He made special reference also to the leader of the Social Democrats in the House, Frank Steinmeier, who stressed that 'without the participation of the Cypriot banks and shareholders, financial assistance to Cyprus may not be possible'. 'Schäuble', continued Valassopoulos, 'if he wants to convince his countrymen he must take to the German Parliament a deal with large collateral for the Germans and especially hard measures'. This was just a small taste of the tough stance towards Cyprus by the Germans, the reporter noted, 'he must have contacted the members of the Cyprus Parliamentary Delegation in Berlin. The climate is particularly difficult especially for Cyprus but generally for whoever would bang on the door of the Germans for financial assistance. Indicative of this atmosphere is that the leader of the Greens linked conditional lending by Cyprus to a settlement of the Cyprus Problem'.[13]

In view of the critical Eurogroup session RIK decided to send a special correspondent to the Belgian capital on behalf of the corporation. Panicos Hadjipanayis' primary role was to inform listeners of CyBC on the contact by the Cypriot delegation in Brussels. On the eve of the meeting of the Eurogroup the journalist focused on the statements of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Cyprus, Yiannakis Kasoulidis. The Cypriot official stated that the country's delegation would go to the meeting with three main objectives: to prevent bankruptcy, avoid debt creation that made us a hostage today, and future generations of Cypriots, and thirdly to reach agreement for funding as soon as possible.

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13   'Winged Words', Astra Radio Station, Friday 15 March 2013.

On the same day Panicos Hadjipanayis broadcast without commentary the position put forward in a central bulletin of the BBC that 'There is great interest in the method chosen to preserve the Cyprus economy.'[14]

On 15 March 2013 CyBC's correspondent was invited by the presenter of the morning show to make predictions about the Eurogroup meeting. He noted that the aim of the Cypriot delegation was not to allow measures and solutions that were not applied to other cases similar to Cyprus. But he neither specified what these measures might be, nor did he present or request any clarification. Panicos Hadjipanayis even broadcast a statement by the German Chancellor, which reported on the Cyprus Memorandum with reference to a 'quality solution'. The reporter noted that in the German press there was still mention of a 'haircut'. The presenter then asked: 'so the haircut is returning?' And the correspondent replied in the affirmative 'from some sources'.[15]

Yet despite the clear position of the head of Eurogroup, but also a number of worrying signals coming from Brussels and Berlin from politicians, economists, and analysts, journalists continued to exclude the possibility of any kind of 'haircut'. Instead, producers and guests focused their attention on alternative ways of finding the €7 billion. Particular importance was attached to the visit scheduled to take place on 18 March 2013 in Moscow by the Minister of Finance. The aim of the visit was to prolong the existing loan at a lower interest rate, to examine a potential market for Laiki Bank in the Russian capital and certainly to ensure a new loan from Russia. Nonetheless, in estimates by the Brussels special envoy of CyBC, although there had been frequent references made to possible Russian assistance, it was noted that the contacts regarding Laiki Bank in search of funds in Russian markets 'are in the initial stage'.[16]

At the heart of the agenda of the morning radio shows – preceding the meeting of the Eurogroup – were the provisions of the loan agreement to be signed by Cyprus. Excluding the possibility of capping deposits, journalists and guests turned their attention to the harsh provisions of the Memorandum, such as the insistence of the Troika for privatisation of public entities, the increase in corporate tax by 2.5 %, the imposition of a tax charge on interest on bank deposits, limitations on the Welfare State and to reduce wages and benefits for workers.

In a discussion at Radio Proto, economist Stelios Platis estimated that the Troika put the increase in corporate tax on the table as a blackmail manouevre in relation to the possible 'haircut' deposits. But, an increase in the corporate tax he noted 'will send the message to foreign investors that Cyprus is being hijacked and that the tax system can

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14 'Morning Route', 3rd Channel RIK, Thursday 14 March 2013.

15 *Ibid.*, Thursday 14 March 2013.

16 *Ibid.*, Thursday 14 March 2013.

change again at any moment. The financial system of Cyprus', he added,

> 'is the only independent system within the Eurozone. The Luxembourg system and the Netherlands are controlled by Germany; Malta and Ireland are controlled by Britain. They cannot be touched. Instead they want to get their hands on the Cyprus system because it is the only independent one. The Europeans have decided that they will not accept the option that gives the Cyprus banking system opportunities for the Russians to invest freely in the Eurozone based on international regulations'.

Mr Platis even wondered how can 'all those who a year ago tore their hair [out] when Christofias' government proposed an increase in corporate tax by 1%, and today they are asking for [more] than twice that as an increase.' The economist characterised the Troika's measures as 'uneconomical' and asked the President of the Republic to proceed with a political negotiation of the Memorandum.[17]

The Director of Limassol Cooperative Savings Bank, Nearchos Ioannou, on a radio show on ASTRA stated that the Memorandum provision for an increase in the corporate tax would bring disruption to the financial system. He also concluded that this negative development would not result in foreign companies pulling their activities out of Cyprus. A similar view was expressed by the chief executive in relation to the assessment of the repercussions of any taxation on financial transactions. In explaining his appreciation, Ioannou explained that in Cyprus there were not many companies that were involved in financial transactions. He chose to focus on the large amount of interest which would be a deterrent to restarting the economy. He expressed a fear that if the government was to lend money to banks it would take the Memorandum rate as high as 9%; lending rates will not then decrease; instead, they will increase even more so.[18]

Over the weekend preceding the 'haircut' radio stations hosted several trade unionists and party representatives, who, each from his own perspective, criticised or justified the attitude of the Government, and the onerous terms of the Memorandum. The representatives of the opposition expressed complaints about the lack of information, and emphasised the possible impact of privatisation on semi-state organisations, the reduction of the Welfare State and the wage and benefits cuts. This is in contrast to the representatives of the Government and those aligned to it who tried to cool things down by recommending calm to working people, often placing responsibility for the mess the economy was in on the policies followed by the previous government.

Although very serious, developments in Brussels and Memorandum provisions were not the only topics in the morning broadcasts concerning radio stations during those five

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17   'Morning Route', 3rd Channel RIK, Thursday 14 March 2013.
18   'Winged Words', Astra Radio Station, Friday 15 March 2013.

days. In particular, Radio Proto which does not have correspondents abroad chose to focus on other issues in the news. Indeed, on the eve of the meeting of the Eurogroup, 'First Broadcast' hardly dealt with these concerns. Specifically, the broadcast began with a discussion on a police operation in Pera Chorio regarding the protection of two chemical factories which local communities had mobilised against. Then, at the invitation of the producer – through an intervention by reporter Fanoulla Argyrou – the show informed listeners of Radio Proto about the condemnation by Britain's former Energy Minister, Mr Huhne, who had been demoted from his post as a result of evading penalty points he received from a traffic violation by persuading his then Greek origin wife Vicky Price to accept the penalty points on her licence. In the second hour of the show the producer engaged in commenting on a variety of subjects including the appointment of two journalists, Makarios Drousiotis and Pambos Charalambous, at the Presidential Palace; the evaluation of the Troika and austerity measures taken by the Samaras Government in Greece; and Cypriot natural gas resources. In short, the day the Finance Ministers were to take important decisions for the Cyprus economy, the specific broadcast focused completely on 'other' issues.

Channel 6, due to the specificity of the character of the station, did not seriously discuss developments in Brussels or make any allusions through references to articles in the daily press. Listeners of the station dealt with provisions of the Memorandum in a limited way through SMS and telephone calls. Just like political and economic figureheads in Cyprus, the listeners of this station focused their attention on the provisions of the Memorandum and not the possibility of a 'haircut'. Generally, listeners expressed their concerns in several provisions of the Memorandum which sought to reduce the welfare state and the living standards of the people. In relation to privatisation and narrowing the gap that existed in earnings between workers in the public and private sectors listeners presented divided views.

Channel 6, based in Limassol, has an agenda that focuses on local provincial problems in its morning shows, as well as during the week when the carnival events were in full swing. This resulted in a diminished importance on political developments and little attention being given to the dramatic events unfolding in Brussels.

Regarding the news on the three other radio channels in the sample, we should note that these were particularly enlightening – focusing very closely on developments in Brussels. In the main, they put matters forward in a balanced way and statements made on these issues gave a comprehensive, integrated coverage of events. However, the unexpected and surprising Eurogroup decision fully justified the decision of most media on Saturday who adjusted their regular programmes to cover developments.

The four stations in our sample played an important role in informing listeners with references to events, declarations and reactions that took place immediately after the

announcement of the decision of the Eurogroup. Indeed RIK-3, Radio Proto and Radio ASTRA carried detailed information on the content of the 'haircut' decision.

The Third Channel of CyBC and the 'Morning Route' reacted swiftly with a long show launched from 6 a.m. – the first information given in the schedule at 4 a.m. – which tried to give full and comprehensive information for the 'all-night thriller'. To this end they had correspondents in European capitals such as the special envoy to Brussels along with informed specialists elsewhere. Their effort was successful because through the information received, listeners of the show were able to form a complete picture of events. Listeners were also informed directly about the situation through gatherings created mainly outside Cooperative Credit Branches, with many upset people congregating and asking to withdraw their savings.

Specifically from 4 a.m. with the fast response of the Corporation's special envoy to Brussels and from 6 a.m. on the programme 'Morning Route', RIK-3 concentrated on the earliest possible global information for listeners surrounding developments in the Eurogroup. Panicos Hadjipanayis, Panos Demiris, and Giorgos Papas conversed with the producer of the show, Eleni Vrettou, in an attempt to unite all the pieces of the puzzle. In the session with Hadjipanayis, extensive reference was made to the hostile climate created towards Cyprus, characterising it as the 'concerted efforts by Schäuble – IMF'. The scenario that was finally adopted, he noted, was the most gentle for Cyprus after the German Finance Minister initially submitted a proposal for a 'haircut' of 40%. The Cypriot delegation faced a straightforward scenario of extortion and 'in at least three cases the President stood up to leave the session'. However, representatives of the Central Bank and the IMF, according to the special envoy of RIK, told the President that withdrawing from the meeting would mean 'the facility of ELA would be close immediately'. Indeed they indicated they were not worried about the possibility that Cyprus would abandon the euro and return to the Cyprus Lira. On his part Panos Demiris spoke of the ruthless behaviour on the part of Europeans. He pointed out that the statements of the head of the Eurogroup discussed the objective as stability rather than solidarity, stressing that 'in such cases words have their importance'. He also focused on Dijsselbloem's statement that 'in Cyprus the banking sector is five times greater than the state', which for the European official was absurd and dangerous. Together with the presenter of the radio show, Demiris attempted to quantify the figures of the decision, namely what amount the 'haircut' might add up to; at what price would branches of banks be sold in Greece; what would be the income from levying deposit rates; what would the increase in corporate tax provide, and would a contribution from Russia also still be required.

Noticeably more subdued the RIK correspondent in Berlin, Giorgos Papas, refrained from dealing with unconfirmed information and assessments. He chose instead to concentrate on facts. Responding even to a prompting remark from the presenter in

Cyprus who tried to justify the attitude of Schäuble; Papas clarified that his aim was not to justify the attitude of the Germans: 'I convey what he said, is what they say and what they do and do it only because we have to know at least what they say. How to evaluate is our business ...'. After this statement, Papas indicated that the Eurogroup imposed a general 'haircut' on deposits without a minimum ceiling in order to protect savers. This decision however was a negative signal which worried the Germans particularly. The CyBC correspondent in Berlin spoke of the systematicness of Cyprus, something that occurred, as he said, on Monday 18 March when the exchanges opened.[19]

In his talk on 'Morning Route' economist, Stelios Platis, spoke of grand larceny and the amputation of the Cyprus economy. Citing an earlier statement by the Minister of Finance that it is nonsense to talk of a 'haircut' on deposits, Platis expressed the view that the Cypriot delegation at Eurogroup should leave. He stressed that he could not 'justify even one single iota from that decision'. Going even one step further Platis noted that 'Members cannot pass such a bill. If I could impose tax on deposits we would not need the Troika. We could do it ourselves, without additional borrowing and memoranda.' It is noted here that all of Stelios Platis' interventions were considered exaggerated in light of the €17 billion total needed for the Cyprus economy based on calculations by PIMCO. The economist said that the political leadership should develop alternative scenarios, which would relieve the country of the Troika and not mortgage the future of the country.[20]

The need to formulate alternative scenarios (a possible plan B) was referred to in statements on RIK-3 by the General Secretary of AKEL, Andros Kyprianou, who stated verbatim his party's position as: 'studying the experiences of other countries, we study the positions formulated by political parties and governments of other countries and try to formulate a view inside our own in our circumstances'.[21]

But, despite persistent questions by the journalist the leader of AKEL was unable to submit a specific counter proposal, stressing that any initiative by the Government with reference to alternative scenarios had to be the subject of collective reflection and response. However, in his first reaction, Kyprianou stressed that President Anastasiades chose to work alone, without informing and seeking support from political parties. Therefore, he stressed, the Government and the President take full responsibility for the outcome of the Eurogroup. In response to an observation by the journalist that the President had been under burdensome pressure, Andros Kyprianou noted that pressures had also been exerted on the previous government, but they had resisted. When Eleni

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19   'Morning Route', 3rd Channel RIK, Saturday 16 March 2013.

20   *Ibid.*

21   *Ibid.*

Vrettou suggested the position that 'it is far easier to say "no" and to have no effect', the General Secretary of AKEL admitted that certainly it is easier to reject, but added 'if you have to choose between falling off a cliff alone, or to be pushed off it you do not choose to fall alone. What has been accepted by the President is what we stressed we would never accept'. Andros Kyprianou expressed that Europe was obsessed and showed vindictiveness towards us. To conclude the AKEL leader expressed the view that apart from the 'haircut' what shocked him most was the sweeping privatisations that were yet to come.[22]

The Chairman of the Parliamentary Finance Committee, Nicolas Papadopoulos, described the nightmarish scenario adopted by the Eurogroup as 'We stand before the collapse of our financial system if not of our whole economy.' The official of the Democratic Party wondered whether it was preferable that Members instead vote for letting the two main banks collapse rather than vote on the 'haircut'. He also requested more information and supporting arguments on the decision taken by the Cypriot delegation to the Eurogroup. Mr Papadopoulos did not avoid apportioning responsibility to the previous government, which in his view 'played political games leading the place into the current mess'.[23]

The President of the European Party, Dimitris Sylouris, in his first reaction made it clear that the President in this case 'would not have his own support'.[24]

In his intervention, the then Minister of Communications, the late Tasos Mitsopoulos claimed that the President was faced with a very difficult dilemma. He had to choose between disorderly bankruptcy and acceptance of painful measures which would ensure the survival of the Cyprus economy. Mitsopoulos considered that the decision of the Eurogroup 'will not have a direct impact on living standards'. Then claimed that the large depositors 'will be replenishing the haircut amount from the revenue they have on deposit rates, which are very high'. The Minister blamed the previous government for undue delay in the conclusion of the Memorandum. 'If they had signed the Memorandum a few months ago, today things would be easier.'[25]

The responsibility to inform listeners on ASTRA for decisions at the Eurogroup was undertaken by Thanos Athanasiou, the station's correspondent in Brussels. He noted a dramatic session in which

> 'all parties wanted to achieve the maximum from their aspirations. The IMF wanted the loan amount to be reduced to a minimum, the Nordic countries focused on money

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22   'Morning Route', 3rd Channel RIK, Saturday 16 March 2013.

23   *Ibid.*

24   *Ibid.*

25   *Ibid.*

laundering information and sought greater punishment on Cyprus, the small countries and those countries discussing the Memorandum tried to understand whether the decisions on Cyprus would affect them [considering] that Cyprus itself on the one [hand] wanted to avoid bankruptcy and on the other wanted to save its banks.'[26]

The result according to Athanasiou, shocked not only Cypriots, but also millions of European depositors, which was why at the press conference Eurogroup officials were inundated with questions concerning the possibility of extending the 'haircut' measures in other countries. The European Central Bank's spokesman, Rasmussen, was reassuring, noting that the funding other Eurozone countries needed was balanced and there was no such risk. The ASTRA correspondent also emphasised statements by Dijsselbloem singling out his view that the volume of banks in Cyprus compared with that of the State should be limited to the average in EU countries.[27]

The correspondent of the radio station in Berlin, Pantelis Valassopoulos, in contrast to his colleague on RIK-3, said that the decision of the Eurogroup was greeted with enthusiasm in Germany. It was suggested that an important role in this decision was played by Finland, Holland and of course Germany. The decision in Brussels, according to Valassopoulos was such that it enabled the German Government to pass it through Parliament by ensuring even the consent of the opposition, which required 'not only European taxpayers contributing but bleeding many depositors of Cyprus banks dry'.[28]

Russia, according to ASTRA's correspondent in Moscow, Thanassis Avgerinos, decided to wait. He found that although there was no official announcement, the Russian authorities appeared concerned. They considered the decision would have contagion effects that might affect Moscow.[29]

Economist, Stelios Platis, commented on ASTRA's morning show as he did on CyBC. Having described the outcome of the Eurogroup as a 'fiasco of the Cypriot delegation' he called for the resignation of the Finance Minister and urged Parliamentary Members not to vote for the bill. He also expressed the idea of a referendum. He called it unacceptable that the Eurogroup could put its hands on deposits under €100,000, essentially violating a key Directive of the European Union itself.[30]

Michalis Olympios, another economist speaking to ASTRA, expressed the view that after the decision of the Eurogroup 'the idea of Cyprus as a financial centre was finished'.

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26   'Without Limits', Astra Radio Station, Saturday 16 March 2013.

27   *Ibid.*

28   *Ibid.*

29   *Ibid.*

30   *Ibid.*

He added that the notion of 'Europe as an area of solidarity had gone for a walk'. Olympios questioned the ultimate benefits of the accession of Cyprus to the EU and raised doubts and fears about how Brussels might behave if, for example, the national security of Cyprus was threatened. Going one step further he stressed the issue of solutions outside the Euro highlighting that if Cyprus had not entered the Eurozone 'none of this would have happened'.[31]

The representative of non-institutional holders of securities/bonds, Fotos Fotiadis, invited people to protest and demonstrate their opposition to the decision, urging for mass gatherings outside Parliament and the Presidential Palace.[32]

The same view was expressed by Deputy Chairman of EDEK, Marinos Sizopoulos, who clarified that based on the data that was before them, EDEK would vote against the bill in favour of the 'haircut' which the Government was going to propose. The EDEK official having described the decision as 'unprecedented and unthinkable' talked of 'collusion against Cyprus'. He continued by saying that the fears of EDEK were confirmed, since it is apparent that the 'Europeans wanted to help but they also want to manipulate Cyprus economically in order then to control the gas explorations and impose a solution of their choice with regard to the Cyprus Problem'. Sizopoulos clarified that EDEK, while acknowledging the responsibilities of the previous Christofias Government for leading Cyprus into this situation, 'believes that the present Government is below expectations, it has shown no resistance, deceived the people, and that notions of supposedly good relations in Europe worked against rather than for the benefit of the Cypriot people'. Finally, the Deputy President of EDEK said that with a 'haircut' amounting to €5.8 billion, Cyprus does not need the Troika and 'it is possible to be saved without this Memorandum'. He also stressed the reasonable request for a referendum.[33]

The President of the Cooperative Confederation, Andreas Mouskalis, assessed that the Eurogroup had imposed the worst possible scenarios. He spoke about a 'dishonest decision which aims to bleed the Cypriot people and their future dry'. He stressed that the decision was catastrophic for the financial system of Cyprus, claiming that it had been 'hatched by the IMF, the slaughterers of people, and was promoted by the Germans and the hard-core of the EU'.[34]

ASTRA also consulted with the Deputy President of DISY, MP Lefteris Christoforou. He immediately admitted that the result was not expected and declined to make evaluations before hearing official information from the representative of Cyprus to

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31   'Without Limits', Astra Radio Station, Saturday 16 March 2013.

32   *Ibid.*

33   *Ibid.*

34   *Ibid.*

the Eurogroup. Commenting on the reactions of the listeners with regard to the attitude of the President he said that 'the issues are critical and you should not elevate small-minded political grounds'. However, Mr Christoforou did not avoid criticism of the previous government and went on to say that if they had concluded a Memorandum agreement in July 2012 the situation would have been much better. The delay, he observed, meant that the process of entering into a Memorandum agreement eventually coincided with the election campaign in Germany which had complicated matters.[35]

The General Secretary of AKEL, Andros Kyprianou, also made an intervention on ASTRA which essentially was a reiteration of what he had already said on CyBC. His comments seemed to lend greater importance to the sweeping privatisations provided in the Memorandum, than the actual proposed 'haircut'. Additionally, he commented on an earlier interview by Yiannakis Kasoulides, whereby the Foreign Minister expressed disagreement with the logic of the existence of 'red lines' with regard to Cyprus. Visibly annoyed with this position Kyprianou expressed the hope that 'the government cannot handle the Cyprus issue in the way they have handled the economy'.[36]

Taking advantage of the interactive nature of radio broadcasting, ASTRA allowed listeners to express opinions in the form of messages. According to the producer of the show, Neophytos Neophytou, 'all hell broke loose with messages and the call centre just caught fire'. The following is a small sample of some of the messages read on-air:[37]

'We demand re-investigation of banker's assets'

'Harnesses the power of radio and mobilise people to the streets'

'Block the House and the President'

'We are resentful'

'Vote against the destruction of Cyprus'

'We want to leave the EU'

'If we call the rulers traitors – are we wrong?'

'It's time to erect gallows'

'Cut from those who voted for them'

'Parliament say NO'

'Everything was premeditated'

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35   'Without Limits', Astra Radio Station, Saturday 16 March 2013.

36   *Ibid.*

37   Despite much effort it was not possible to acquire the complete list of messages sent by listeners to the station. Messages referred to in the text are those read out on people's behalf by the journalist on-air.

'Fair decision'

'Cut the salaries of the rich'[38]

Radio Proto opened in the same manner as the previously mentioned two stations. The presenter of the Saturday news programme, Kostas Konstantinou, relied on a highly comprehensive news bulletin of the station that attempted to help listeners to interpret the decision of the Eurogroup and predict the repercussions of the banking system and the Cyprus economy in general. In terms of politicians, Konstantinou hosted the views of the General Secretary of AKEL, the Deputy Chairman of the Democratic Rally and the President of the Finance Committee. All three basically reiterated what was said on other aforementioned radio stations.[39]

Beyond what Nicolas Papadopoulos had already stated on CYBC-3, he expressed the view that the punitive stance taken by the Eurogroup towards Cyprus would act as a boomerang for the EU since, as he alleged, 'there will be a lack of trust of all depositors in all countries of the Eurozone'. He explained that this would happen because following the Eurogroup decision additional 'haircuts' on deposits will be opened and will be imposed on any other country that use the support mechanism. Andros Kyprianou spoke of a dreadful day and the resounding failure of the Government and the need, even if belatedly, of developing alternative scenarios. Lefteris Christoforou accused European partners of destroying solidarity. He said that they had 'killed any sense of solidarity' with Cyprus and they had not acted as a 'Union'. Furthermore, he conveyed the view that if the previous government had signed the Memorandum in June 2012 the conditions would be painless in comparison with those imposed presently in Cyprus by the Eurogroup:

> 'The fact that we said, we kept open the Memorandum for nine months when Samaras, who was in a much more difficult condition, concluded a Memorandum in three months to get €50 billion, proves how wrong the tactics followed in Cyprus by the previous Government actually were. Every day that passed made the situation worse and gave the opportunity to the Germans and others to promote their own claims.'

However, the Deputy Chairman of the Democratic Rally admitted that on their return to Cyprus, the Cyprus delegation and the Minister of Finance himself 'should give answers to many questions that remain open'.[40]

In his intervention, the President of the Board of the Hellenic Bank, Makis Keravnos, spoke of a decision that lacked reasonable logic which was also characterised as

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38   'Without Limits', Astra Radio Station, Saturday 16 March 2013.

39   'Make Issue', Radio Proto, Saturday 16 March 2013.

40   *Ibid.*

'humiliating' for the Cypriot people. He recalled that the 'haircut' was something that the President of the Republic and the Minister of Finance had declared would not even be discussed. He asked for calm to prevail and moderating elements to help address the problems created. At the same time he pointed out that 'despite the anger and frustration caused by the decision we should be optimistic'.[41]

From another viewpoint, economist, Michalis Florentiadou, estimated that the Cypriot side went into Eurogroup cornered; with a weak position and that any proposed solution would be painful for Cyprus. In fact he records that 'it seems that there was no alternative'. He proceeded by saying that those who believed in 'European solidarity without limits had their hopes dashed' and urged politicians to be 'more realistic'. In explaining the attitude of Europeans he said that 'one does not want to see a country, a member of the Eurozone be bankrupt, but on the other hand they want all funded Memorandums to be sustainable'. As a decision, it may in the eyes of the Cypriots appear unfair, but Europeans think that in this way their own sense of justice is satisfied because it was a case of equal burden sharing. In Europe the 'haircut' decision was unprecedented but in the US, 'if a bank faces similar problems, deposits of more than two hundred and fifty thousand US dollars are lost'. Finally, Florentiadou voiced his opinion that the 'haircut' as a method was 'not the end of the world' and that 'we should see how we can move forward'.[42]

Yet another economist, Theodoros Panayiotou, described the 'haircut' as very wrong and inept and 'it should have never been agreed to!' It was a decision that would irreparably undermine the financial system of Cyprus. Panayiotou was disappointed with the Finance Minister, noting that a 10% of the 'haircut' could be converted into gas shares. Criticising the choices and manipulations made in terms of government he pointed out that 'you cannot win your credibility in Europe and lose your credibility in Cyprus'. He also estimated that the decision on Cyprus would impact on all the Eurozone countries, since the depositors were sceptical and that 'they do not have their faith! Trust may continue, but it could be lost, and therefore we are talking about the complete stupidity of Eurozone leaders'.[43]

In his intervention on Radio Proto, Stelios Platis, beyond what he had already stated on other radio shows expressed the view that we 'must get rid of Laiki Bank even if that has negative costs, we still need to discuss Plan B, but this should not be done by political parties, as we have seen where that has led us already, the discussion should be with economists'. Platis refuted the argument that the government had to choose between

41   'Make Issue', Radio Proto, Saturday 16 March 2013.

42   *Ibid.*

43   *Ibid.*

disorderly bankruptcy and a painful compromise, saying characteristically: 'What else could be considered disorderly – default?' To end with he reiterated the call for the rejection of the bill by MPs. 'The credibility of the financial system has been damaged, stressed, let us not haircut our own credibility as well.'[44]

The attorney, Andreas Angelides, took the view that the decision of the Eurogroup violates the right to movable and immovable property, which he considers to be one of the most protected rights in the EU. Since this right is violated, he said, 'Every citizen can appeal to the European Court in Luxembourg, not as a person, but through a collective process.'[45]

Lazaros Mavros, the presenter of the daily morning programme on Radio Proto expressed his own view on the handling of matters by the Cyprus delegation. The reporter turned his 'guns' personally at the President of the Republic by considering the attitude of the Eurogroup as 'unacceptable and destructive'. The reporter read his own text which would be published the next day in the newspaper 'Simerini' under the original title: 'You voted Anastasiadis? Now you got to Eat/Endure/Live with Anastasiadis.'

In short, Mavros' comment targeting the citizens who just three weeks earlier voted Anastasiades into power highlights the new Presidency of the State by homing in on their behaviour during the most historic Eurogroup. 'The President tricked them', Mavros said, and went on to say that he had 'violated the election and post-election promises made to them, he bowed his head and usurped their vote. After all this how would voters react?' The journalist linked the behaviour of the President of the Eurogroup in the session with the stance taken in the 2004 Referendum, and predicted that Cyprus would soon be faced with the promotion of another unfavourable solution – The Dissolution of Cyprus and the plundering of our country's rich natural gas deposits.[46]

On Monday 18 March, the day the House of Representatives would decide the fate of the bill for the 'haircut', two radio stations, despite the fact that it was a public holiday (Green Monday), produced extraordinary news programmes.

In a special show, RIK-3 hosted the government spokesman together with party representatives, representatives of the commercial and industrial world, trade unions, economists, political analysts, and commentaries from the station's correspondents in European countries. The show dealt mainly with the following issues:

➢ The positions that would be taken by the parties during the critical vote;
➢ The impact of the bill on the Cypriot economy and society, and the financial system in Cyprus, and countries in the Eurozone;

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44 'Make Issue', Radio Proto, Saturday 16 March 2013.

45 *Ibid.*

46 *Ibid.*

> ➢ The availability of alternatives;
> ➢ The sustainability of Cyprus as a member of the Eurozone;
> ➢ The attitude of the Cypriot delegation at the meeting of 15 March in Brussels;
> ➢ The movement on Eastern stock markets and how they were affected by the Eurogroup's decision;
> ➢ The mobilisation of citizens.

Due to the importance of the situation it is deemed necessary to make a succinct reference to the attitude of the producers of the two morning shows on the day of the discussion of the bill for 'haircut' in the House of Representatives. I must stress that the aim of this research is not to evaluate journalists but to focus on the criticality of the situation and how it was reported on this day by these two radio stations.

Paula Sponta, who was responsible for coordinating the discussion on RIK-3, adopted a cautious approach by being demanding with the guests in attendance. She tried to be fair to all participants present but at the same time her own personal view – in favour of the bill – came across when reading between the lines. The main reason for this attitude was 'the absence of an alternative proposal'.[47]

Radio Proto chose a different route with journalist, Lazaros Mavros, in his extraordinary topical broadcast of Monday 18 March. The reporter essentially put on the back burner the regular informative nature of the programme, turning it into a purely subjective broadcast. Without exception the guests, each from their own perspective, opposed the bill through formulating simultaneous sharp criticism on the handling of the issues by the President. Indeed one of them, Dimitris Konstantakopoulos, directly accused the President of the Republic of high treason in at least three cases, labelling him as 'the scum of Nicosia' and 'the killer inside our house'. The journalist intervened only in the third instance by saying that these were heavy characterisations. The guests on the show broached the idea of an international conspiracy against Cyprus and raised urgent questions on finding alternatives, underlining the devastating repercussions of the 'haircut' for Cyprus in general. Questions and comments by the journalist moved in a similar tone, with references often made to Eleftherios Venizelos, ancient Greek scholars and philosophers, also using hard and weighty characterisations against the ruling government. It is also important to note the repeated invocation of the German Finance Ministry, who said that the idea of 'haircuts' on deposits over €100,000 was not theirs, but came from President Anastasiades. Wanting to emphasise his own stance on the matter, the reporter returned to the chorus line from a famous song by Xarchakos: 'Mana Mou

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47   The argument put forward by the journalist, not directly as a view, but as a plausible way through a series of questions.

Ellas' (ta pseftika to loyia ta megala) [My mother Hellas (those grand false words)],[48] and recited this line following each interview. This reference added a heavy repetitive tone to the broadcast, functioning as it did as a form of nationalist rhetoric.

Conclusions

It is clear that the Media in general and journalists in specific who were obviously influenced by the general climate created by Government did not consider it likely that a decision on taxation of savings in banks (haircut) would actually happen. For a long time, as we have shown, it was not an item for discussion on radio agendas. This displacement could likewise be viewed as a form of out-of-touch-ness on their part which afterwards left a feeling of disoriented producers on daytime radio broadcasting stations. It was clear that they did not evaluate scenarios as properly as they could have done and that they did not have much information on the 'haircut'. In many ways it came as a complete surprise to many people in the media just as it did to citizens of Cyprus. The difference is, of course, that we expect media to be informed, to be on top of things and well-briefed.

In comparison with most presenters and producers, the correspondents from ASTRA and RIK-3 radio stations came across as more astute in their estimations after almost every response to the unfolding situation and they often left their options open.

More often than not, incorrect forecasts and invalid estimates came across from guests on radio stations. The possibility of clipping savings was considered unlikely. Political and economic commentators and analysts focused their attention on the provisions of the Memorandum configuration and ignored the warnings on a looming 'haircut' that was coming from abroad. Instead, and this applies particularly to politicians, they tended to slide into a form of rhetorical public on-air mudslinging, a blame game concerning who is responsible (for now) by referring to who was or who used to be in power, when in fact a more holistic and united approach would have been more appropriate and perhaps effective.

Broadcasts from RIK-3 and ASTRA in the days preceding the Eurogroup meeting dealt more extensively with issues, and the key factor in this was because both stations maintained correspondents in countries which play a key role in shaping the international environment. CyBC went one step further and even had a special envoy for the Eurogroup meeting in Brussels. As a result, reportage by these stations had a different kind of live

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48 'Mana Mou Ellas' by Stavros Xarchakos from the release 'to Rebetiko' (1983) a motion film soundtrack by Costas Ferris. The resonance of linking a film about the 'Asia Minor' tragedy (1923) with the current economic crisis has a heaviness in terms of nationalism and rhetoric, despite sentiment of the original lyric which criticises nationalism and the fate of refugees from Asia Minor.

unfolding quality in terms of their content. Additionally, their coverage tended to be more informative and objective while other stations like Radio Proto relied on forms of subjective commentary based on bias which often utilised imagery and language that ranged from opinionated personal inflection (Lazaros Mavros) to at times slanderous and contentious accusations.

Simultaneously, one station Kanali 6 did not give due attention and importance to developments in Brussels. It was the only one in our sample that did not alter its programme and did not address, other than routine newscasts, the outcome of the Eurogroup. This was largely due to the uniqueness of the specificity of the town of Limassol in relation to annual Carnival Festivities which traditionally happen on the weekend leading up to the public holiday of Green Monday.

The criticality of the session at the House of Representatives on Monday 18 March should have been an ongoing item on all radio stations. Ultimately only RIK-3 and Radio Proto had regular live coverage and broadcasts on this historic occasion.

Broadcasts on RIK-3 and ASTRA were quite pluralistic and hosted all views on the events that shook Cyprus. On the other hand Radio Proto, generally included people whose views largely coincided or colluded with those of the presenter, Lazaros Mavros. Generally, the majority of journalists tried to put their personal views into the frame in an attempt to emphasise the informative qualities of their content. The only exception was the journalist Lazaros Mavros, who on Saturday and Monday chose to be clearly and absolutely biased on developments.

On the whole, the radio stations under investigation with the exception of Kanali 6, responded to the character and mission of offering audiences timely and broadly comprehensive information about events in Brussels.

The key objective of this research has focused on classifying and processing a large volume of recorded radio broadcast archival material. While acknowledging that an empirical piece of research such as this may have certain epistemological limitations I believe synoptically that this is a first step on research on radio content in a specific time of political turmoil in contemporary Cyprus. It is hoped to extend this study in the near future to include other key forms of media, such as print, television and news web portals on the same subject with the objective of contrasting different coverage on the tumultuous days leading up to the vote on the bailout in Cyprus.

Articulating Participation and Agonism:
A Case Study on the Agonistic Re-articulations
of the Cyprus Problem in the Broadcasts of the Community
Broadcaster MYCYradio

Nico Carpentier[1]

Abstract

The article starts with a discussion on the material and discursive components of conflict transformation, arguing for the need to complement the dominance of material and psychological approaches with a more discursive-cultural approach. This plea contextualises the analysis of a series of broadcasts of the Cypriot web community radio station, MYCYradio. Supported by the Mouffe's (discourse-) theoretical conceptualisations of antagonism and agonism, the analysis focuses on the broadcasts of three MYCYradio shows. For each show, 10 episodes, broadcast between September and November 2013 are analysed, using discourse-theoretical analysis. Through this analysis, four main re-articulations are identified in the MYCYradio shows: the overcoming/decentralising of the divide, the deconstruction of the self (and the enemy), the reconfiguration of time, and the elaboration of the cost of the conflict. The analysis shows that community media, despite the many different problems they face, have particular abilities to support agonistic discourses.

Keywords: community media, participatory media, Cyprus Problem, conflict transformation, discourse theory, agonism, antagonism, discourse-theoretical analysis, constructionism

Introduction

In past decades, community media have received considerable attention, not least from academic researchers, where it has been argued that these media organisations are vital

assets to the respective media landscapes to which they belong. But seldom has community media's role in relation to violent conflict received a similar degree of attention. Nevertheless, as the rare studies into this subfield (see e.g. Rodriguez, 2011) indicate, community media identities and practices can indeed structurally contribute to conflict transformation.

For a thorough and in-depth analysis of this role of community media, it is necessary to focus on a particular conflict, and even on a particular community media organisation, to cope with the complexity that always characterises conflicts (and community media). This article thus focuses on a web radio station, MYCYradio, located in Nicosia, Cyprus; an island which is typified by a combination of long-lasting conflicts and crises. The study concentrates on the so-called Cyprus Problem, which refers to the decades of intercommunal tensions and violence that eventually resulted in the geographic and ethnic divide of the island in 1974, when Turkey invaded and occupied the north. This long-lasting political crisis still plays a significant role in contemporary Cypriot politics and cannot be seen in isolation from other crises such as the recent financial crisis in the Eurozone. The Cyprus Problem has impacted on the economic development of the island, in particular on the north, which saw its export capacity restricted by an embargo and which still requires Turkish financial support. Ironically, the north's isolation and its weaker economic development somewhat protected it from the banking crisis of 2012–2013, which predominantly and severely affected the south: In 2013, the banking crisis led to the dissolution of the Cyprus Popular Bank (or Laiki Bank) and to a 'haircut' on uninsured deposits. The economic effect of this crisis in the south was intense, as the decrease of the Gross National Income with almost 5% in 2013 demonstrates (World Bank, 2014).

Within the particular context of the Cyprus Problem – in articulation with a series of other crises – this case study further focuses on the content of three MYCYradio programmes: the Turkish Cypriot *One Percent*, the Greek Cypriot *Downtown Choris Bakira* and the mixed-community *Cyprus Oral History Project*. In order to understand how these programmes contribute to conflict transformation (and what the limits of their contributions are), the article starts with a number of theoretical reconfigurations, that emphasise the importance of the discursive (while the more classic models of conflict resolution tend to combine the material components with only the psychological approaches) that, as Mouffe (2005, 2013) explains, define conflict as an ontological condition of the social and explore the transformation of antagonism into agonism. Through this discourse-theoretical lens, the three MYCYradio shows are analysed for the presence and nature of particular agonistic re-articulations of the antagonistic model of war.

Material and Discursive Dimensions of Conflict Transformation

Conflict itself, as a concept, has a wide variety of meanings, as Pondy (1967, p. 298) remarked: 'The term "conflict" has been used at one time or another in the literature to describe: (1) antecedent conditions [...], (2) affective states [...], (3) cognitive states of individuals [...], and conflictual behaviour, ranging from passive resistance to overt aggression'. Important in the context of this article are the differences in the definitions of conflict as violent behaviour, as antagonistic positions and as societal contradictions (Wallensteen, 1991, p. 130). If conflict is defined as violent behaviour, it is easy to think its cessation, and the conflict's resolution is its transformation from a violent to a non-violent state. When conflict is seen as antagonistic positions between actors, as defined by Wallensteen (*ibid.*), as 'subjectively experienced or objectively observable incompatibilities', then these antagonisms are not necessarily resolved when violent behaviour disappears. For Wallensteen (*ibid.*, p. 131), resolution is then the 'transcending [of] a basic incompatibility between the parties in conflict in such a manner that they (voluntarily) express their satisfaction with the outcome [...]'. Finally, if conflict is seen as societal contradictions, conflict is not resolved 'until more fundamental changes are made', and before that occurs, conflicts 'may shift between more latent or manifest phases [...]' (*ibid.* p. 130).

Frequently, the emphasis in conflict and conflict resolution theory is placed on the more material dimensions of conflict. For instance, Galtung's (1969) influential distinction between personal violence and structural violence as a way to reflect on peace research, is operationalised by reverting to material versions of concepts such as, on the one hand, bodily harm, tools, actors, organisations, and targets, and on the other, power distribution, inequality, actors, systems, structures, ranks and levels (Galtung, 1969, pp. 174–175). Galtung's (2009) equally important conflict triangle model connects three concepts, namely conflict, attitude and behaviour. Conflict is viewed here as incompatibilities or contradictions, as he explains in the description of his 2009 version of this model: 'Conflict has been defined in terms of incompatibilities, of contradictions, and that should not be confused with the attitudinal and behavioral consequences of conflict' (Galtung, 2009, p. 105). Similarly, Mitchell's (1981) triadic conflict structure, which was inspired by Galtung's model (see Demmers, 2012, p. 5), also has three components, (i.e. situation, attitudes and behaviour), and uses an equally materialist approach towards conflict, which is seen as 'any situation in which two or more "parties" (however defined or structured) perceive that they posses[s] mutually incompatible goals' (Mitchell, 1981, p. 17). Even more recent models – such as the 'hourglass' model of conflict resolution responses (Ramsbotham, Miall and Woodhouse, 2011) – tend to emphasise the material aspect. In this 'hourglass' model a more temporal dimension (and escalation and de-escalation phases) is added to Galtung's approach, which allows the

authors to distinguish between conflict containment, conflict settlement, and conflict transformation. Interestingly, the cultural is present in this model through the notion of cultural peacebuilding, but only connected to conflict transformation.

Despite their material emphasis, we should not disregard the importance that the psychological, and thus, although indirectly, the cultural, plays in these models. Galtung's conflict triangle model places considerable importance on the notion of attitude, which he sees as the 'mental states of the actors', as distinct from the 'somatic states of the actors in the action-system', a distinction which is grounded in 'the age-old body-soul division between the somatic and the mental states' (Galtung, 2009, p. 36). These attitudes become articulated with the notion of perception, both of the self and the enemy, where Galtung emphasises the structural similarities of these perceptions: 'There are important symmetries in the perception, they are to some extent mirror images of each other, through imitation and projection' (*ibid*., p. 105). These examples show how individualistic and actor-based Galtung's approach is, even if he acknowledges that actors can be collectivities, but then attitude refers 'to the attitudes of the members' (*ibid*., p. 37). Attitudes also play a significant role in Mitchell's (1981, p. 27) work. He defines conflict attitudes as 'those psychological states (both common attitudes, emotions and evaluations, as well as patterns of perception and misperception) that accompany and arise from involvement in a situation of conflict'. Despite his starting point that 'such emotions and cognitive processes are essentially characteristic of individuals', he does acknowledge a societal dimension, as 'they can be shared by a large or small group of people' (*ibid*., p. 71). Also in Mitchell's case, we can find significant attention expended on perception, which brings in the representational angle, particularly because of Mitchell's (*ibid*., 99ff) emphasis on images of the self and the enemy. The images that Mitchell describes are the virile and moral self and the alien intruder within the self-images on the one hand, and the black-top and puppet (enemy) leadership, the 'pro-us' (enemy) people and the unified enemy images on the other.

Despite the presence of the more psychological aspects in some seminal works on conflict and conflict resolution, the need to strengthen the cultural components remains. However significant the work of authors such as Galtung and Mitchell is, their focus on the psychological (more than on the cultural and the discursive) feeds into a more individualised approach, grounded in a realist paradigm. One significant consequence is that the interactive relations between the cultural-discursive and the material (or behavioural) remain underrepresented. More in particular, both the role of the discursive in providing meaning to the material (and behavioural) and the contingencies in these signifying processes, which allow space for agency and avoid the full closure of structure, are not thematised. Demmers (2012, p. 119) summarises this difference as follows: 'The discursive approach rejects both individualist and structuralist theories of violent conflict'.

Other authors have emphasised these discursive dimensions, as is illustrated by Keen (1986, p. 10): 'In the beginning we create the enemy. Before the weapon comes the image. We think others to death and then invent the battle-axe or the ballistic missiles with which to actually kill them'. Or, as Jabri (1996, p. 23) writes: 'knowledge of human phenomena such as war is, in itself, a constitutive part of the world of meaning and practice'.

Arguably, this approach can be further enriched and strengthened by making use of discourse theory, a particular strand in discourse studies which allows not only to emphasise the significance of the discursive from within the logic of contingency, but also to revert to a broadened ontology of conflict. In discourse theory, a discourse is viewed as a structured entity in which meaning is constructed, but also constantly negotiated. Laclau and Mouffe (1985, p. 105) described discourse as a structured entity that is the result of articulation, which itself is defined as 'any practice establishing a relation among elements such that their identity is modified as a result of the articulatory practice'. Discourses are contingent structures that allow us to think, understand and communicate the social, without ever being capable of replacing the material. A world of existence, which is external to thought, and independent of any system of social relations has to be acknowledged, but discourses remain very necessary to attribute meaning to this world of existence. Discourse theory thus rejects the 'classical dichotomy between an objective field constituted outside of any discursive intervention, and a discourse consisting of the pure expression of thought' (*ibid.*, p. 108), but seeks to explain how both categories interact. When discussing the discursive, it is important to emphasise its contingent and political nature, because the always existing possibility of re-articulation, or dis-articulation, renders discourses structurally susceptible to change. This does not imply that the discursive is incessantly fluid and void of any fixity. The implication of discursive contingency is that the fixation, stabilisation and sedimentation of meaning is a particular social construction and a political intervention. This in turn means that alternative articulations could potentially come into existence, but that this potentiality is not necessarily translated in actual practice, and that despite its particularity, specific articulations can rigidly maintain their presence. In cases where a particular discourse or articulation achieves dominance, the Gramscian notion of hegemony is used in discourse theory.

Following this discourse-theoretical position, its approach towards the political and its affinity with the sociologies of conflict, conflict is very much seen as an ontological condition which structures the social and the political. Mouffe's (1997, p. 3) definition of the concept of the political clarifies this, as she perceives the political as a 'dimension of antagonism that is inherent to human society', in order to argue that the political touches upon our entire world, and cannot be confined to institutionalised politics.

Consequently, the issue is not to suppress conflict, but to encapsulate it in a democratic order. Mouffe (2005) here refers to the work of Schmitt (1996), and his friend/foe distinction, in order to theorise the need to shift from an antagonistic enemy model to an agonistic adversary model. As Schmitt (1996, p. 27) wrote, the enemy is whoever is 'in a specially intense way, existentially something different and alien, so that in the extreme case conflicts with him are possible'. This antagonistic model of conflict[2] is grounded in a series of dichotomies, which glorify and homogenise the self, and demonise the enemy. Agonism then transforms this antagonistic conflict into a 'we/they relation where the conflicting parties, although acknowledging that there is no rational solution to their conflict, nevertheless recognize the legitimacy of their opponents' (Mouffe, 2005, p. 20). In other words, an agonistic conflict does not hide the differences in position and interest between the involved parties; they are 'in conflict' but 'share a common symbolic space within which the conflict takes place' (Mouffe, 2005, p. 20; see also Mouffe, 2013, p. 7).

From this perspective, the notion of conflict resolution should be handled with more care, as (ultimately) conflict can never be resolved. Conflict transformation seems to be a more appropriate concept to be used in a discourse-theoretical context, because this concept allows emphasising that 'conflict is normal in human relations, and conflict is a motor of change' (Lederach, 2003, p. 5). The argument proposed in this article is that conflict transformation consists out of the transformation of antagonistic conflicts into agonistic conflicts. Lederach's (2003, p. 14) definition of conflict transformation, which is seen to consist out of 'constructive change processes that reduce violence, increase justice in direct interaction and social structures', and that respond to 'real-life problems in human relationships', can be used to make this point. If we look closely at this definition, then we can identify this definition as an operationalisation of agonistic conflict, which is built upon the avoidance of physical and structural violence and on the recognition of all actors as operating within the same democratic, legal and social sphere, without ignoring the diversity of their positions.

Media, Conflict and Agonism

This transformation of antagonistic into agonistic conflicts has both material and discursive dimensions, where the latter is affected by a variety of discursive machineries, social structures that circulate and perform discourses, and where the iterations of these discourses – in a very Butlerian (1993) sense – always affect their nature. One rather significant type of discursive machinery is the mainstream media. The multitude of

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2   When, in earlier work, discussing antagonism in connection to war, I have labelled this the ideological model of war (Carpentier, 2008).

discourses that these media organisations circulate is frequently contradictory and instable, although moments of cross-media consensus and hegemonic articulations do exist here. As an example, in the case of war, strong discursive alignments tend to occur, as has been documented frequently (i.e. Hjarvard and Kristensen, 2014). As most discursive machineries, mainstream media organisations have a certain but varying degree of autonomy, but they are, at the same time, not outside dominant discourses (Hall, 1973). Though many involved in mainstream media organisations like to believe that they are outside the operations of ideology – what Schlesinger (1987) has called the macro-myth of independence – ideology as such, and the workings of the ideological model of war with its antagonistic logics, are difficult to escape, not least because, as Kellner (1992, p. 58) frames it, mainstream media organisations are 'a crucial site of hegemony', which also implies that they are significant targets for the propaganda efforts of involved parties. At the same time, we should acknowledge that mainstream media still have the possibilities of developing counter-hegemonic discourses, including agonistic discourses that have the potential to question the taken-for-grantedness of antagonism.

But arguably, community media are frequently more geared towards agonistic discourses for a number of structural reasons. Before discussing their capacity for the voicing, performance and circulation of agonistic discourses of conflict, it is necessary to briefly elaborate on the identity of community media, as they can take many different forms and can use various technological platforms (print, radio, TV, web-based, or mixed). Despite their differences, community media share a number of key characteristics, which distinguish them from other types of (mainstream) media organisations like public service or commercial media. Their close connection to civil society and their strong commitment to maximalist forms of participation and democracy, in both their internal decision-making process and their content production practices, are especially important distinguishing characteristics that establish community media as the third media type, distinct from public service and commercial media. One way to capture their diversity and understand what unites them is to combine the four approaches that have been used in the literature for the study of community media (discussed in Carpentier, Lie and Servaes, 2003; see also Bailey, Cammaerts and Carpentier, 2007; Carpentier, 2011). Taken together, these four approaches allow the complexity and rich diversity of community/alternative media to be unveiled, together with the role of participation:

- ➢ The community approach focuses on access by, and participation of, the community; the opportunity given to 'ordinary people' to use media technologies to have their voices heard; and the empowerment of community members through valuing their skills and views;
- ➢ The alternative approach stresses that these media have alternative ways of organising, alternative ways of using technologies, carry alternative discourses

and representations, make use of alternative formats and genres, and remain independent from market and state;

➢ The civil society approach incorporates aspects of civil society theory to emphasise that citizens are being enabled to be active in one of many (micro-) spheres relevant to everyday life, using media technologies to exert their rights to communicate;

➢ Finally, the rhizomatic approach uses Deleuze and Guattari's (1984) metaphor to focus on three aspects: community media's elusiveness, their interconnections (amongst each other and, mainly, with civil society), and the linkages with market and state. In this perspective, community media are seen to act as meeting points and catalysts for a variety of organisations and movements.

At the same time, it is necessary to avoid an approach that is too celebratory towards community media. Community media do not provide catch-all solutions for all societal problems, although they can play a significant role in strengthening the democratic tissue of a society, and, as the following part will argue, in contributing to the transformation of antagonistic conflict into agonistic conflict.

As discussed with Doudaki in an earlier article (Carpentier and Doudaki, 2014), the main argument here is that their participatory nature and their ambition to be an alternative to mainstream media organisations, also facilitates their societal role as producers of both internal and external diversity. Fraser and Restrepo Estrada (2001, p. 18) argued this in relation to community radio in the following way: '[c]ommunity radio, through its openness to participation to all sectors and all people in a community/ies, creates a diversity of voices and opinions on the air'. Community media are not homogeneous organisations serving a homogeneous community, but allow a diversity of people, embedded in civil society, to produce media content that relates to a variety of societal groups and sub-communities, mixing minority and majority cultures, ethnicities and languages often in the same community media (Barlow, 1988; René and Antonius, 2009; Sussman and Estes, 2005), creating rhizomatic networks of alternative content creation.

Obviously, this capacity to stimulate intercultural dialogue is not to be taken for granted as it very much depends on the embeddedness of the media organisational culture in a participatory-democratic ideology. It is also complicated by linguistic differences. Moreover, organising dialogue within a context of diversity generates many thresholds and difficulties. One significant problem is generated by the risk of non-democratic voices and actors entering and damaging these realms devoted to democracy and participation. At the same time an equal number of creative democratic practices have been developed to deal with these challenges. To use the example of language diversity, and the difficulties it creates for enhancing dialogue: A wide variety of techniques has been developed by

organisations like the Swiss radio school klip+klang, which has been experimenting with organising multi-linguistic dialogues in close collaboration with Swiss community radio stations like the Zurich-based Radio Lora (see klipp+klang, 2009).

This capacity to foster diversity, intercultural dialogue, and tolerance has made community media privileged actors in peace-building, conflict transformation, and reconciliation projects. In contrast to the more general and widely recognised capacity to stimulate intercultural dialogue, there is much less academic research into the more specific role of community media to strengthen the transformation of antagonistic conflict into agonistic conflict, although there are many particular projects, mainly located in the global South. In one of the rare academic publications, Anheier and Raj Isar (2007, pp. 323–324) suggest that community media can indeed play a mediating role in conflicts. Moreover, Rodríguez (2001, p. 147; 2011) attributes a central role to community media in peace-building efforts and conflict transformation. In a ground-breaking research project in the Colombian Magdalena Medio region, researchers from four universities and a regional network of community radio stations joined forces and provided unrivalled evidence for this central role of community media in a struggle for peace (Cadavid and Moreno Martínez, 2009; see also Rodríguez, 2011). One of Rodríguez's (2011, p. 255) key conclusions of her analysis of Colombian community media activities stresses the performance of peace-building: 'Instead of transmitting messages about peacebuilding to audiences, Columbian citizens' media involve audiences in, and subject audiences to, the felt, embodied experience of peace'.

The lack of attention from academic researchers does not imply that no community media projects aimed at peace-building and conflict transformation have been organised. Different international institutions have been instrumental in supporting peace-building activities of community and especially UNESCO, with its Community Media Programme, has been at the forefront of these initiatives (Mainstreaming the Culture of Peace report, 2002; The United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa report, in Matoko and Boafo, 1998). In addition, AMARC[3] has been actively promoting the capacity of community media to support peace-building, especially through its women's network(s). But not all initiatives have been sustainable, for instance the UN peacekeeping radio stations have been critiqued for combining the lack of sustainability with the lack of local embeddedness (Orme, 2010).

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3   AMARC is the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters, or, in French, l'Association Mondiale des Radiodiffuseurs Communautaires.

CCMC and MYCYradio in Cyprus

As mentioned in the introduction, this article aims to contribute to filling some of the gaps mentioned in the first part of the study by focusing on the discursive dimension of conflict transformation and by looking at the agonistic discursive work performed by a community web radio station, MYCYradio in Cyprus. This web radio station is part of the Cyprus Community Media Centre (CCMC), which was established in 2009 and is located in the UN-guarded Buffer Zone in Nicosia. Initially it was not a broadcasting organisation, but centred on providing training, loaning equipment to member organisations (that are part of the Cypriot civil society), creating productions for other organisations, staging public events, and offering media advice to members. Only in 2013 did CCMC's web radio station, MYCYradio, begin broadcasting, despite the fact that at present there is no explicit recognition of community, or alternative media, in either part of Cyprus.[4] In its *Foundation Charter*, the mission of CCMC (2009) is pithily summarised as '[e]mpowering a media literate and active society', which positions its emphasis on community participation and empowerment. But the organisation also aims to contribute to conflict transformation, especially in the description of CCMC's ten core values where the link to conflict transformation is made explicit. Similarly, MYCYradio's (2013a) *Foundation Charter* also refers to inclusiveness, diversity and participation: 'MYCYradio aims to engage with and serve all communities living in Cyprus, by providing a platform for a diversity of voices to be heard. It aims to highlight cultural and linguistic diversity, encourage social integration thus promote a culture of active citizenship and participatory democracy'. With these objectives, MYCYradio further aims to provide an alternative to the Cypriot mainstream media, wherever 'one-sided legitimacy or status superiority, stereotypical positions of the own side's good intentions and the other's wrong doings dominate' (Christophorou, Sahin and Pavlou, 2010, p. 169).

As mentioned in the introduction, the radio broadcasts of three MYCYradio shows are analysed: the Turkish Cypriot *One Percent*, the Greek Cypriot *Downtown Choris Bakira* and the mixed-community *Cyprus Oral History Project*. More specifically, the analysis centres on 10 episodes of each show, broadcast between September and November 2013. During this period, the Turkish Cypriot *One Percent*, produced by Doğukan Müezzinler, discussed the 'problems that the Turkish Cypriot community faces' (MYCYradio, 2013b), sometimes with a guest. In the interim, the MYCYradio programme schedule changed, and *One Percent* was replaced by another programme

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4   Neither the internationally recognised Cyprus Radio and Television Authority (CyRTA), nor the Higher Broadcasting Authority in the northern part of Cyprus have made legislative provisions for analog or digital frequencies to be made available to community media organisations.

(*Cyprus 360*), which involved Doğukan Müezzinler until he left Cyprus. The Greek Cypriot *Downtown Choris Bakira* focused on the urban realities of Nicosia's inner city. In the course of the research, this programme had three producers – Orestis Tringides, Yiannis Ioannou and Yiorgos Kakouris. The latter two producers subsequently left the radio station and the programme was produced solely by Orestis Tringides until September 2014, when it stopped. Finally, the *Cyprus Oral History Project* was grounded in Frederick University's *The Cyprus Oral History and Living Memory Project* (2011), and was one among many Cypriot oral history projects (Briel, 2013). Its producer, Nicoletta Christodoulou, re-edited a selection of these interviews for the MYCYradio broadcasts. This programme ran until July 2014.

The broadcasts of these three radio shows were transcribed, translated into English – from Greek or Turkish – when necessary[5] and then analysed. The analysis of the broadcasts is further contextualised by interviews with their five producers. The method that has been used for the data analysis, is a discourse-theoretical analysis (Carpentier and De Cleen, 2007) supported by the basic principles of qualitative research (Wester, 1987, 1995; Maso, 1989). As a form of respondent validation or feedback analysis, the five producers were asked to comment on both an oral summary of, and a full draft paper on, the analysis.[6]

Representing Conflict on MYCYradio

In this case study, the emphasis will be placed on how the discourses at MYCYradio support the transformation of antagonism into agonism. In other words, this case study examines the ways the friend/foe distinction is re-articulated into a discursive model of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot relations that overcome the dichotomisations inherent to the friend/foe perspective. Through the discourse-theoretical analysis, four main re-articulations have been identified in the programmes: the overcoming/

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5   Most of the *Cyprus Oral History Project* broadcasts were in English (although there were three Greek broadcasts), all *One Percent* broadcasts were in Turkish, and most *Downtown Choris Bakira* broadcasts were in Greek (one was in English, and two combined Greek and English). Greek and Turkish broadcasts were translated into English. All citations in this article are rendered in English, and only special cases of (multi-) language use are indicated.

6   For this purpose, interviews were organised with Yiannis Ioannou (9 June 2014), Yiorgos Kakouris and Orestis Tringides (19 June 2014), Nicoletta Christodoulou (26 June 2014) and Doğukan Müezzinler (2 July 2014). During these interviews, all five producers expressed their agreement with the analysis. Afterwards, the five producers, together with CCMC ad interim manager Michael Simopoulos, received a draft version of this paper. Two producers, and the ad interim manager, provided additional feedback. In one case, a particular fragment was discussed extensively, which rightfully led to more emphasis on the playful nature of *Downtown Choris Bakira*.

decentralising of the divide; the deconstruction of the self, and the enemy; the reconfiguration of time, and the elaboration of the cost of the conflict. The four areas are discussed in this part of the article.

Overcoming/Decentralising of the Divide

Re-articulations that overcome or decentralise the divide are frequently present in the broadcasts: There is a wide variety of subtle narrations on how the separations and distinctions between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots – and sometimes between Greece and Turkey – are overcome or bypassed. Many of these narrations concern the discursive and material practices of contemporary everyday life in Cyprus and its many spheres, such as educational, professional, linguistic, relational, culinary and identity. Other accounts mention the ways that institutions overcome the divide, while others contain narrations that structurally decentre the divide. These re-articulations are often very implicit, and almost always made *en passant*. One example, which demonstrates how the overcoming of the divide within the educational, professional and linguistic spheres of the everyday is represented, occurs when a guest on *One Percent* initially describes himself as someone who was born in Turkey ('My family is from the last Greeks that stayed in Istanbul' – *One Percent*, broadcast 18 September 2013), undertook his PhD in Athens, worked as a journalist for the (northern) Cypriot desk of a Greek newspaper, and – as an academic – wrote a book in Turkish about Cyprus. In discussing this book, the guest also invokes a discourse of friendship, when he refers to the possibility of having his book translated into Greek, for 'our Greek friends' (*One Percent*, broadcast 18 September 2013). Moreover, in other cases, the relational sphere is seen as a location where the divide is overcome, not in general, as in the previous example, but in more specific terms, when Turkish Cypriots refer to *their* Greek Cypriot friends, and *vice versa*. By way of illustration: The following story is told, mostly in English, by a retired Greek Cypriot teacher in a *Cyprus Oral History Project* broadcast:

> 'And I remember once my sister didn't have black shoes to go to the church and the ... this Turkish [Cypriot] girl told her: Maroulla, να σου δώσω τα δικά μου είναι καινούργια [Greek in original – I'll give you mine, they are new] – her father was a doctor and they were rich. [...] And I remember Maroulla telling her: no, I am not going to accept them. [The girl then replied:] I give them to you because you are my best friend' (*Cyprus Oral History Project*, broadcast 30 September 2013).

The overcoming of the divide is also grounded in other affects, such as empathy and remorse. In the above-mentioned *Cyprus Oral History Project* broadcast, the interviewee summarily captures these emphatic sentiments in the following way: 'they suffered like we suffered' (*Cyprus Oral History Project*, 30 September 2013), which recognises the

suffering of the other, and not only focuses on the 'own' suffering (and the vilification of the other as perpetrator). Empathy can also be found in narrations concerning the visits by dislocated Cypriots to their original houses, as in the case of this retired Greek Cypriot civil servant:

> 'The Turkish Cypriot woman came near me to hug me. Then she was afraid of seeing me, crying like this, she came and went [...] The Turkish lady, I had nothing against her, it wasn't the Turkish lady's fault that she was inside. I truly didn't mind at all. I didn't have even the tiniest bit against her, so to speak. Because I said to myself, she has built her life for the second time too. Of course I didn't know this when I entered, [but] she had also lost a son in Istanbul' (*Cyprus Oral History Project*, broadcast 7 October 2013).

In some instances, empathy is explicitly grounded in a humanist stance, where the divide is overcome by emphasising that all are humans, as is the case in the following fragment:

> 'it's how you see your fellow human and the environment. You can't tell them apart. You must know to get in the other person's shoes. And Turkish Cypriots also have this problem, they are the same – we do not differ at all from the Turkish Cypriots [...] They sit, they eat, they drink. [...] We are humans, we are not Greek Cypriots, Turkish Cypriots, Maronites, it's how you see your fellow human' (*Downtown Choris Bakira*, broadcast 12 September 2013).

At the same time, the humanity of all is sometimes protected by creating a distinction between 'fanatics' and ordinary Cypriots, which is again used as a way to overcome the divide as both sides are seen to be equal in 'having fanatics'. In the *Cyprus Oral History Project* broadcast of 4 November 2013, the interviewee, a Turkish Cypriot biology teacher, says:

> 'we are Cypriots that couldn't find a way to protect ourselves, to protect our neighbors ... I mean ... against any [of the] fanatical movements'.

But in yet another *Cyprus Oral History Project* broadcast, this dichotomy between fanaticism and normalcy is undermined, as the interviewee explains, in detail, how his 'nationalistic feelings' led him to commit (minor) acts of vandalism as a child, and later, when he was a student, to consider planting a bomb in a factory. His entire interview is framed by his transformation from a Turkish Cypriot nationalist into a peace activist, despite the pressure from relatives, who were saying:

> 'how can you work with Greeks, to help the peace. With Greeks, when you know that they tried to kill your sister' (*Cyprus Oral History Project*, broadcast 23 September 2013).

Over and above that, the programmes contain narrations on how the divide is materially overcome, by people moving into the 'other' space. Some of these crossings of the material divide are highly emotional, as the above-mentioned stories have shown in the visits of dislocated Cypriots to their original houses. Another story about an earlier visit is the following:

> 'We went to the village in 1975. When the people saw us arriving in the village, they were all surprised. About one hundred people were crying, shouting, ... They shouted and said "τα παιδιά του Ιωσήφ ήρθαν" [Original in Greek – Josephs' children came]' (*Cyprus Oral History Project*, broadcast 30 September 2013).

Years later, when several 'border' crossings were opened in 2003, moving across the divide became easier and more integrated in everyday life, as the following citation displays:

> 'We would talk about our most favourite places of both sides. On the other side, of course, we love Büyük Han every Saturday around 11 o'clock. If anyone goes to Büyük Han, there is a long table there and I highly recommend everyone to go [...]' (*Downtown Choris Bakira*, broadcast 10 October 2013).

In addition, the space of the Buffer Zone, and in particular the Ledra Palace crossing, plays an important role in materially overcoming the divide, because it is defined not as a zone 'with nothing in it', but as a space that has structures and allows:

> 'people who love peace and want to discuss [their thoughts] with a lot of people from different places in Cyprus can come' (*Downtown Choris Bakira*, broadcast 19 September 2013),

as one guest of the *Downtown Choris Bakira* programme – a representative of the German-Cypriot Youth Exchange Programme – remarked.

Likewise, on a much more discursive level we can find narrations in programmes that overcome the divide through the identification with a unified Cypriot identity and culture. Sometimes these references are subtle, for instance, when a guest – an academic – invites 'all the islanders' (*One Percent*, broadcast 18 September 2013) to the presentation of his new book. However, in other cases the articulation of a unified identity is more explicit and celebratory. For instance, in a *Cyprus Oral History Project* broadcast, the interviewee, a Turkish Cypriot from Nicosia, says:

> 'Because Cyprus is a very beautiful island, we love our island, our country. Both Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, we have common ways, we love kebab, souvlaki, we love ...' (*Cyprus Oral History Project*, broadcast 14 October 2013).

Here, the climate, nature, food, history, architecture and the Cypriot language (a variation of Greek) are used to construct this unified Cypriot identity.

The programmes do not simply concentrate on the ways that the divide is overcome at the more everyday level, but they include references to how the divide is overcome in more institutionalised societal spheres. Here, we note that a multitude of societal fields are mentioned, including politics. The producers point in these scenarios to the existing collaborations between north and south, for example, in relation to sewage processing in Nicosia. One of the producers of *Downtown Choris Bakira* remarks that 'Unification comes from the underground, my friend' (*Downtown Choris Bakira*, broadcast 19 September 2013). What is more, other fields feature in the programmes: civil society and activism, academia, medicine, sports, and in particular the arts are mentioned as institutionalised locations for overcoming the divide. In one of the *Downtown Choris Bakira* broadcasts, this is made explicit as follows:

> 'But we are here – Artists are here to create a much better environment to bring the communities together' (*Downtown Choris Bakira*, broadcast 31 October 2013).

A variation of the overcoming of the divide articulation is its decentring, where the status of the Cyprus Problem, as a master signifier that gives meaning to all Cypriot realities, is reworked. The centrality of the Cyprus Problem is sometimes jokingly undermined, as portrayed in a *Downtown Choris Bakira* broadcast, where one of the producers describes a German Cypriot exchange programme when questioning the significance of the Cyprus Problem and stating the need to see beyond it:

> 'one year a group of German [visitors] come here and check[ed] us out, to see what is going on and to see what is going on with the stupid Cyprus Problem, and the society of course, beyond the Cyprus Problem [...]' (*Downtown Choris Bakira*, broadcast 19 September 2013).

Statements are alluded to which point to the hybrid cultural origins of Cyprus, the external explanations for the Cyprus Problem (e.g. colonialism and imperialism are mentioned), the many different ethnicities that live on the island and the integration of Cyprus into Europe, and in particular the EU, can be seen as decentring the Greek Cypriot/Turkish Cypriot dichotomy and the centrality of the Cyprus Problem. The strongest reformulation of this centrality comes from a guest in *Downtown Choris Bakira* who has recently returned from covering the civil war in Syria. In a rather insensitive way, he questions the severity of the Turkish invasion, by comparing it to the Syrian civil war:

> 'Look, we haven't actually had a war here. Here, Turkey invaded for 4–5 days and it was over. I mean, that is not war, but a cakewalk and – on the one hand, people got killed, but

on the other hand, you cannot compare the magnitude [of that conflict] with [what is going on in] Syria' (*Downtown Choris Bakira*, broadcast 24 October 2013).

The Deconstruction of the Self (and the Enemy)

The second re-articulation of antagonism in agonism deconstructs the self (and the enemy), a process that is based on processes of anti-homogenisation and pluralisation. In the ideological model of war, the self becomes glorified and homogenised – as the self is seen as united in its courageous battle against the enemy. Deconstructions of the self, in the MYCYradio broadcasts, firstly consist of critiques or rediculisations of particular components of the self (such as the 'own' political system, the army, the church, the media, ...), or of the entire 'own' culture and ideology, where the passive and uncritical nature of Cypriot society, the 'victim psychology' (*One Percent*, 20 November 2013) is shown, and its consumerist and intolerant characteristics are frequently mentioned.

Nonetheless, the critique on the 'own' political system is especially severe. Although nuances are sometimes made, politicians are described as both impotent and power hungry, incompetent, corrupt and unethical. Furthermore, they are described as playing games and being involved in intrigues. They serve private interest, and their actions lack transparency; their policies are repeatedly critiqued for being nonsensical. Moreover, they brain-wash and manipulate people, pitching them against each other. One of the guests in *One Percent* captures it quite clearly: 'Yes, the politics is dirty; yes, it's degenerated' (*One Percent*, broadcast 13 September 2013). Also, the 'own' allies (mostly Turkey in the Turkish Cypriot programme) and the 'own' historical leaders are not spared, as is evidenced by the following ironic conversation on the (Greek) Cypriot presidents:

'Producer 1: Look, there's something else, of course. We know that, as is well known, Makarios lies in a big jar full of formaldehyde
Producer 2: Not a jar, that other thing, what's it called?
Producer 1: A capsule
Producer 2: Yes, a capsule, but it's a big one. Yes, yes, on the throne. Ok, as usual, presidents come and go there. But what we don't know is that the head of Spyros Kyprianos is wired in the city [where] the presidential [estate is located] [Laughter]
Producer 1: No, the head of Spyros Kyprianos is like that of the villain from the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles ...'
(*Downtown Choris Bakira*, broadcast 7 November 2013).

Different other 'own' institutions are also critiqued, sometimes in a more serious tone, sometimes jokingly. The position of the 'own' military and police is put into question by linking the paramilitary forces of the 1960s and 1970s to fanaticism and terrorism. In one

example, the heroism of ordinary people is celebrated, and (later) juxtaposed to militarism:

> 'I met a fifteen-year-old [...] who literally crawled on the ground for 45 meters in order to retrieve a woman who had been shot and who nobody could get close to' (*Downtown Choris Bakira*, broadcast 24 October 2013).

But the critique affects present-day military and police forces as well where the police is linked to police brutality, and the competence of the army is questioned. In *Downtown Choris Bakira* especially, the Greek Cypriot army is – rather playfully – ridiculed; something which is triggered by one of the producer's absences because of his duties as a reservist. Here, irony is frequently used, with the others addressing that particular producer as 'General' and the producer himself stating: 'I'm ready for war!' (*Downtown Choris Bakira*, broadcast 24 October 2013). The same discursive logic applies to the 'own' media and religious institutions, where the former's lack of independence (in relation to both politics and the market), quality, relevance and respect, and the latter's business and political interests, are critiqued. As a pun based on the word βρωμάριος – a wordplay that combines βρώμα (which means 'bad smell') with Makarios (the first president of the Republic of Cyprus) – in the *Downtown Choris Bakira* broadcast of 17 October 2013, shows that these critiques which desacralise the key figure of contemporary Cypriot politics, are sometimes communicated through humour.

The homogeneity of the self is also sometimes re-articulated through the emphasis on internal diversity such as the (often suppressed) left-right divide or the distinction between 'fanatics' and ordinary people. This emphasis on the internal divide is partially contemporary – 'Of course, immediately, the press, or rather the public in general, is split' (*One Percent*, broadcast 6 November 2013) – and partially historical, as is illustrated by the story of a Greek Cypriot interviewee in the *Cyprus Oral History Project*, in relation to how she took shelter in a coffee shop when trying to get home during the 1974 coup:

> 'We went there, we tried to be aware for the people of EOKA [B] because that coffee shop belonged to the AKEL. There the Greek soldiers were shooting at us [...] Because EOKA [B] was the extreme right and AKEL the extreme left. So at that time the coup was against AKEL as well. That's why the soldiers were shooting [...] They didn't have the intention to shoot everybody, at least I think that they wanted to frighten us. I remember, I had [to] hide under the table' (*Cyprus Oral History Project*, broadcast 21 October 2013).

The Reconfiguration of Time

In the third re-articulation, time is reconfigured. In one variation, there is a nostalgic return to the pre-conflict past, which becomes represented as an idyllic era of co-

habitation and peace. This can mostly be found in the *Cyprus Oral History Project* broadcasts, where interviewees talk about the 1960s and 1970s. For instance, a Turkish Cypriot pharmacist talks about visiting a 'beautiful children's garden' in the Greek Cypriot part of Nicosia, and then, 'after coming back to Nicosia – our side' always being offered an ice cream in a Ledra street shop by her father (*Cyprus Oral History Project*, broadcast 9 September 2013). A Greek Cypriot retired civil servant recounts that:

> 'Our life was very good in Lapithos, and our neighbourhood was very nice. The relationships among the people were very nice' (*Cyprus Oral History Project*, broadcast 7 October 2013).

In some stories, the conflict is already more present, but it is described how, before the actual division of the island, Turkish and Greek Cypriots would defend each other:

> 'I know some villages that I really admire for protecting each other. [These villagers said:] "Those Turkish Cypriot villages are neighbours and they cannot touch them unless you kill us"' (*Cyprus Oral History Project*, broadcast 4 November 2013).

In the second variation of this time-based re-articulation, the focus is placed on the future, which includes explicit discussions about the solutions for the Cyprus Problem, and the requirements for their implementation. This variation contributes to the agonist re-articulation through the communication of the implicit belief that solutions can be realised and that a future without the Cyprus Problem can be imagined. Some of the strategies that are discussed are highly individual, such as the need to raise one's child with a high degree of autonomy, so that she/he is not dependant on anybody. The producer of *One Percent* expressed himself in the following way: 'it is clear that each individual has its own responsibility for solving the problems', to which his guest, an academic, then replied by acknowledging the need for 'mindfulness' (*One Percent*, broadcast 13 September 2013).

Other strategies are more encompassing. Sometimes, more political solutions are mentioned such as the establishment of a federation with the two communities, the island's demilitarisation, or the provision of guarantees since:

> 'we want the rest of our lives to be secure somehow, at least for the elements we cannot control. It [is] the same for both sides' (*Cyprus Oral History Project*, broadcast 11 November 2013).

Similarly, small scale political solutions like establishing a bazaar in the Buffer Zone are discussed. Not surprisingly, different, and sometimes contradictory positions are defended when discussing these political solutions. For example, in dealing with the

problem of returning the lost properties, some defend a compensation model, while others simply say:

> 'we want our houses, we want the places in which we were born and grew up, and let the Turk[i]s[h] [Cypriots] have their own houses back' (*Cyprus Oral History Project*, broadcast 11 November 2013).

In a few other cases, the solution is placed in more (politico-) culturally oriented solutions such as the need for a 'moral rebirth' (*Downtown Choris Bakira*, broadcast 12 September 2013); for Cypriots 'to be more questioning as a community' (*One Percent*, broadcast 25 September 2013) or to 'focus on more local or smaller things. To experience this, we can start to manage ourselves in neighbourhood-wide [schemes]' (*One Percent*, broadcast 20 November 2013). Here, we find a strong emphasis on the argument for Cypriots to take control themselves:

> 'I think it is up to Cypriots to come together and to work together to have a big future – a better future for all of us' (*Cyprus Oral History Project*, broadcast 14 October 2013).

A variation of this type of re-articulation can be found in the references to a post-conflict Cyprus, which attempt to imagine the country – and in particular the still divided capital city of Nicosia – after the conflict has been resolved, where both national – the urban development of Limassol – and international examples (i.e. Berlin) are used to show the potentially bright future of Cyprus and Nicosia.

The Elaboration of the Cost of the Conflict

Finally, the fourth re-articulation consists of a straightforward narration of the cost of the conflict and the division. The narrations of the conflict, especially in the *Cyprus Oral History Project* programme, are very detailed memorialisations of the fear, pain and destruction that characterised the intra-communal violence in the 1960s and the Turkish invasion in 1974. More than attributing blame, these memorialisations demonstrate the suffering caused by war, which ironically unifies both Greek and Turkish Cypriots, without privileging the suffering of one side – a frequently occurring process that Papadakis (2006) calls 'ethnic autism'. For instance, in the *Cyprus Oral History Project* broadcast of 7 October 2013, a Greek Cypriot refugee, whose husband is still missing, says the following about her status as refugee:

> 'But still, it troubles me very much. I mean, not only the fact that I'll never go back to my house, but the future of our country, what our children will inherit, where our children and our grandchildren are going to live'.

In the *Cyprus Oral History Project* broadcast of 14 October 2013, one week later than the previous citation, a Turkish Cypriot refugee tells her story:

'In 74 we became a refugee once again, for the second time. [...] Because we had to move again, in this stage to a Greek Cypriot home. And it was [a] very bad experience, again, because ... since we lived this situation in 63 we knew how it feels to leave your family, leave your house and go away'.

At this juncture, it is important to add that the programmes show that the trauma has not disappeared, but it is still part of the everyday lived experience, and it also concerns everyday routines:

'Look, the fact that you go to the supermarket and you buy 1 kg. of cucumbers, 1 kg. of tomatoes and 15 cans, that is not something that happens in countries that have not suffered war. This is a small issue and it sounds really funny, but this thing is essentially the refugee's syndrome' (*Downtown Choris Bakira*, broadcast 31 October 2013).

These narrations of the impact of war, in past and present, are complemented by references to the cost of the divide, which, for instance, draw attention to the political isolation of the north, the political instability and uncertainty generated by the divide, and the lack of access to property and – for a long time – to people. In a *Downtown Choris Bakira*, broadcast (31 October 2013) it is explained that the divide not only impacts on material access, but also has a discursive dimension:

'you always tend to hit a wall which has been erected, not only as a result of the special political circumstances that are in effect now – that [Nicosia] is a divided city – but also due to conceptions about what this or that person will say etc.'

In addition, we find discussions on the everyday consequences of the divide as well. A typical example is the impossibility of taking a pet for a walk to the other side, or of providing medical assistance:

'for many years no one could find practical ways to get an ambulance [English in original] across [the Green Line] in cases of medical emergency' (*Downtown Choris Bakira*, broadcast 31 October 2013).

These re-articulations are not without internal tensions and contradictions, which limit the programmes' capacities to support agonism. One significant limit consists out of the different interpretations linked to the narrations on the cost of the conflict and the divide, as these narrations could potentially serve an antagonistic model, particularly when only the suffering of the 'own' side is emphasised. Although in many cases this is compensated

by expressions of empathy by the same person in the same broadcast, and by other persons in other broadcasts, we can, in some cases, find more self-centred narrations which only articulate the self as victim, and the other as perpetrator, or at least as uncivil and uncaring. The following cynical statement of a Greek Cypriot retired civil servant shows the presence and strength of these kinds of narrations:

> 'Ok, so what did we learn? You simply find out how the strong prevail and [what] the fate of the weak [is]. I mean, we are weak, we have right on our side but we are still doomed by the strong. I believe this is a principle that applies to all peoples. You just realise what this world is and how it works' (*Cyprus Oral History Project*, broadcast 7 October 2013).

A second problematic discourse that we find in the broadcasts is the normalisation of violence and militarism, fed by nationalistic ideologies. For instance the violent 1974 National Guard coup, initiated by the Greek Junta, is downplayed by one Greek Cypriot interviewee as the actions of 'a political party [that] tried to change the government', which is something that 'happens every day in every country' (*Cyprus Oral History Project*, broadcast 18 November 2013). Likewise, the denial by the same interviewee, of the existence of pre-1974 violence, which disproportionally affected Turkish Cypriots, is an example of this problematic discourse:

> 'This is 1974, I was happy, I have anything I looked for, I live in a nice town, and enjoy the beauty of the town, I was enjoying my vacations, my family and it was not a country where it was anarchy or dictatorship. We live in democracy and everything was peaceful' (*Cyprus Oral History Project*, broadcast 18 November 2013).

Thirdly, within the island-wide Cypriot identity discourse, we can also ascertain traces of a new constitutive outside that is the foreign immigrant. The latter not only includes the Turkish settlers in the north, but also (and mainly) immigrants from other regions of the world that are subjected to negative, sometimes racist, judgments. In one *Cyprus Oral History Project* broadcast, the Turkish Cypriot interviewee, a pharmacist, talks about 'unregistered' immigrants in the following way:

> 'Most [...] are very poor people, and illiterate, and coming here just to work. So they are not living in [...] good conditions. They destroyed everything. They are not clean' (*Cyprus Oral History Project*, broadcast 9 September 2013).

One other constitutive outside that is mentioned in the broadcasts – mostly in the programme *One Percent* – are gay people, but these discriminations are fiercely dismissed by all who are present in the studio, and the negative consequences of these discriminations are highlighted, making these references much less problematic and

antagonistic. Nevertheless, it remains important to reiterate that the presence of these three problem discourses weaken the programmes' agonistic capacities, even when they rarely occur and when their existence within Cypriot society at large cannot be denied.

Conclusion

The discourse (theoretical) approach allows light to be shed on the processes of meaning-making that are intrinsically part of the logics of conflict. Through this approach, it becomes clear that conflicts are more than material practices and psychological processes, and that the collective dimension of meaning-production needs to be incorporated for a richer understanding of conflict. Constructing the enemy, and the self, is not a purely individual process, but a highly complex interaction of individual agencies, social structures, and material and discursive-ideological practices. In more technical terms, this implies that an exclusive focus on a constructivist approach, which highlights how persons are actively engaged in the creation of meanings (Burr, 2003, p. 18) is not desirable. The constructivist approach needs to be complemented by a more *constructionist* approach, which focuses on the construction of meaning as a social process (Burr, 2003, p. 9). This constructionist approach renders visible the ways that groups and communities produce always particular discursive structures, and identify with them in always particular ways. Moreover – and this is where discourse theory shows its strength – we should not assume that these discursive constructions, or their identifications, are stable, but in contrast, we should be attentive towards the political struggles that make them contingent.

Arguably, this is not different in the case of war and armed conflict, where these discursive-ideological constructions, for instance, of the conflict and the identities of the parties involved, play an equally significant role. For this perspective, antagonism is a construction, and a lethal one. But again, correspondingly, the creation of antagonism, with its particular articulations of the other as enemy, is the outcome of a particular political struggle. This implies that this outcome is not set in stone, and that re-articulations of this ideological (antagonistic) model of war are always possible – a position which carries much hope. Although these re-articulations cannot position us outside conflict – as diversity, and the contradictions and contestations it generates is ubiquitous – they can produce alternative ways of thinking the other, not as enemy. As the case study has shown, these re-articulations are very real in the way that they agonistically make sense of the Cyprus Problem, by describing the many ways the divide is already overcome, by decentring it, by deconstructing the homogeneous and united self, by reverting to an idyllic past before the conflict, by envisaging a future and by showing the cost of war and the divide.

This finally returns us to the role that community media can play, as discursive machineries that allow these re-articulations to surface and circulate. Here, it could be

argued that having these re-articulations voiced and performed is already important in itself. Moreover, the participatory structure of community media facilitates these discourses being voiced, by generating respect for diversity in and amongst communities, for collaboration based on power-sharing and for substantive democracy, which thus creates the conditions of possibility for the transformation of antagonism into agonism. At the same time, community media face many different problems and imperfections of their own, and they should not be considered a panacea. One of their main problems is that community media have often difficulties with reaching large audiences, which is also the case with MYCYradio. Their participatory logics do not guarantee them an audience. We should not downplay the importance of these problems, as discourses need circulation to gain social impact, but we should also not ignore the importance of these discourses being voiced and performed in the first place. This paradoxical situation allows emphasising that community media do have particular abilities to support agonistic discourses, and that, for this reason, they deserve more attention, acknowledgement and (considered) support.

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Framing Immigration in Online Media and Television News in Crisis-stricken Cyprus

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Abstract

Immigration is an issue of contestation across Europe. Since the 1990s, the retreat of multiculturalism has resulted in pressures exerted on immigrants to conform and integrate. The strengthening of anti-immigrant stances has intensified after the economic recession that has deteriorated standards of living for large populations and has increased the competition between social groups for public resources. Linguistic labels that evoke judgments have real consequences, as citizen attitudes depend on the labels attributed to immigrants in the public discourse. This study[1] employs framing analysis of online articles and television news stories about third-country immigrants that appeared in the Cypriot media in 2013, when the consequences of the financial crisis were most strongly felt by the Cypriot population. The findings reveal the explicit discursive and sourcing mechanisms by which immigration is constructed as a problem and immigrants are 'othered' in the media discourse. The study concludes with a discussion of possible remedies deemed appropriate in the context of Cyprus.

Keywords: News framing, sources, immigration, financial crisis, Cyprus

Introduction

In recent years a growth in anti-immigrant sentiment across the globe has been documented (Wilson and Hainsworth, 2012). The onset of the global financial crisis hitting hard both the US and Europe has set the immigration issue high on the political agenda, while raising more restrictive postures towards immigration (Dalton, 2011). In Europe, the economic crisis has led to a border crisis where France, Germany and most prominently the UK started to rethink the principle of freedom of movement within the European Union, although mobility comprises a cornerstone of the European idea. At a time when European governments implement neoliberal policies curtailing the welfare state and when employment opportunities become harder to find, it is no surprise that the politicisation of immigration intensifies.

At the societal level, under such economic and social insecurity, immigrants become convenient targets, as the frustration felt by native populations can lead to hostile and antagonistic attitudes as well as aggression targeted toward the most vulnerable, those less likely or unable to retaliate (Larsen, Krumov, Ommundsen and van der Veer 2009; Haslam and Holland, 2012; Philo, 2013). At the political level, immigration comprises a common field of contestation, as political actors and parties attempt to benefit from conflicting social ideas and public discourses (Finotelli and Sciortino, 2009; Magnani, 2011). The issue of migration has always been at the heart of controversy in the public sphere; yet following the ambivalence of the European Union between a security/identity approach and a multiculturalism/human rights approach (Jordan, Stråth and Triandafyllidou, 2003; Heller, 2014), two dominant and recurring discourses have prevailed: the *economisation* and the *securitisation* discourse. The former refers to the limited available economic resources and the criteria needed to distribute them. The latter conceptualises immigration as a security concern stemming from the motivation of governments to control migration flows and comfort public opinion against the fear of cultural erosion (Buonfino, 2004). Within this context, the political system attempts to capitalise the dominant discourses. In regard to the migration issue, the relation between frames and actors is dialectical, as the dominant frames operate as 'orientation maps' for the political elite upon highly contested matters, facilitating them to set goals and construct an effective positioning, and ultimately to influence legislation (Magnani, 2011).

Cyprus, having become a migration destination only at the end of the 1980s, had adopted a generalised restrictive orthodoxy on the entry, residence and labour conditions of foreigners, especially those coming from third countries. After abandoning the restrictive immigration policy followed until 1991, in an effort to meet low-skill labour shortages generated by an economic development model based on mass tourism and services (Trimikliniotis, 2013), Cyprus attracted a substantial number of migrants amounting to 5.7% of the population (Trimikliniotis and Demetriou, 2012). However, according to the Migration Policy Index,[2] Cyprus ranks second last of all 31 MIPEX countries in regard to long-term integration of foreigners, providing the least favourable conditions for foreigners to access and integrate in the labour market on a long-term basis and to have real opportunities to participate in democratic life. The current hardening of immigration control in Cyprus is closely related to the financial crisis. In March 2013 the newly elected Cypriot government agreed to an EU-IMF bail-in arrangement which involved a – later finalised – 47.5% 'haircut' of all deposits above €100,000 in the Bank of Cyprus and the shut-down of the second largest bank on the island. This 'remedy' also

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2   Source available at: [http://www.mipex.eu/cyprus]. Last accessed on 8 November 2014.

included a set of austerity measures containing cuts in civil service salaries, social benefits, allowances and pensions, privatisations, and increases in VAT, tobacco, alcohol and fuel taxes, taxes on property, and higher public health care charges. A side effect of the current economic and banking crisis has been the intensification of debates on migration and a stronger anti-migration sentiment. Indicative of this is the sustained campaign by anti-immigrant politicians, who have been targeting migrants, particularly asylum-seekers, as excessively benefiting from welfare allowances and health care services.

Against this background, the current study focuses on the coverage of third-country immigrants in the most popular Cypriot mainstream online and broadcast media in 2013, when the consequences of the financial crisis were most strongly felt by the Cypriot population. The study explores two research questions: How is immigration framed in the Cypriot online and television news media? Which sources inform the media representations about immigration and how are they related to immigration framing?

Literature Review:
Immigration and the Media

The media are important means of constructing and diffusing representations, and therefore hold a crucial role in the manner in which people perceive and understand the issue of migration (Jacomella, 2010; Triandafyllidou, 2013; Chauzy and Appave, 2014). Despite the fact that European societies are becoming increasingly multicultural and ethnically diverse as a result of immigration, media representations of immigration and immigrants tend to be negative and selective (Grobet, 2014), resulting in the 'demonisation' of migrants, which in turn tends to erode social cohesion and lead to the marginalisation, exploitation and abuse of migrants.

Before examining media framing of immigration, it is important to point out a particularly problematic element of news content, that is, the selective and minimal coverage of the issue of migration and migrants. As Jacomella (2010, p. 14) argues, 'it is key to this issue to try and zoom in on what is *lacking* in media coverage on migration'. Jacomella's point is confirmed by the 'visibility' news value or the 'invisible event' idea put forward by Hooper (2014). According to this idea, news stories that question dominant narratives and discourses about migrants are unlikely to be published, allowing governments to continue ineffective policies (Gemi, Ulasiuk and Triantafyllidou, 2013).

Public judgments of migration and migrants are greatly influenced by media frames. Frames stress certain aspects of reality and push others into the background; they have a selective function. In this way, certain attributes, judgments, and policy orientations are suggested (Lecheler and de Vreese, 2013). The framing building process is influenced by the complex and dynamic interaction among journalists, media institutions and other political and social actors. Extensive scholarly work on media coverage of migration

touches upon different problematic practices the media are prone to engage in which produce unfair coverage through stereotyped and negative frames (Mai, 2005; Cecchi, 2011).

Conversely, in order for a story to be eligible for publication it needs to conform to specific news values, such as drama deriving mainly from victimisation frames (Bennett *et al.*, 2013) or negativity, found in frames associating migrants with negative acts and criminal behaviour (Gemi, Ulasiuk and Triantafyllidou, 2013). Although the 'victim' frame is quite common, for a story to be published it should also involve a large number of people-victims otherwise its news value is diminished (Hooper, 2014). The 'criminal' frame, which is systematically reproduced by emphasis on stories involving violent and criminal behaviour (Mai, 2005) is a recurrent frame sustained in multiple ways. First, it is constructed through the racialisation of crime attributing different types of crimes to different ethnicities (Cecchi, 2011), particularly third-country nationals (Bennett *et al.*, 2013; Heller, 2014). Second, it derives from extensive misuse of terms such as 'illegal' migrant (instead of undocumented migrant or asylum seeker) (Bennett *et al.*, 2013). Augostinos and Quinn (2003) found that social attitudes are less supportive when the label attached is 'illegal immigrant' in contrast to 'asylum seeker'. Moreover, immigration news is often elite-sourced. Elites tend to construct and reproduce 'safe information and events', in other words events that coincide with the dominant moral and political values (Davies, 2008). The issue of sources on migration coverage is of outmost importance as reliance on elite sources not only distorts any notion of balanced reporting excluding the viewpoint of migrants, but also prevents the quest for truth, as reporters do not question official sources as much (Phillips, 2011).

The 'otherness' frame, which perceives immigrants as threats to the culture, language and values of the society, is also a common frame employed by the media (Lakoff and Ferguson, 2006). In this case emphasis in media discourse is drawn to ethnic and cultural characteristics, which not only are 'alien' to native populations but also disrupt the political and cultural order of the nation by threatening its 'purity' and 'authenticity' (Triandafyllidou, 2000). However, the perception of migrants as threats goes beyond the erosion of cultural purity. The 'threat' frame that perceives migrants as a risk to public health (ter Wal, 1996), or the 'enemy' frame that presents migrants as competitors taking the jobs of natives, have become dominant discourses in media content (Grobet, 2014; Staglianò, 2014).

Hooper (2014) argues that frames are further reproduced and reinforced via 'sloppy reporting', which is the result of conscious and unconscious reporting practices, based on a fixed repertoire of how the issue of migration and migrants should be covered by the media. News events are narrated in a concise, generalised, simplified and dramatised manner, while evoking stereotypes and negative frames. Ill-construed symbolic narratives

are diffused into the public debate, which become institutionalised and circulate once again. Such coverage is related to the creation of 'moral panics', imbuing hysteria and intensifying alertness on the part of natives toward the presence of migrants in their country (Spoonley and Butcher, 2009). This practice is commonly encountered at times of crisis and combines the recycling of the people's values with truth bias in an attempt to manipulate the public by offering an enlarged version of their own sentiments (Davies, 2008). As a result, ethnocentric, nationalist and xenophobic rhetoric is legitimised, and myths in regard to the number, status and economic impact of migrants are perpetuated (Grobet, 2014; Staglianó 2014), while integration policies are inevitably undermined.

The Cypriot Context

The notion of hospitality to 'guests' or 'foreigners', a traditionally major cultural value in Greek-Cypriot society, appears to be in conflict with rising xenophobic tendencies toward migrants in the Cypriot society (Demetriou, 2013). Earlier studies on attitudes of Cypriot children (Spyrou, 2004) and youths (Harakis *et al.*, 2005) toward foreigners reveal the negative disposition of important segments of the young population (i.e. the perception of stereotypes and racism as justified, the connection of migrants with crime, the attitude that foreigners in Cyprus are 'too many' and that some or all should go back to their countries) (cited in Zembylas *et al.*, 2010). A more recent study, focusing on perceptions, emotions and self-reported perceptions of Cypriot students aged 11–18 in 2009, manifests enduring negative attitudes toward immigrants and the tendency of students to prefer separation models of coexistence with immigrants rather than assimilation or integration – although, compared to past studies, racism against immigrants is acknowledged more broadly (Zembylas *et al.*, 2010). Besides attitudes, Trimikliniotis and Demetriou (2012) document not only growing incidents of racial violence in Cyprus after 2004 but also a systematic under-valuing and trivialisation of the breadth of this phenomenon. According to Mainwaring (2008), racism within the Cypriot society is fuelled by the fear of losing economic security as well as the related perception of material scarcity and the dread of coping with the 'burden' of migrants and refugees who threaten the country's national identity – a fear exacerbated by stereotypes and myths. Among the various factors that affect attitudes toward immigration (education, economic conditions, political discourses and policy-making), media discourses and representations are of key significance.

Although scholarly work on media representations of migrants and migration in Cyprus is rather scarce, the relevant literature shows that misrepresentation of migrants is deep-rooted. A discourse analysis of press coverage about migrant workers almost 20 years ago (1996–1997) reveals how migrants were constructed as 'the problem' through the 'numbers game', that is, sensationalist and alarmist calls for the restriction of migration

based on the assumption that foreigners in Cyprus were 'too many', drawing on a nationalist discourse concerning the need to ensure the 'national survival' of a semi-occupied country by all means necessary (Trimikliniotis, 1999). Other recurring themes at the time were the scapegoating of migrants with regard to the rising crime rate, social disintegration (marriages of convenience, break-up of marriages and illegitimate children), the rise in unemployment and a connection of migrants with disease, crisis, and dirt (*ibid.*). More recent studies manifest the endurance and perpetuation of these media frames. Trimikliniotis and Demetriou (2006) document the exact same negative media depictions in the first half of the 2000s, with the addition of the concern over migrants as carriers of 'alien cultures and religions' and consequently as a threat to national culture and heritage. Nonetheless, there are two differences. First, some sympathetic reports emerged about 'illegal' immigrants and asylum seekers but only in the form of heart-breaking stories of individual migrants; when migrants were covered as a group or a section, the media accounts tended to be less sympathetic or even xenophobic. Second, following the accession of Cyprus to the European Union (EU) some media reports, sourced by international bodies or NGOs, began to focus on the ill-treatment of migrants by employers and the police (*ibid.*).

The ideological orientation of the Cypriot media and their ties with political elites (Christoforou, 2010) plus their tendency towards conflict-oriented coverage (Ersoy, 2010) has cultivated an anti-migrant sentiment within the Cypriot society. This sentiment, after the 2004 referendum, exacerbated as ideological and political polarisation increased and some politicians tried to capitalise on the anti-migrant feeling that developed in some parts of the society (Trimikliniotis and Demetriou, 2012). The incident of the 'Rainbow Festival' – an anti-racist demonstration – that took place in November 2010, which was dispersed by right-wing groups and ended up in violent conflicts and a serious injury, is indicative of how both political and media discourses legitimise racist and xenophobic narratives. The more progressive political entities tried to keep their distance from 'the two extremes' as the counter-march against the 'Rainbow Festival' was largely supported by conservative media and politicians. As a result, the mainstream media were visibly accommodating nationalistic and xenophobic ideas, and the anti-immigrant and racist discourse was 'legitimised', 'normalised', and presented as a valid political argument (Trimikliniotis and Demetriou, 2012).

Research Method

Sampling

As the present study was carried out within a research project targeting specifically third-country immigration, the sampling method was designed to match this objective. In

consequence, mainstream media articles and newscasts were selected if they referred to: (a) immigration or immigration policy in general; (b) third-country nationals (TCNs), regardless of their country of residence (in Cyprus or other EU country); and (c) racism against immigrants in general or TCNs in particular. News content that referred explicitly to asylum seekers or 'illegal' immigrants was excluded but news and opinion articles appearing in established online newspapers and news portals were sampled along with the evening newscasts of television stations. The sample was drawn from six Greek-speaking national newspapers,[3] four news portals[4] and seven national television channels.[5]

Regarding the online press news content, the sample was selected using a combination of purposive sampling and random stratified sampling. Because not all online news media provided a functioning search engine so that reliable term-based searches could be performed, we first identified the dates in which there was extended coverage of immigration in the year 2013, by searching the content of two online newspapers (*Kathimerini* and *Politis*) with the most effective search engines. The terms used were: immigration, third-country nationals, foreigner[6] (and its derivatives). After scanning the results, additional searches were conducted using the names of the countries from which the bulk of TCNs in Cyprus originate (Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Somalia), together with the acronym 'KISA', a non-governmental organisation in Cyprus which is particularly active in defending the rights of immigrants and often features in the media. The search results were subsequently studied (reading through the title, the story lead and, when necessary, the news story) to decide whether the item met the aforementioned content criteria. After identifying the news articles that matched the criteria, we compiled a list of all dates on which immigration-related news stories appeared. Next, these dates were sorted according to weekdays, which allowed us to create two constructed weeks with third country immigration-related news for each outlet. According to Riffe, Lacy and Fico (2005), this method permits the generalisation of findings to the news content

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3   These newspapers are: Alitheia, Phileleftheros, Xaravghi, Machi, Politis, Kathimerini.

4   The news portals (www.sigmalive.com; www.newsit.com.cy; www.livenews.com.cy; www.24h.com.cy) were selected according to four criteria: (a) inclusion in the list of the 200 most popular news websites in Cyprus, according to Alexa; (b) availability of archived content; (c) originality of news content (aggregators simply reproducing news articles from other outlets were excluded); and (d) news content related to broadly defined sociopolitical issues (e.g. websites with exclusively showbiz content were excluded).

5   The seven TV channels were: CYBC1 (public broadcaster), ANT1, MEGA, SIGMA, PLUS TV, CAPITAL, and EXTRA. CYBC2 was not selected because its news content is drawn from CYBC1, which is the news-oriented channel of the public broadcaster.

6   The term 'foreigner' ('*allodapos*') is a very common term referring to immigrants in the Cypriot public discourse.

of the whole year. This technique was applied to all news outlets that provided a term-based search service. To identify relevant content in the news outlets that provided only a date-based (not content-based) search, we examined the editions of the dates identified as having immigration-related content from the previous search. Once more, two constructed weeks were compiled for each outlet. The final sample of online news articles counts 140 items: 84 articles from online newspapers (14 articles from six newspapers) and 56 articles from online portals (14 articles from four online portals).

Moving on to television news sampling, the random stratified sampling approach was also applied as follows: starting from the list of dates with extended coverage of immigration, we examined the newscasts that were broadcast by the selected news stations. In total, 1,050 newscasts were examined, resulting in 162 immigration-related news items that matched the study's criteria.

Analysis

Framing

The study employed framing analysis following Entman's definition[7] of what framing is and how it works. Additionally, the research is premised on van Gorp's (2010) approach, which proposes a constructionist technique to framing following an inductive framing analysis in order to construct the frame matrix. During the inductive phase, two researchers working independently using the constant comparative method studied about one-third of the selected news articles and newscasts to reconstruct the frame packages. The process of open coding included two main tasks: the identification of framing devices (the manifest elements that indicate the existence of a frame, for instance, themes, actors, catchphrases, visual images and so on), and the identification of reasoning devices (i.e. problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and treatment recommendation).

Following van Gorp (2010), the reconstruction of the frame packages was developed on the premise of culturally embedded frames that could resonate with common cultural themes (e.g. the victim, the enemy) instead of issue-specific and general frames (such as the conflict frame). Moreover, for precision and comparison purposes, we developed the notion of the 'subframe' to distinguish between the various shades of immigrants' roles within each frame. This process allows for more accurate results and also for the comparison between different media texts. The final step of the inductive phase was the construction of the frame matrix, which was considered complete when no new frames

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7   'To frame is to *select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation* for the item described' (Entman, 1993, p. 52, emphasis in the original).

and subframes emerged in the content analysed.[8] The second part of the study involved a quantitative content analysis based on the frame matrix. At this stage, each subframe was coded when revealed present in the news content studied. Furthermore, because news texts often include more than one frame (and certainly multiple subframes), a mechanism was needed to account for frame salience and discern the main interpretative scheme in each news text. Thus, the notion of the dominant subframe was introduced. To code for the dominant subframe, a number of criteria were applied: the extent of the subframe in the text in terms of number of frame devices and/or word count; the main problem definition as stated or implied in the text; and the general sense or impression the reader forms after exposure to the text. Also, in order to minimise potential differentiation in the coding of subframes, a codebook was created so that researchers would follow a consistent approach when coding. The third and final stage of the study involved the final coding of the news texts based on the coding instructions.

Sources

The role of sources in journalism is pivotal, as they shape the volume and the perspective of produced news (Manning, 2001). A key factor in the selection of sources by journalists is the extent to which different actors, people and information are considered as credible (Gans, 1979); 'source reliability', however, is inextricably associated with the conventional logic of news production (Powers and Fico, 1994; Reich, 2009). A basic principle of the dominant professional culture is the selection of topics that can be covered quickly and easily, and that are 'safe'. The latter refers to the tendency of journalists to adhere to the 'official line' in the presentation of events, voiced by the so-called 'elite sources', which protects them from entering into a clash with powerful institutions and individuals (Davies, 2008).

In the present study, sourcing practices were studied quantitatively, recording the five major sources for each news item. Two types of sources were identified: the original sources (the sources used to produce the news article, for example, ministries, politicians) and the secondary sources (other news media from which stories are reproduced, edited or unedited). Sources were recorded only when they were explicitly named, either directly quoted or mentioned by the reporter. The same method was applied to television news; here, besides secondary sources, we recorded original sources that either appeared on camera (talking heads) or were cited by the reporter.

To study sourcing practices we used a typology of sources constructed in a previous analysis of news practices [Authors], which is based on the categorisation of sources as

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8   The frame matrix was based on a previous analysis of media framing of immigration in the Greek media, following the same methodology [Authors].

'elite' and 'non-elite' (cf. Atton and Wickenden, 2005), informed by Hall, Critcher. Jefferson, Clarke and Roberts' (1978) theory of the primary definition, namely the privileged access of powerful actors to mainstream media and the subsequent marginalisation of resource-poor social groups and their interests (for a complete list of categories, see Appendix).

Findings

The Frame Matrix about Immigration

The inductive framing analysis designated three main frames in the news content analysed: [1] The Victim frame; [2] The Threat frame; and [3] The Active Agent frame (table 1). The first frame (Victim) is based on the archetypal role of the innocent victim (cf. van Gorp, 2005), and comprises of six different subframes: [1.1] the human smuggling or trafficking victim; [1.2] the economic migrant, victim of global inequality in wealth distribution, together with the refugee, the victim of persecution and oppression in the country of origin; [1.3] the sweatshop worker, victim of employment practices with no respect for labour rights; [1.4] the 'othered', victim of racism or xenophobia; [1.5] the political puppet or scapegoat, victim of manipulation from political parties in order to gain political leverage; and [1.6] the helpless, victim of (non-racist) violence. The victim frame derives from humanitarian concerns and sympathy emotions towards immigrants, whose life conditions are beyond their control. In that regard, policy recommendations connected to this frame target either the causes of the problem (e.g. poverty in developing countries) or the alleviation of people in need (e.g. integration and anti-discrimination policies).

The second frame (Threat) is also commonly encountered in the relevant literature connoting stereotyped notions of the various threats that come along with the presence of migrants (van Gorp, 2005). It includes six subframes: [2.1] the criminal, a threat to the safety and well-being of native society or the illegal intruder, a threat to national security and public order; [2.2] the alien/other, a threat to one's own ethnic, religious and cultural values and identity; [2.3] the economic competitor, an economic threat for natives, a competitor in terms of employment; [2.4] the intruder/social burden, the 'unwelcome guest' who is a burden for the country's social welfare system; [2.5] the civic/political threat, a threat deriving either from immigrants' political rights or their emergence as political subjects making claims to rights; and [2.6] the public health threat, the carrier of infectious diseases threatening local populations. In these approaches, the problem lies with the immigrants themselves; the solutions that are brought forth reflect the primacy of a 'law and order' approach and are oriented towards more border security, more policing and repression, and stricter asylum policies. As van Gorp (2005) remarks, both these frames (the Victim and the Threat) reflect cultural motives used quite often in media discourse.

Table 1: Frame Matrix about Immigration (abbreviated)

Main Frame	Type of Immigrant (Subframe)	Role of Immigrant	Problem Definition	Problem Source	Responsibility	Policy Solution
[1] Victim	[1.1] Human Smuggling or Trafficking Victim	Victim of human smugglers	Exploitation of people, coerced to forced labour, begging and prostitution	Human smugglers/traffickers and absence of mechanisms to combat them	1) National and international mechanisms for combating crime 2) Cypriots who do not care or even participate in exploitation	Combating human smuggling and trafficking
	[1.2] Economic Migrant / Refugee	Victim of global inequality; Victim of persecution and conflict	1) People from poor countries who seek work in advanced economies on a quest for a better life 2) People are forced to leave their homes and seek asylum abroad	1) Poverty and global wealth inequality 2) Capitalism and globalisation 3) National, racial and religious conflicts and wars; authoritarian regimes	1) The advanced capitalist countries stripping countries of migrant origin of their wealth, forcing them to flee 2) Developed states that do not eliminate conflicts causing migration	1) Wealth redistribution 2) Restraining multinational corporations' parasitic operation 3) Western initiatives to eliminate conflicts in countries of origin
	[1.3] Sweatshop Worker	Disenfranchised worker, victim of employers	Illegal employment of immigrants in low-paid and dangerous jobs, with no benefits	1) Employers exploit undocumented immigrants to maximise their profit 2) Ineffectiveness of authorities	1) The Cypriot authorities responsible for regulating employment 2) Cypriot employers	1) Legalisation of undocumented immigrants 2) Combating 'illegal employment'
	[1.4] The 'Othered'	Victim of racism or xenophobia	1) Discrimination and racism against immigrants in terms of ethnicity, religion or race; 2) State repression and violence 3) Policies that prohibit integration (residence permits and naturalisation)	1) Racist and xenophobic ideas 2) Absence of integration policies	1) State (authorities, police, education) 2) Racist parties/organisations	1) Policies for integration of immigrants in society 2) Policies for combating xenophobia and racism
	[1.5] Political Puppet or Scapegoat	Victim of manipulation for political ends	Political parties use immigrants to obtain political gains, either by defending (e.g, left parties) or prosecuting them (e.g, far right)	Manipulation by political parties	Political Parties, Government	Putting an end to manipulation of immigrants by political parties
	[1.6] The Helpless	Victim of (non-racist) violence	Immigrants fall victim of violence, murder, kidnapping and other criminal acts	Immigrants are a vulnerable group and should be protected	The state that does not protect this vulnerable social group	1) Institutional protection of immigrants 2) Tackling crime

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Main Frame	Type of Immigrant (Subframe)	Role of Immigrant	Problem Definition	Problem Source	Responsibility	Policy Solution
[2] Threat	[2.1] The Criminal or the Illegal	The lawbreaker who constitutes a threat for the safety of Cypriots. The intruder, the undocumented immigrant	1) Crime is increased as a result of the increase of immigrants 2) Immigrants exploit laws of Western countries to enter their territory / violate laws 3) Large numbers of immigrants enter illegally, becoming a threat for public order	1) Inadequate police patrolling / unguarded borders 2) The immigrants themselves who have criminal records or come from savage and uncivilised countries 3) Immigrants who enter Europe fraudulently / do not respect laws 4) Lax deportation policy	1) The authorities do not fight crime and illegal entry of immigrants 2) The immigrants themselves who intrude and commit crimes	1) More policing and repression of immigration-related crime 2) Fortification of borders 3) Stricter policies for granting residence permits to immigrants 4) Deportation of all illegal / law-breaking immigrants
	[2.2] The Alien/ Other	A threat for the ethnic, religious and cultural cohesion	Immigrants with different ethnic, religious and cultural traditions, spoil the ethnic and religious purity of society	1) Inadequate border controls 2) Lax deportation policy	1) The authorities who do not prevent illegal entry of immigrants 2) The immigrants who carry values incompatible with the Cypriot culture	1) Deportation of all immigrants 2) Policies to reduce the number of immigrants
	[2.3] Economic Competitor	An economic threat for native workers	Immigrants take jobs away from Cypriots and lower the wages, making the bad economic situation of Cypriots worse	1) Inadequate border controls 2) Lax deportation policy	1) The authorities who do not prevent illegal entry of immigrants 2) The immigrants invading the country 3) The immigrants who are 'cheap labour'	1) Legalisation of all 'useful' immigrants, deportation of the rest 2) More jobs for Cypriots
	[2.4] The Intruder/ Social Burden	The 'unwelcome guest' who is a burden for the country's social welfare system	Immigrants who leave their countries, come uninvited use up welfare resources	1) Inadequate border controls 2) Timid immigration policy 3) Immigrant benefits / free health care	1) The authorities who do not take measures to combat illegal immigration 2) The Europeans who are not helping us 3) The immigrants who invade the country 4) Policies for immigrant benefits	2) Legalisation of all 'useful' immigrants, deportation of the rest 2) Tightening of policy regarding immigrant benefits 3) Burden-sharing policies in EU countries
	[2.5] The Civic/Political Threat	A civic or political threat for Cypriot citizens	1) Immigrants granted civil and political rights and vote against the interests of Cypriot people 2) Immigrants engage in political acts and demands without any right to do so	1) Immigrants' political rights 2) Political parties who let them speak up and become visible 3) The immigrants themselves who come from authoritarian regimes and do not know what democracy is	1) Political actors who seek to grant immigrants political rights 2) The left which enables immigrants to make political demands 3) The authorities who do not crack down immigrant protests	1) Abolish or make more stringent laws about access to citizenship and voting rights 2) Repression and punishment of immigrant protests as criminal acts
	[2.6] The Public Health Threat	The carrier of infectious diseases	Immigrants carry diseases that threaten public health	Immigrants come from countries with many diseases that they carry due to lack of health controls	1) Immigrants who 'carry diseases' 2) The authorities that do not impose strict health controls	Health control of immigrants

Main Frame	Type of Immigrant (Subframe)	Role of Immigrant	Problem Definition	Problem Source	Responsibility	Policy Solution
[3] Active Agent	[3.1] The 'Useful' Worker	Low-wage worker who does the jobs Cypriots won't do and contributes to the competitiveness	How to create a low-wage workforce to boost economic development, cracking down on unreported employment	Unreported employment and tax evasion	1) The Cypriot state and authorities 2) Cypriot employers	Creating just and lawful employment for immigrants so that tax evasion is avoided
	[3.2] The Proletarian Worker	Low-wage worker who is part of the labour movement and worker struggles	How to integrate immigrants in the struggles of the labour movement	Weak integration of immigrants in society and in the struggles of the labour movement	Borne by the working class that goes against immigrants, seeing them as competitors, instead of uniting forces against capitalist exploitation	Legalisation of immigrants
	[3.3] Active Political Subject	People who fight for their rights	Immigrants are denied civil and political rights	Absence of policies for granting of civil and political rights, xenophobia	1) The state which fails to create integration policies 2) Society itself which does not accept immigrants	Institutional and legal changes for granting of civic and political rights
	[3.4] Quality Workforce	Employees with qualifications equal to or better than those of the domestic workforce	'Brain drain': The domestic economy is unable to absorb specialised scientists, who migrate in search of work	1) Lack of modernisation of the economy 2) The myth that immigrants are uneducated	Borne by the state that offers no incentives to highly trained personnel to remain in the country	1) Development and modernisation of the economy 2) Incentives for young scientists to remain in the country
	[3.5] Wealthy Investor	Affluent third-country citizens who bring their wealth to Cyprus and strengthen the economy	Impediments to migration in Cyprus for third-country nationals	State policies on immigration	Borne by the state that does not care to simplify procedures for investors	Favourable provisions for wealthy investors from third countries
	[3.6] Equal Society Member ('one of us')	Integrated (or able to integrate), valuable and committed members of society	Immigrants are denied access to citizenship and opportunities to integrate; they are forced to ghettoization	Absence of policies for integration	1) The state which fails to create integration policies 2) Society itself which does not accept immigrants	Institutional and legal changes for granting of civic and political rights and integration policies

The third frame (Active Agent), contrary to the positive but passive representation of immigrants reflected in the Victim frame, signifies a mostly positive and active representation of immigrants. Six subframes were identified in the texts: [3.1] The useful worker, which refers to the low-skilled and low-paid worker, whose presence is deemed important for economic development and increased competitiveness. It should be noted that, although this subframe bears a positive representation compared to the Threat frame, it reduces the role of migrants to that of workers, denying them labour, social and political rights. In the second subframe, the proletarian worker [3.2], immigrants are perceived as workers exploited by the capitalist order, who should be integrated in the native labour movement and contribute to the struggle against plutocracy. The third subframe [3.3] is the active political subject and it refers to immigrants as political subjects who fight for their rights (e.g. hunger strikers). The fourth subframe [3.4] refers to immigrants as a quality workforce – as employees with training and qualifications equal to, or even better than, those of the domestic workforce. The fifth subframe [3.5] is the wealthy investor and refers to affluent third-country citizens who bring their wealth to Cyprus and strengthen the economy. Lastly, the sixth subframe [3.6] refers to immigrants as equal members of society ('one of us'). Here, immigrants are portrayed as valuable social subjects who are integrated (or can be integrated) and honour the Cypriot identity. The problems identified in these subframes are rather inconsistent and so are the solutions suggested. However, if put together, a third frame is constructed, which perceives immigrants as active agents, as people who hold rights, possess skills, and in some cases material wealth. In that sense, this frame differs from both the Victim and Threat frame, and connotes positive representations of immigrants as people who control their fate and whose rights should be acknowledged.

Media Framing of Immigration

Online Mainstream Media

In online mainstream media, the most often used dominant frame is the Threat frame, appearing in 45% of the news articles. The Victim frame follows with a presence in 42% of the articles, whereas the Active Agent frame features as dominant in only 11% of the cases (table 2).

The analysis of the articles in terms of subframes allows us to grasp the precise representations of immigrants in the Cypriot news. As seen in table 3, the framing of immigrants as Victims is constructed mainly through stories about racism against immigrants (27% of total articles). Within the Threat frame, two subframes stand out: the depiction of immigrants as criminals (24%) and as intruders or social burden (12%). In stories portraying immigrants mainly as Active Agents, the most commonly used frames are the equal society member (4%) and the wealthy investor (3%).

Table 2: Dominant Frames about Immigrants in Print and Online News Articles

Dominant Frames		
	n	%
VICTIM frame	59	42%
THREAT frame	63	45%
ACTIVE AGENT frame	15	11%
Unclear	3	2%
Total	**140**	**100%**

Table 3: Dominant Subframes about Immigrants in Online News Articles

Dominant Subframes			
	n	% within frame	% of total articles
[1.1] Human Smuggling or Trafficking Victim	3	5%	-
[1.2] Economic Migrant or Refugee	6	10%	4%
[1.3] Sweatshop Worker	7	12%	5%
[1.4] The 'Othered'	38	64%	27%
[1.5] Political Puppet or Scapegoat	1	-	-
[1.6] The Helpless	4	7%	3%
VICTIM frame total	**59**	**100%**	**42%**
[2.1] The Criminal or the Illegal	33	52%	24%
[2.2] The Alien/ Other	5	8%	4%
[2.3] Economic Competitor	6	10%	4%
[2.4] The Intruder/ Social burden	17	27%	12%
[2.5] The Civic/Political Threat	0	-	-
[2.6] The Public Health Threat	2	-	-
THREAT frame total	**63**	**100%**	**45%**
[3.1] The 'Useful' Worker	1	7%	-
[3.2] The Proletarian Worker	0	-	-
[3.3] Active Political Subject	3	20%	-
[3.4] Quality Workforce	1	7%	-
[3.5] Wealthy Investor	4	27%	3%
[3.6] Equal Society Member	6	40%	4%
ACTIVE AGENT frame total	**15**	**100%**	**11%**
Unclear	**2**		**-**
Total	**140**		**100%**
*Note: percentages lower than 3% are omitted from the table (marked with '-')			

Television News

In television news, the Threat frame is even more prominent compared to online media, present in 51% of the news stories. The Victim frame appears in 31% of the stories, and the Active Agent frame is the dominant frame in 13% of news stories (table 4).

Table 4: Dominant Frames about Immigrants in Television News

Dominant Frames		
	n	%
VICTIM frame	51	31%
THREAT frame	82	51%
ACTIVE AGENT frame	21	13%
Unclear	8	5%
Total	162	100%

The Victim frame in television news consists mainly of crime news stories, in which immigrants are represented as victims of violence, without any racist connotations (14%). The most prevalent representation falls within the Threat frame and is related to the image of the criminal or the illegal (42%). Within the Active Agent frame, most news stories feature immigrants as wealthy investors (9%) (table 5).

The Role of Sources

The majority of sources used by journalists in immigration-related news articles are official sources (72%) – mostly mainstream media, politicians, the police and public institutions (table 6). Ordinary sources are used only in 32% of the articles, and these consist mostly of non-governmental organisations.

In television news, most sources are again elite sources (68%): mainly the police, politicians, and public institutions (table 7). Ordinary sources account for 20% of the stories.

To investigate the role of sources in the frames adopted in online and television news stories, we calculated the correlations (*Pearson r*) between the source and subframe categories appearing most frequently (in more than 4% of the cases) in the news items. Regarding online media, three source categories are weakly (between .20 and .29) or moderately (between .30 and .39) correlated with certain subframes. The use of politicians as sources is positively correlated with the subframe of immigrants as 'others'. Police is correlated with the representations of immigrants as victims of violence and as

Table 5: Dominant Subframes about Immigrants in Television News

Dominant Subframes			
	n	% within frame	% of total articles
[1.1] Human Smuggling or Trafficking Victim	2	4%	-
[1.2] Economic Migrant or Refugee	11	22%	7%
[1.3] Sweatshop Worker	1	-	-
[1.4] The 'Othered'	14	27%	9%
[1.5] Political Puppet or Scapegoat	1	-	-
[1.6] The Helpless	22	43%	14%
VICTIM frame total	**51**	**100%**	**31%**
[2.1] The Criminal or the Illegal	68	83%	42%
[2.2] The Alien/ Other	2	-	-
[2.3] Economic Competitor	8	10%	5%
[2.4] The Intruder/ Social burden	3	4%	-
[2.5] The Civic/Political Threat	0	-	-
[2.6] The Public Health Threat	1	-	-
THREAT frame total	**82**	**100%**	**51%**
[3.1] The 'Useful' Worker	0	-	-
[3.2] The Proletarian Worker	1	5%	-
[3.3] Active Political Subject	3	14%	-
[3.4] Quality Workforce	0	-	-
[3.5] Wealthy Investor	15	71%	9%
[3.6] Equal Society Member	2	10%	-
ACTIVE AGENT frame total	**21**	**100%**	**13%**
Unclear	**8**		**5%**
Total	**162**		**100%**
*Note: percentages lower than 3% are omitted from the table (marked with '-')			

criminals or illegals. This means that the more the 'police' is used as a source in immigrant-related stories, the more frequent are the representations of immigrants as criminals – and vice versa. The substantial positive role of NGOs as sources is confirmed by this analysis, as the presence of NGOs as sources is correlated to the frequency of references to the status of immigrants as economic migrants and to racism against them. At the same time, the less NGOs are used as sources in a news story, the more the issues of immigrant criminality or illegality appear in the news.

Table 6: Sources in Print and Online Immigrant-related News

News Articles' Sources		
	n	% of total sources
Official (elite) Sources		
Politicians	34	15%
Public Institutions	16	7%
Police	31	14%
Military	1	-
Intellectuals	1	-
Private Institutions	1	-
International Institutions	8	4%
Experts	15	7%
Mainstream Media	45	20%
Union Leaders	1	-
Church/Religion	3	-
Personalities	2	-
Total of Elite Sources	**101**	**72%**
Ordinary Sources		
Interest Communities	1	-
Voluntary Organisations (e.g. NGOs)	21	9%
Eyewitnesses / Sources of Information	14	6%
Immigrants	14	6%
Friends/ Relatives / Neighbours	5	-
Ordinary Citizens	1	-
Prisoners	1	-
Victims	2	-
Ideological Communities	1	-
Alternative Media	2	-
Total of Ordinary Sources	**32**	**23%**
No source mentioned	**7**	**3%**
TOTAL	**227**	**100%**
*Note: percentages lower than 3% are omitted from the table (marked with '-')		

Table 7: Sources in Television Immigrant-related News

TV News Sources		
	n	% of total sources
Official (elite) Sources		
Politicians	37	18%
Public Institutions	21	10%
Police	60	29%
Experts	4	-
Mainstream Media	1	-
Union Leaders	11	5%
Church/Religion	5	-
Personalities	2	-
Total of Elite Sources	**141**	**68%**
Ordinary Sources		
Interest Communities	5	-
Geographic-ethnic Communities	1	-
Protesters	3	-
Voluntary Organisations	1	-
Eyewitnesses / Sources of Information	10	5%
Immigrants	3	-
Friends/ Relatives / Neighbours	3	-
Ordinary Citizens	7	3%
Accused/ Awaiting trial	7	3%
Victims	1	-
Total of Ordinary Sources	**41**	**20%**
No source mentioned	**26**	**13%**
TOTAL	**208**	**100%**
*Note: percentages lower than 3% are omitted from the table (marked with '-')		

In television news, the appearance of politicians is correlated with the discussion about wealthy investors, whereas there is a negative correlation with the subframe of immigrants as helpless victims of violence. The police is negatively correlated with the subframe of immigrants as victims of racism and as wealthy investors; again, there is a strong correlation of police sources with representations of immigrant criminality. Union leaders play a negative role, as they are correlated strongly with the appearance of frames portraying immigrants as competitors in the workplace. They are, however, negatively correlated with immigrant criminality.

Table 8: Correlations between Frames and Sources in Online Media

Pearson r correlations							
	[1.2] Economic Migrant/ Refugee	[1.3] Sweatshop Worker	[1.4] The 'Othered'	[1.6] The Helpless	[2.1] The Criminal/ the Illegal	[2.2] The Alien/ Other	[2.4] The Intruder/ Social Burden
Politicians	-.042	-.022	.012	-.103	-.181*	**.221**	.184*
Public Institutions	-.105	.030	-.023	-.021	-.109	.040	.015
Police	.036	.052	-.132	**.356**	**.355**	-.171*	-.197*
Experts	-.101	.115	.139	-.101	.008	-.111	-.035
Mainstream Media	-.030	.025	.051	.026	-.020	-.115	.052
Voluntary Organisations	**.249**	-.007	**.244**	-.123	**-.247**	-.134	-.138
Eyewitnesses / Sources of Information	-.097	-.032	.060	.080	-.087	-.025	-.152
Immigrants	.080	-.032	.161	-.009	-.087	-.107	-.025

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 9: Correlations between Frames and Sources in Television News

Pearson r correlations						
	[1.2] Economic Migrant/ Refugee	[1.4] The 'Othered'	[1.6] The Helpless	[2.1] The Criminal/ the Illegal	[2.3] Economic Competitor	[3.5] Wealthy Investor
Politicians	-.164*	.031	**-.210**	-.187*	.105	**.362**
Public Institutions	-.114	.106	.115	-.142	.054	.057
Police	-.132	**-.275**	.055	**.457**	-.090	**-.254**
Union Leaders	-.080	.101	-.123	**-.254**	**.543**	-.089
Eyewitnesses / Sources of Information	.019	.190*	.018	.067	-.066	-.085

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

In what follows, we provide a qualitative analysis of the main frames and subframes and discuss how they are connected to the financial crisis being experienced by Cypriot society, concluding with some recommendations for media policies that may improve immigration-related coverage in the Cypriot context.

Discussion:
Framing of Immigration in the Context of the Financial Crisis

In order to interpret this study's findings in a historical perspective, a connection to previous studies on the coverage of migration is required. Bearing in mind that a direct and accurate comparison between methodologically dissimilar studies is not possible, we can at least make some assumptions about how the media-migration relationship in the Cypriot context has developed over time. Evidently, several negative frames of migration have remained in place: in fact, it is rather sad to record the same patterns over and over again, namely the emphasis on migrant criminality and the negative economic and social consequences of migration, as well as the lack of reference to the contribution of migrants in Cypriot society. What has perhaps toned down is the overtly nationalistic discourse in relation to migrants and the stress of their 'alien' culture and religion – possibly because these aspects are being overshadowed by economy-related frames as we discuss below. A positive indication is connected to the reporting of racism as the tendency of the media to thematise racist violence, noted earlier by Trimikliniotis and Demetriou (2006), seems to be on the rise in online media (but not in television news). Yet, it is uncertain whether the frequent reporting of migrants as victims of racism can contribute to more self-reflexive attitudes of native populations regarding their own practices and experience. The study of Zembylas, Michaelidou and Afantintou-Lambrianou (2010) reveals a paradoxical fact: Cypriot students tend to acknowledge the existence of racism in Cypriot society, but at the same time they deny that there is discrimination against immigrants. More research is needed to investigate the impact of such reporting on public views, namely, whether it contributes to an understanding of how racism is entangled with discrimination in everyday life, instead of conceiving it as an abstract phenomenon disassociated from specific practices.

Turning to the question of how the framing of immigration is affected by the financial crisis, studies on other countries have shown that framing immigrants as a threat has intensified since the economic recession has deteriorated the standard of living for large numbers of citizens and has increased the competition between social groups for public resources (Cecchi, 2011; Schmuck and Matthes, 2014).

In Cyprus, the deposit 'haircut' imposed by the Eurogroup in March 2013, together with subsequent austerity measures agreed by the new government, generated 'a new migration state of exception' (Trimikliniotis, 2013, p. 459), a hardening of immigration

policy, with measures such as the use of coupons instead of cash payment benefits to immigrants and the overt recommendation by the government to employers to hire Cypriots rather than foreigners. As Cyprus faces the mandate to curtail public expenses and shrink the size of the welfare state, the frame of immigrants as 'intruders or social burden' becomes prominent; in the sample analysed in this study, this subframe was the third most frequent subframe in online media, portraying immigrants as a problem for the host country, as a burden that the state, and hence its citizens, cannot bear. The construction of the 'social burden' is based, first, on an emphasis on the magnitude of the 'problem', with the use of numerical or statistical evidence ('millions of immigrants', 'more than doubled') and metaphors ('the wave of immigration', 'suffocation of the infrastructures', 'burden'). Second, news articles about official immigration policies, sourced by government actors, stress emphatically the strain put on the welfare state by immigrants. To give some examples, the Minister of Interior is quoted as saying 'the small and weak Cyprus cannot bear more [immigrants]' and 'with the economic crisis plaguing the country, it is impossible to accept more immigrants', whereas government officials refer to 'excessive benefits granted to aliens', reassuring the public that the official policy will be amended so that the injustice done to rightful beneficiaries (Cypriots) will be corrected. Similarly, an article about the demands of doctors employed in public hospitals describes the free (but mandatory) treatment of third-country nationals for contagious diseases as a 'nightmare' ('*vrachnas*') for the public health system, which has to be 'dealt with drastically', as TCNs 'are daily flooding public hospitals'.[9]

Besides constructing immigrants as persons who drain public resources that would otherwise be granted to natives, the justification used in this discourse is strictly instrumental, assessing the health and the life of immigrants solely in economic terms rather than in terms of rights or humanistic values. This fact can be interpreted as a facet of a broader effect of the financial crisis – and neoliberalism in general – on public discourse, namely, a push to subject the entire social life to the economic logic of the market and a strategic-calculative reasoning. The corollary is a public sphere being dominated by technocratic arguments, justified by an imperative for economic or practical efficiency, signifying the de-politicisation of the social through its economisation (Adaman and Madra, 2014). The instrumentalisation of public discourse can also explain the fact that important issues and frames about immigrants are almost entirely overlooked in the media-produced public sphere, that is to say the frame of the

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9   Again, this is a reflection of the official government policy, as 'one of the first items of the agenda of the austerity legislation by the right-wing Government of Nicos Anastasiades, elected in February 2013, was to effectively end free health care and allowances for asylum seekers, third world country and EU nationals, as well as Turkish-Cypriots' (Trimikliniotis, 2013, p. 446).

'sweatshop worker' and the discussion about labour rights of immigrants in Cyprus. Instead, what is presented quite prominently, especially in television news, is the frame of the 'wealthy investor', which refers to governmental policies for establishing favourable provisions for affluent third-country citizens in terms of residence and work permits as well as citizenship rights, in order to bring their wealth to Cyprus and strengthen the economy. The strongly economic logic is evident yet again in these news stories and articles, legitimising immigration when it is associated with wealth and economic power, principally in times of financial crisis, but denying the same rights to underprivileged immigrants. Thus, the media discourse reproduces and legitimises the official immigration policy of Cyprus, which is based on the distinction between two diverse classes of migrants: elite migrants, whose presence should be stable and permanent so that they can increase the competitiveness of the economy, and subaltern migrants, who are supposedly temporary and cover the need for low-skilled jobs in terms of short-term and precarious employment (Trimikliniotis, 2013).

The association between the construction of immigrants as committers of crimes or lawbreakers simply by their being 'illegal' is long established in the literature on media coverage of immigration. Hall, Critcher, Jefferson, Clarke and Roberts (1978) documented how the media contributed to the rise of 'moral panics' in 1970s Britain. By constructing scapegoats or 'folk-devils' associated with black immigrant settlers, they in fact created diversionary mechanisms for the deeper problems of British society. In the same vein, Cecchi (2011) argues that in Italy 'immigrants [...] work very nicely as "scapegoats" who help to hide the injustices produced by the new economic system and by the political elite's lack of capacity for action' (p. 41), as the criminalisation of immigration in most-watched Italian media 'is accompanied by a deafening silence when it comes to the serious problems relating to both the economic and the political spheres' (*ibid.*). In the absence of longitudinal data, it is hard to document a respective phenomenon in Cyprus, namely, the increase of immigration-related crime coverage since the financial crisis compared to previous years. Yet, this study has revealed that a significant volume of established media attention is directed toward news stories concerning immigrant criminality. These stories have every typical feature of the 'crime story': the sources are almost exclusively police or public officials, the crime is presented in a detailed and dramatic fashion, the coverage is episodic instead of thematic, and the framing follows the logic of a 'law and order' mandate. The practice of mentioning immigrants' nationality in crime-related stories, which, according to this study's findings, is quite frequent in the Cypriot media, is related to the racialisation of criminality (Cecchi, 2011), namely, the association of specific nationalities to certain categories of crimes. The high volume of such stories can accentuate public perceptions about immigrants being responsible for the rise of criminality and direct attributions of responsibility to immigrants themselves, as if they

had an 'inherent propensity' for criminality. Moreover, other stories within this category depict immigrants as lawbreakers: the unlawful acts reported refer to cases of police arrests of 'illegal' immigrants, of illegal employment or even cases of domestic workers accused of 'abandoning their employers'.

A positive aspect in media coverage of immigration emerging from this study is the prominence, in online media, of news related to racism or xenophobia, state repression and violence against immigrants, and the violation of their rights (the 'othered'). Among the issues reported in the respective articles are cases of abuse by the police (detention, torture, deprivation of medical treatment), prolonged detention, non-implementation of decisions to release immigrants detained to be deported, violation of the right of access to justice, as well as racist violence and the broader social exclusion of immigrants in the Cypriot society. These articles adopt mostly a humanitarian approach and articulate a rights-based discourse, while criticising the official immigration policy in Cyprus. As shown by the qualitative analysis and confirmed by the statistical data, the prominence of this discourse is largely a result of the communication strategies of pro-immigrant non-governmental organisations which are the main sources of these news items. Yet, there are apparent limitations that consist generally in two interrelated journalistic practices: First, many articles referring to violation of immigrants' rights by the authorities were covered episodically, devoid of any background or connection either to previous similar cases or to routine procedures practiced by authorities (police, courts, immigration services). Thus, these cases were covered as single events, isolated from the broader socioeconomic conditions in which immigrants live in Cyprus and, ultimately, as exceptions to the rule. In some cases (e.g. police blackmail and exploitation of immigrants), the offenders were presented as the 'bad apples' which were finally punished, instead of addressing the systematic mistreatment of immigrants by state mechanisms. Second, and most important, the stories simply reproduced NGO press releases, without questioning or even simply seeking answers from the respective authorities regarding the grievances against them. When single events are presented as if they were unconnected to the official immigration policy, pressure cannot be exerted upon officials to reassess problematic aspects of this policy, nor is a critical discussion introduced in the public sphere so that demands for change can be voiced. Lastly, a word of caution is warranted regarding news related to racism against immigrants. On the one hand, there is no doubt that these stories have a positive effect as they raise the issue of violence against immigrants by bringing to the fore the respective events; on the other hand, they can also result in the victimisation of immigrants, and their depiction as helpless and easy targets of violence and abuse. In times of financial crisis and the disintegration of the welfare state structures, which leaves wide populations in increasing financial hardship, combined with the rise of extreme right-wing parties with a xenophobic agenda, the frustration and uncertainty experienced by native

populations can be easily directed toward immigrants, especially if the latter are portrayed as the most vulnerable and the least likely to retaliate (Larsen *et al.*, 2009; Haslam and Holland, 2012).

Concluding Remarks

The consistency of the empirical findings regarding the established media coverage of immigration over time and across countries paints a rather gloomy picture vis-à-vis the prospects for a profound change toward a fairer representation of immigrants in media discourses – although outstanding examples do exist and exceptional immigration coverage can be found in most countries. What is equally important, besides ascertaining the various pathologies, is to uncover the causes that lead to this type of immigration coverage. To a large extent the causes are associated with journalistic routines and values, deeply embedded in the mainstream mode of news-making such as the lack of specialised knowledge on migrant issues, organisational constrains (limited time for information collection), the prevalence of negativity and over-simplification of complex issues as news values and so on. As regards immigration in particular, cross-cultural studies (e.g. Gemi, Ulasiuk and Triantafyllidou, 2013) point to additional factors, such as the inherently resource-weak position of immigrants in terms of influencing the processes of news-making and counteracting the ability of elite actors to shape the agenda and the framing of immigration issues.

Although the current study did not investigate the reasons behind the problematic coverage of immigration in the Cypriot media, it revealed, among other practices, the tendency of journalists to avoid confronting the authorities regarding immigration policy, even when ample evidence about systematic ill-treatment of immigrants was provided. This resulted in the creation of two separate monologues (one produced by the official authorities and the other by NGOs focused on immigrant rights), rendering any meaningful critical discussion of immigration policy highly unlikely. This practice can be rooted to several possible causes: lack of interest on the part of journalists to fulfil their watchdog role regarding immigration issues, a tendency to conform with the official xenophobic rhetoric and appease the (perceived) alarmed public opinion, and the structural characteristics of the Cypriot media system, which resembles the Polarised Pluralism model (Hallin and Mancini, 2004), especially in terms of political parallelism, namely, the close ties of media companies with political parties [Authors], combined with a lack of investigative journalism, dependence on official sources, and a dearth of independent journalistic work (Sophocleous, 2008).

Taking these facts into account, it is our contention that what is urgently needed in the Cypriot media is the diversification of journalistic personnel within the Cypriot media organisations, because migrant journalists in the Cypriot media are currently non-

existent. Internal pluralism in the media is considered a factor contributing to social and political diversity in media content, that is, the representation of different cultural groups in the media as well as divergent opinions and viewpoints (McQuail, 1992; Doyle, 2002). Taking into account that previous approaches have proved insufficient, such a measure is considered imperative. For instance, although the Journalistic Code of Ethics includes general provisions against discrimination of any kind in the media content, complaints about the violation of the Code in relation to migrants are often filed to the Cyprus Media Complaints Commission (which functions as a Press Council in Cyprus). As Trimikliniotis and Demetriou (2012) note, the attempt made by the Anti-Discrimination Body (Ombudsman) in Cyprus to issue a binding Code of Conduct for the media on how to avoid racist and xenophobic stereotyping was met with fierce resistance from journalists, who perceived it as a restriction of press freedom.[10] The inclusion of journalists with immigrant background in the media, though not a panacea, can remedy some inadequacies in the news-making process and perhaps increase the volume of coverage of immigration issues by making the investigation of such disputes easier, instil new perspectives on migrant concerns in the heart of the news-making process (the newsroom), provide native journalists with first-hand knowledge and contacts on migrant-related subjects, as well as reduce the reluctance or inability on the part of immigrants themselves to provide information by eroding language and culture barriers and increasing trust (Gemi, Ulasiuk and Triantafyllidou, 2013). The recent case of three migrants to whom a residence permit was granted after sustained media coverage in Norway (Ihlen and Thorbjørnsrud, 2014) proves that positive coverage with the use of strong frames can be valuable and effective, and it confirms the dynamics of frame production, their effects and power. As the current financial crisis can only deepen social inequalities and consequently exacerbate xenophobic tendencies, the thorny relation between media and immigration, especially in regard to its causes and possible remedies, should be prioritised in the research agenda.

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10   The code was finally issued and adopted by the Anti-Discrimination Body in 2010, but as a non-binding set of guidelines instead. Available in Greek at: [http://www.no-discrimination.ombudsman. gov.cy/sites/default/files/kateythintiries_arhes_MME_kata_ratsismoy_xenofovias_diakriseon.pdf], accessed on 13 March 2015.

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Appendix

SOURCES CATEGORIES

Elite	Non-elite	
1 Politicians	1 Interest Communities	
2 Public Institutions	2 Geographic-Ethnic Communities	
3 Police	3 Protesters	
4 Military	4 Workers	
5 Intellectuals	5 Voluntary Organisations	
6 Private Institutions	6 Eyewitnesses	
7 International Institutions	7 Immigrants	
8 Experts	8 Prisoners	
9 Mainstream Media		9a Friends-Relatives-Neighbours
10 Church-Religion		9b Ordinary Citizens
11 Unions' Leaders		9c Accused-Awaiting Trial
12 Personalities	9 Ordinary people	9d Public Opinion
		9e Voters
		9f Victims
		9g Audience
		9h Petitioners
	10 Ideological Communities	
	11 Alternative Media	
	12 Grassroots Reporters	

'The Poor have been Raped': An Analysis of Politicised Collective Identity in Facebook Groups against the Financial Crisis in Cyprus

VASILIKI TRIGA, VENETIA PAPA

Abstract

This paper investigates the content of collective identities as constructed in Facebook groups created in protest against the haircut in 2013 in Cyprus. Given its supplementary role to offline social action, we use Facebook as a research domain and data gathering tool. Drawing on the concept of politicised collective identity we undertake a qualitative content analysis of the posts in three Facebook groups. The analysis reveals two main forms of collective identification. The first presents a rather common form of collective identity that is informed ideologically by nationalism. The second is built upon a strong anti-president rhetoric, echoing the arguments of the opposition parties. The 'banal' nature of such identities probably go a long way in accounting for the limited potential for collective action – unlike some of the other European crisis countries.

Keywords: politicised collective identities, social movements, online social media, civil society, Facebook groups, Cyprus crisis, nationalism, shared grievances, adversarial attributions, thematic analysis

Introduction

The objective of this paper is to explore how online social media contributed to the protest actions in Cyprus against the austerity measures and the haircut in 2013, and in particular, how members of protest groups in Facebook constructed their collective identities. Facebook, or rather any online social media is perceived as a new space of protest action which might, according to the literature, constitute another parallel or supplementary way of protest (Valenzuela *et al.*, 2012). Focusing on the study of social protest in Cyprus is intriguing for two main reasons: The first one relates to the financial crisis and the wave of protests triggered in a context which does not have a legacy in social action but is contrarily characterised by apathy and abstention from political activism (Katsourides, 2013). Since April 2012 when Cyprus signed a bailout agreement (Memorandum) with the Troika (European Commission, European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund), the island officially took its place among the group of

'crisis countries' in the Eurozone (together with Greece, Spain, Portugal and Ireland). Despite the fact that Cyprus was the last among the Eurozone countries to sign a memorandum agreement with the Troika, it had to implement an unprecedented rescue plan that until that moment no one could have anticipated. As expected, this has triggered protest actions by citizens who demonstrated against the austerity measures and the rescue plan in an effort to prevent an abrupt change to their financial situation.

The second reason that makes the study of social protest in Cyprus so thought-provoking is linked to the fact that for the first time in the Cyprus context, protests did not only take place offline but also online with the use of online social media. Even though the field of social movements and protest action online is new, there are a considerable number of studies which explain the connection between new media and protest along with the different forms of identities and actions that are constructed online.

Drawing mainly on social psychological theories of collective action such as collective identity theory and, more specifically, the concept of politicised collective identities (Simon and Klandermans, 2001), the study addresses identity issues as they are negotiated in the posts by members in selected Facebook groups. The analytical goal initially is to locate and identify the meaning of politicised collective identities adopted by the group members as they are constructed and elaborated in the Facebook posts. Secondly, the study focuses on the ways in which the constructed online politicised collective identities represent the protest actions mainly in terms of shared grievances that define the categories of 'us' and 'others' as well as calls for offline action. To end, the study places emphasis on interpreting the accounts regarding online politicised collective identities vis-à-vis their link to the offline protest movement against the crisis.

In the next section the role played by online social media will be briefly addressed together with their use in protest actions based on the emerging literature on social movements and collective identities. Subsequently the theoretical framework of politicised collective identities will be discussed as well as the way it is operationalised in order to explore this area too in the present study. The section on methodology is undertaken next, followed by the results of the analysis which are presented before concluding the paper with remarks and suggestions for future research.

Social Protest through Online Social Media

While the emergence of new and transnational social movements such as the 'Arab Spring', the Indignados, 'the Occupy Movement' and, more recently, the Gezi park uprisings (in May 2013) have been examined in relation to the use of online media, their connection is less clear in the literature. For example, Castells (2012) in his recent work explores the relation between social movements like 'The Indignados movement' and 'The Occupy

movement' with online social media. While the emphasis is on the power of networks as spaces par excellence, which facilitate new forms of political participation, Castells leaves aside the complex dynamics between participation, identity transformation, autonomy and continuity of social movements within online social media. At the empirical level, researchers in the wider field of media and internet studies claim that online media and in particular social media have progressively become an integral tool for social protest action since they have transformed 'political action and long established mechanisms of social movements organisation, communication and mobilisation in various ways' (Theocharis *et al.*, 2015, p. 204). For the purposes of the present study, the existing literature that elaborates on the association between online social media and collective identities is discussed below.

Concentrating on the study of collective identities in online social media, researchers have procured mixed results. Departing from Bennett and Segerberg (2012), we encounter their concept of 'connective action', which opposes the traditional notion of collective action. They argue that digitally networked social action 'that relies on mediated networks for substantial aspects of their organisation' entails an openness, which allows for the spread of personal frames that 'overshadow collective frames' (*ibid.*, p. 765). So, 'connective action' can be seen as the outcome of the newly established structure of communication set by online social media which can require higher personal involvement from individuals in terms of input (Anduiza *et al.*, 2014). Hence, if connective action is what explains social action in online social media, which is enabled by constant individual or collective content production (Bennett and Segerberg, 2012) then this insinuates a transformed notion of collective identity. Studies have shown that social media use for social action is associated with the construction of weaker identity ties which facilitate the multilateral interactivity of users as well as the extension and management of their social networks (Bennett, 2008; Valenzuela *et al.*, 2012). Yet while collective identities being constructed or reconstructed through online social media may be weaker, there is evidence that online social media that hold together collective narratives, which incorporate the diversity of personalised action frames, may accelerate the identity formation processes (Anduiza *et al.*, 2014). To illustrate this, Baym (2010) discusses a new phenomenon called 'networked collectivism' where individuals can construct a shared but at the same time distributed group identity, sometimes less coherent than previous forms of unified collective identities. In a complementary point of view, Kavada (2009) argues that the available communication tools in online social media allow for both reciprocity and interactivity, which are significant not only for bonding but also for the construction of collective identities online. Having a different focus, Jasper (2011) in his recent work highlighted the importance of 'an emotional energy', defined as a 'mood of excitement and enthusiasm' around a common identity, as another explanation for protest participation. In the same vein, Gerbaudo (2012) contends that within online social media individuals indeed can construct collective identities.

The brief discussion of the existing literature on online social media and its impact on social protest and collective identities leads to the conclusion that social media is central for political activism (Howard, 2011). In addition, social media is positively correlated with protest, though not for all types of protest. Demonstrations are one type of protest that is closely linked to the use of social media in contrast to petitions, which seem not to be affected by social media use (Valenzuela, 2013). This argument raises the question regarding the actual role of online social media in relation to social movements and actions that take place offline. Providing an answer to this question is crucial since it elicits the theoretical premises on which the present study is based. In order to answer this question we draw upon recent empirical studies, which consider online social media as amplifiers of traditional forms of protest rather than new forms of protest (Valenzuela *et al*., 2012). In this sense the connection of online social media with offline actions is strong (Caren and Gaby, 2011; Earl *et al*., 2014) but supplementary (Valenzuela, 2013). More explicitly online social media is conceived as technology or as space where people mediate their political interests, so it is considered as a tool rather than a cause for social action (Bond *et al*., 2012; Kroh and Neiss, 2012). Along these lines, we have pursued Valenzuela's view that 'Facebook is a resource for creating collective identity' (Valenzuela *et al*., 2012, p. 311).

As a final point, another important conclusion that emerges from the existing literature is that although the number of studies on protest is progressively increasing, more content-based approaches will provide a better account of the dynamics and impact of online social media particularly in the construction of online collective identities – a necessary constituent of social protest. That said, the present study attempts to contribute in this regard by concentrating on unfolding the meanings of politicised collective identities that were constructed in Facebook groups as part of the protest movement against the financial crisis in Cyprus.

The Concept of 'Politicised Collective Identities'

Identity constitutes a basic concept in social movement studies (Azzi *et al*., 2011) since, according to the literature, people's identification with a social group increases their inclination to protest as regards defending the rights or claims of this group (Klandermans *et al*., 2002). In particular, the concept of collective identity is directly linked with almost every theoretical perspective and empirical study focusing on protest action (Hunt and Benford, 2004). Due to its popularity, defining collective identity can be a laborious task and this is why there is a high number of similar definitions but not a consensual one (Snow, 2001). Nevertheless, adopting a definition is a fundamental step in building the theoretical framework of the present study. In order to select the appropriate definition, we have turned to the disciplinary distinction that van Stekelenburg (2013) emphasises

between sociologists and psychologists. While the sociological elaboration of collective identities is more macroscopic, we have sought to adopt the psychological explanation given the research goal of our study. The psychological understanding of collective identity has its roots in a long tradition of research in social psychology, starting from the classic social identity theory (Tajfel, 1978). The latter treats collective actions as the results of the strategies adopted by minority groups in the process of social change. Even so, identification with the group determines the individuals' perceptions of socio-structural characteristics and predicts the likelihood of individuals' participation in social change processes. Social identity: a) underlines group-based emotions and brings together the perception of injustice and collective action; b) politicises and, thus, motivates collective action by channelling broader social identities into more specific protest organisations; and c) predicts both structural and incidental types of collective disadvantage. Based on this theory, social identity is understood as a well-defined entity rather than a socially constructed category or a social strategy that can be prone to change in the course of action. This means that social identity fails to explain social change although it describes the transition from 'I' to 'we' at an individual level. To attend this weakness, Simon and Klandermans (2001) developed another theory of collective identity in accordance with collective identification, which is built gradually within a series of events that politicise the individuals and transform their interactions with the social environment. Such events, like protests, are the collective actions that principally contribute to collective identification. The latter arises as a result of the salience, intensity and internalisation of the group's norm of participation into action (van Stekelenburg and Klandermans, 2009).

By linking group identification to participation in political protest, Simon and Klandermans (2001) introduced the concept of 'politicised collective identity'. Here the emphasis is on the notion of power and, more specifically, the struggle for power between social groups within society, which is represented in terms of political group activity (*ibid*., p. 323). In other words, members of a group intentionally engage themselves in a struggle for compensating the group's claims, sharing common goals, values, identifications and an understanding that their social action takes place in a wider social context. This means that the group's identity 'breeds' and is 'bred' by the wider dilemmas, dynamics and discourses involved in the power struggle between various social groups. According to Klandermans (2014, p. 1), collective identity becomes politicised when people who share a specific identity take part in political action on behalf of that collectivity. Politicised identities are in constant change since their meaning is contingent upon the context in which they are constructed, such as the power struggle in which the movement is involved (Polletta, 2009; Klandermans, 2014).

Operationalising Politicised Collective Identities

This paper draws on the concept of 'politicised collective identity' in order to answer the following research question:

> *What is the meaning of politicised collective identities as these are constructed by the members of Facebook protest groups which are engaged in political action against the financial crisis in Cyprus*?

To address this research question it is necessary to operationalise 'politicised collective identity' so that its meaning(s) can be unravelled. We focus on the three constituent components that are often proposed to occur in a sequence departing from a) awareness of shared grievances, through b) adversarial attributions to c) the involvement of society. Below, we discuss these three components since the aim of the present study is to explore the meanings attributed to each one of them in the selected Facebook posts but without considering importance in relation to their sequence. This is because the major analytical emphasis is on the meaning of politicised identities rather than the process of their construction.

a) *Raised Awareness of Shared Grievances*: This component refers to a common feeling of deprivation, insult, or violation of rights, values, an injustice or a moral indignation that unites individuals in a group which acts against this perceived injustice (Tajfel and Turner, 1986; Smith *et al*., 1994 Klandermans, 1997). This feeling, which is conceived as a psychological status is considered a necessary condition for the emergence of politicised collective identity (Klandermans, 1997). This concept has been very influential and has led to the emergence of one of the core theories in social movements, namely the Relative Deprivation Theory (Walker and Pettigrew, 1984). In order to clarify politicised collective identities, we should concentrate on identifying the raised awareness about shared grievances, which means the degree to which members of a group are conscious of what they consider collectively as a grievance. Shared grievances can be detected in various forms, such as: i) injustice or illegitimate inequality usually vis-à-vis other social groups (Klandermans, 1997). The shared grievance in this case is attributed to some sort of violation of equality that should apply in respect to the social groups compared, such as North and South, poor and rich; ii) suddenly imposed grievances (Walsh, 1988), which describe grievances that are caused by accidents or shocking events; iii) violation of values or principles that are associated with the emergence of new social movements (Kriesi, 1993) and iv) privileges under threat (Simon and Klandermans, 2001). In the present study, by analysing the written posts of the selected Facebook groups configured against the financial crisis in Cyprus our aim is to identify the shared grievances and the forms in which they are presented as discussed here.

b) *Adversarial Attributions*: The second distinct component concerns defining intergroup relations and, more specifically, the 'others' against whom the actions of a group (e.g. social movement) are directed as well as the 'us' group. Defining the 'in-group' and the 'out-group' is a basic premise of classic social identity theory that brings to the fore the emphasis on similarities and commonalities characterising the in-group and the differences that diversify the in-group from the out-group (Tajfel and Turner, 1986).

In politicised collective identities the meaning of the 'others' takes a rather intense form since it is conceived in very antagonistic terms, usually in terms of 'enemy'. This means that we observe high intergroup polarisation, in which the categories of 'us' and 'others' serve as powerful tools for interpreting social reality and adopt positions regarding all social and political matters (van Stekelenburg, 2013). The usual form of an enemy can be a specific out-group, an authority, or more generally the 'system' (Simon and Klandermans, 2001). The analysis centres on identifying the categories constructing the 'us' and 'others' in the posts of the members of the selected Facebook groups.

c) *Involvement of Society (Action)*: The third characteristic of politicised collective identities points to the form of action promoted or undertaken by the members of the group. In other words, it refers to a need to take punitive action or compensation from the identified 'enemy' (Simon and Klandermans, 2001). The type of action that is advanced (or the plea for it) is normally confrontational, directed against the government or similar actors with political power. Actions are also directed toward the general public to exercise pressure to take-up a position or mobilise it to participate in the group's social actions. As Simon and Klandermans put it, actions aim to 'transform the confrontation into a more comprehensive power struggle forcing society at large to take sides either with their in-group or with their opponent' (2001, p. 326). Politicisation of the action takes place once the power struggle triangulates and this happens with the involvement of society at large.

Methodology

The bedrock of this study centres on studying material which is contained in the most popular online social media, namely Facebook. Facebook is increasingly used for social research purposes. Two strands of empirical research using Facebook are identified in the literature. The first strand uses Facebook as a variable to be tested or explored, hence advancing research questions such as 'why people use Facebook' and so on (Wilson *et al*., 2012). The second conceives Facebook as a useful and ongoing database of social activity where information is constantly added (*ibid*., 2012, p. 204), a fact that makes it an accessible research tool. In this second strand of research, Facebook is not under exploration *per se* but it is perceived as an online media site that facilitates other social phenomena. By looking at the research question that guides the present study, it becomes

evident that the second strand of research is adopted. This is because Facebook is utilised as an online sphere of social behaviour (*ibid*., 2012), which hosts the interactions and views of members of protest groups against the financial crisis in Cyprus: Such interactions and views are what we consider to be the data of this study. Given the increasing popularity of Facebook as a research tool, and despite the considerable volume of research dedicated to it, there is fragmentation regarding the research methodologies employed. That said, our methodological strategy has been developed in order to tackle our research question. Explained in detail below is the type of data collected plus the data mining technique along with the analytical procedure.

Data and Process

The study is based on data collected and extracted from the written material published online in selected Facebook groups – one of the most popular Facebook functionalities. Any Facebook user can create a group by inviting other users to join it based on shared preferences or goals on which the group is constructed. Facebook users, by choosing to join a specific group, declare their orientation on the 'mission' of the group, goals and claims and express their membership. Although joining an online protest group in Facebook may be considered as a thinner form of collective identification, it nevertheless entails a degree of responsibility since the Facebook user declares among her/his friends her/his collective identity knowing that there might be opposite opinions or objections on behalf of some of them (Triga, 2011). In other words, joining a Facebook group on political issues might have repercussions for a Facebook user because it automatically reveals ideological and political positions. As mentioned in previous sections, the selected Facebook groups that were analysed in the present study are seen as supplementary to the wider social movement that was formed against the financial crisis in Cyprus and made its presence visible in the demonstrations that took place mainly during March 2013. Based on this rationale, the assumption is that the common point of reference among the selected groups' members is their interest in the Cyprus crisis, the intervention of Troika and the haircut of bank deposits.

The groups were selected as a research sample after using the search function in Facebook's webpage to identify those that contained in their title the following keywords in Greek: 'Haircut Deposits' [Κούρεμα Καταθέσεων'], 'Cyprus Haircut Deposits' [Κύπρος Κούρεμα Καταθέσεων'], or 'No Haircut Deposits' ['Οχι Κούρεμα Καταθέσεων']. Groups were probed that were operational during the crucial ten-day bail-in period from 16 March to 26 March 2013, when offline protest action demonstrations were also taking place. A list of Facebook groups and pages appeared which contained the respective terms in their title but not all of them were included in the analysis. In order to select the groups for the analysis a series of criteria was applied. The first criterion was to determine the length of time that groups had been in existence. Facebook groups that were created after the ten-day bail-in

period of analysis were excluded from the final sample. The second criterion concerned structural characteristics in relation to the Facebook platform. It was necessary for groups to express a description in their profile; a feature that verifies the goals of the group and its relevance to the specific issue (e.g. the financial crisis in Cyprus and nationwide demonstrations). Moreover, groups had to exhibit a certain number of 'likes' or members participating in the group. With respect to the latter, our criterion was to identify groups with more than 50 members and 50 likes, a number that is considered a benchmark, since it facilitates the group's appearance in the newsfeed. As a final criterion, groups had to be 'public' otherwise the material generated by the group's members could not be accessed. A public Facebook group allows for all published material attached to the group's 'wall' to be accessible by all Facebook users without the necessity of being members of the group.[1] Three groups met the criteria and are presented in table 1.

In order to investigate the politicised collective identities, we concentrated on the comments posted by the three groups, which form the analytical material of the study. The comments were of two types: a) comments posted by members on the wall of the group and b) hyperlinks that were posted by members on the wall which could either be accompanied by comments or not. Both types of comments were subsequently analysed. The total number of posts examined from the three selected Facebook groups was 205, which also included hyperlinks or posts containing comments and hyperlinks.

Given that the selection of posts took place some time after they had been published on the group's wall a data mining technique was needed to collect them. To perform this task a data mining technique was used based on NodeXL, an open source network analysis and visualisation software, used primarily for network analysis, discovery and exploration of a particular social media (Smith *et al.*, 2009). Additionally, this tool can be used for data mining as an add-in function for Excel 2007 appending network analysis and visualisation features to the spreadsheet. The data entered into the NodeXL template workbook can be converted into a directed graph chart or explored further for the purpose of content analysis (*ibid*). NodeXL has a modular architecture that allows network data to be extracted and imported from specific dates and specific Facebook pages or groups.

Analysis

Following the collection of all respective posts, a qualitative content analysis was used in order to evaluate them (Smith, 1995; Ahuvia, 2008; George, 2008). In qualitative content

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1   The use of material produced by the selected groups' members can be used for research purposes, therefore, no ethical issues are raised because this material is considered to be public based on Facebook regulations (for more detailed information, see 'Privacy Options for Groups' at: [https://www.facebook.com/help/220336891328465], accessed on 29 April 2015.

analysis, the interest, as in traditional content analysis, lies in highlighting the themes that appear in selected texts as well as the interpretation of these themes. The main objective was to search for the various issues that constitute the content of politicised collective identities and proceed with their deciphering. The major analytical strategy involved the identification of 'commonplace' aspects of the accounting practice (Condor and Gibson, 2007, p. 121). This process entails the repeated readings of all the posts that lead to the identification of their themes. Based on the identified themes, all posts were subsequently classified in the three main components of the concept of politicised collective identity – namely those which concerned the raised awareness of shared grievance(s), the definitions of the 'in-group' and 'out-group(s)', and the forms of actions against what was considered to be the group's 'enemy'. The next step involved repetitive readings of the content of each of the three components, which led to a thick description of them.

Table 1: Description of Facebook Groups

GROUP TITLE	MEMBERS	POSTS	HYPERLINKS	HYPERLINKS AND POSTS
1. NO TO THE CATASTROPHIC PLAN OF TROIKA [ΟΧΙ ΣΤΙΣ ΚΑΤΑΣΤΡΟΦΙΚΕΣ ΠΡΟΤΑΣΕΙΣ ΤΗΣ ΤΡΟΙΚΑΣ]	1177	36	16	9
2. NO TO THE HAIRCUT DEPOSITS BY THE PARLIAMENT [ΟΧΙ ΤΗΣ ΒΟΥΛΗΣ ΣΤΟ ΚΟΥΡΕΜΑ ΚΑΤΑΘΕΣΕΩΝ]	749	27	5	7
3. NO TO THE ECONOMIC SELL OUT [ΟΧΙ ΣΤΟ ΟΙΚΟΝΟΜΙΚΟ ΞΕΠΟΥΛΗΜΑ]	137	64	28	13
TOTAL	2063	127	49	29

Results

In this section the constructed meanings of the three basic components of politicised collective identities are deliberated for the selected posts of the three Facebook groups. We endeavoured to present posts from all three groups based on the common meanings attributed to the components of politicised identities rather than to differentiate the posts between the three groups. This choice is justified by the fact that no distinctive discursive

elements were found that differentiate one group from the others. After continuous readings of the material, we concluded that the collected posts from the three groups constitute a single volume of material that may be analysed based on the different lines of argumentation contained therein which impart meaning to politicised identities. Below we discuss the content attributed by the members of Facebook groups to the three components – shared grievances, intergroup relations and the call for action. To make the discussion more vivid we provide characteristic extracts from the posts.

A.   *Raised Awareness of Shared Grievances*

Shared grievances, which are considered to be the glue that binds the members of the groups, have been expressed in five diverse ways. Each one of them emphasises different crucial elements without any conflict existing between them.

A1.   *The Haircut as an Illegitimate Violation of Cyprus Assets*

In the first category shared grievances are expressed as a shared feeling of illegitimate violation against Cyprus. Two main lines of argumentation were encountered. The first constructs the violation as an illegitimate loss of material goods. The illegitimacy is uttered in strong terms, for instance, attributions of 'theft' or 'robbery' that cannot be disputed regarding their negative connotation. Victims are represented as the 'people and their money', or the 'banks and their deposits'. To underline the illegitimacy, vivid metaphors are detected in various posts such as 'steal the bread from our mouth(s)'. Interestingly the 'Russians' or other people's money are described as victims too, a reference that demonstrates the large scale of illegitimacy.

> 'The decision for the haircut was already taken before. The public denials of this fact 1 day before the haircut, was made on purpose so people cannot take [out] their deposits. So banks closed on Friday and until they open[ed] on Tuesday they would have stolen from our accounts our money at the rate agreed last night by the leader of robbery!!'

Nonetheless, the ultimate goal of this robbery is claimed to be the catastrophe and collapse of the Cyprus economy. The latter is built upon logical sequences and effects which derive from the haircut such as 'terrorising people' and the resulting loss of trust in banks. The attribution of blame is directed against a list of actors, including the government and corrupted elites, the banks and the Troika, although Germany is also mentioned as a 'greedy' actor.

> 'My biggest worry at the moment is this Troika haircut that our useless government is about to impose by law, next week and rob our bank accounts up to 10% of our savings and without our approval simply to bail out the crooked banks.'

What distinguishes this first line of argumentation from the second one below is that the illegitimate loss in material goods is represented mostly in assets that were 'stolen' from individuals. Hence, accountability is pointed at the level of the 'agency' rather than as a collective harm. Although it can be represented as 'collective' it is reflected in fewer posts as the majority of them draw emphasis on personal damage. That said; the second line of argumentation constructs the violation as an illegitimate loss of collective goods. The material aspect is typified in terms of the country's 'wealth', which is linked to people's lives and the country's future. To make this even more convincing, the main victims affected by the illegitimacy are sensitive social groups such as young people and the unemployed.

> 'My heart goes [out] to all those young people who live by the day without hope ... and also to the old and vulnerable citizens of our society who are in the middle of this chaos and no-one thinks about the repercussions that this cold Troika robbery will have on their lives... and the 60,000 unemployed what can one say about those families?'

> 'Cyprus is doomed and [it is] time to rethink ways to protect the future of our children and the future generations: where there is no Justice ... there is no legal wrong ...! All is permissible in such a country, robbery included!'

The loss of collective wealth is represented in dramatic terms as a domino process of deprivation affecting social policies and deeds such as the collapse of the health system, the implementation of privatisations, besides salary and pension cuts which will unavoidably affect negatively the social cohesion of Cyprus society. The lists of austerity policies recorded by the groups' members show a high degree of specialised knowledge in the field that is reinforced via the device of footing. This is clarified by providing examples of other crisis cases (i.e. a rhetorical device that aims to add veracity to the current accounts):

> 'If we succumb now by signing the memorandum and mortgage our wealth to these speculators, the result will be for people to be without medicine in the future: privatisation [deals], wage cuts, tax hikes, pension cuts, our society will be hurt. We have the example of Greece. Let them not fool us.'

The austerity measures implemented as a remedy for the financial crisis are constructed as a source of violation. They are rejected not simply as unfair but also as useless policies that have been rejected in the past by the same political actors currently supporting the measures. This behaviour undermines the effectiveness of the proposed measures. To emphasise this, a catalogue of past public announcements and declarations by politicians who were condemning such measures is juxtaposed with their present

actions. The illegitimacy of the proposed measures is given further prominence by portraying them as part of an experiment taking place in Cyprus; hence the effectiveness of the process is still to be tested.

A2. *The Haircut as a Suddenly Imposed Calamity*

The second category of meaning attributed to the shared grievance focuses largely on the way the haircut has been imposed. What is contended is its sudden imposition, a dimension which has also been supported in the literature as a common trait in the way that shared grievances are rationalised in politicised collective identities (Walsh, 1988). In this case grievance is represented in terms of a calamity that violated the people's rights. The fact that it was unexpected, and thus sudden, is deployed in the accounts as a way to foreground the severity of the consequences it has provoked. This is represented through various metaphors which serve to make the descriptions more vivid and create solid, tangible images of calamities in order to strengthen their effect on other members of the group. More specifically, the haircut is parallelised with the 'explosion in Mari',[2] 'the Annan Plan', as well as a 'shocking but predetermined plan', and 'a death penalty'. These metaphors also imply the lack of alternative choices on the part of Cyprus.

> 'Don't you think that the "explosion" caused by the Eurogroup's "initiative" is less painful to our economy than the explosion at Mari? For those who will argue that now we don't have any "dead people", I want to tell them that the dead will start to get stacked, when the suicides appear. Let's find out some statistical info's from the Motherland.'

> 'We are condemned to the death penalty and now they give us the right to choose how we want to die: from the haircut or by direct execution which means exit from the Eurozone. I prefer the second choice. If it is to die I do not want to be tortured first. It is better if they pull the trigger.'

It is interesting to note that the argumentation for constructing shared grievance as a calamity is defended by resorting to emotion and intense images that enforce a specific negative representation of the grievance.

A3. *The Crisis and the Haircut as Part of a Conspiracy against Cyprus*

In the posts of the three Facebook groups a third category of shared grievance has also been identified which is built upon conspiracy rhetoric. According to the literature,

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2   The Evangelos Florakis Naval Base explosion was one of the worst military accidents ever recorded in Cyprus. The incident occurred on 11 July 2011, when 98 containers of military explosive material that had been stored for 2½ years outside in the sun on the Naval Base near the village of Zygi in Limassol, exploded, killing 13 people from military personnel to fire-fighters.

conspiratorial thinking is actually common in social movements in Europe and America (Lipset and Raab, 1970; Groh, 1987). The conspiracy against Cyprus is structured upon two main lines of argumentation. The first represents the haircut as an effective means to inflict harm on Cyprus in order to weaken its position so that the responsible actors gain power in the area and exploit the natural resources of the island. In this sense the true reason for the haircut is insinuated to be geopolitical.

> 'Troika through the EU have both cunningly tried to subjugate economically our little island for geopolitical reasons and steal its new wealth – the natural gas.'

The second line of argumentation represents the conspiracy as a more generalised plot, which is linked to the Cyprus problem. The conspiracy lies in epitomising the haircut as a covert way of conquering Cyprus. Thus, the causal links provided in the posts to justify the veracity of the arguments are informed by the provision of historical events and other causal mechanisms between the past and the present. Historical events are allied with current actions with the intention of drawing similarities and therefore the hidden 'plan' is verified.

A common element in both lines of argumentation is the attribution of extraordinary powers to certain agents to act and control others (i.e. the Troika, Germany), for instance, to design a secret plan, which is an accepted logic in conspiracy theories (Sunstein and Vermeule, 2009). At the same time a process of victimisation is also observed in which the 'weak Cypriots' are associated with a sense of alienation and disaffection from the system; unable to react against the 'enemies' plots. This too is characteristic in conspiratorial thinking according to the literature (Citrin *et al*., 1975; Graumann, 1987; Berlet, 1992; Goertzel, 1994).

The shared grievance that is constructed by the use of conspiracy theories is explained by the attribution of otherwise inexplicable events (i.e. 'stealing people's money') to intentional action (i.e. 'the Troika' plan to exploit Cyprus' natural resources) due to the unwillingness to accept the possibility that significant negative consequences may be a product of specific system mechanisms (such as market forces) or of simple chance rather than of anyone's plans. This kind of logic seems successful in creating a unifying power among members of the groups in their perceptions of injustice caused by the financial crisis and insecurity (Goertzel, 1994). Overall, constructing a shared grievance in terms of a conspiracy actually evidences what Volkan (1988) suggests: that people often feel a need for a tangible enemy on which to externalise their angry feelings.

> 'Is it over? Or not? We lost a battle but not the war. After this defeat other battles will follow, and other memoranda and haircuts. More pseudo-dilemmas creating fake panic and Asia-minor's disasters, and more Annan-type of Plans for Cyprus will also come. Maybe the name will not be Annan, or Ban Ki-moon or even an idea of our friend, Merkel. Whatever will be discussed it [will] not be for [our] good.'

Although in this category the major characteristic is that the shared grievance is constructed upon a conspiracy, the actual grievance is expressed in terms of threatening existing market opportunities (i.e. the exploitation of national resources). This representation fits with one of the forms of grievances usually described in the literature on politicised collective identities (Simon and Klandermans, 2001).

A4.   *Crisis as a Manifestation of Colonial Capitalism*

The fourth category constructs shared grievances among the members of the Facebook groups as a violation of values and ideological principles. The latter is represented mainly as a national injustice but at the same time it is hostile towards capitalism. Such conviction is informed by the ideological resources of what is known as ethno-socialist rhetoric (Hobsbawm, 1991). More specifically, what unites the members who share this construction is their belief that the haircut along with all related decisions adopted by the political elites, domestic and international, are actions which represent 'an invasion' that violated Cyprus as a nation and signify why every act of resistance against such measures is described as an act of 'pride'. Simultaneously, these policies are represented as dangerous outcomes of capitalism, which aim at the destruction of weaker countries by the financially strong ones. A list of vivid expressions depicts this, for example, 'colonial capitalism', 'debtocracy', 'colonies of debt', and so on.

> 'The MPs did the right thing and cast away for good Germany's (EU) Colonial Capitalism – Bravo my little nation, and Bravo MPs who have united against an evil that was about to swallow our country into oblivion! You made us proud and have shown the world a real lesson in democracy, which has been nibbled away like cheese by ravenous rats. The principle of "Right & Just" is been eroded by an international new dark movement and Cyprus was their test case firstly by creating debtocracy and then [to] rob the wealth of nations for absolute control; that, my dear friends is the real New Face of Colonial Capitalism on the rise.'

> 'Our effort should be to change the attempt to stop us from being the next Financial Centre, to become the colony of debt to get their hand[s] on our Natural Gas in the future. Also, to stop the social role of the state in terms of public services, health, education etc. No to the colony of debt, debtocracy to neoliberal system.'

According to the theory of politicised identities, those grievances that are the result of violating values also express a moral outrage against the political actors who dishonoured those values. Such feelings are verbally expressed through individual's indignation or disappointment, which leads to identification with other participants who share the same grievances. Such description correlates with the accounts in Facebook groups that express users' indignation against any political actor who is identified as

responsible for the present situation. It is characteristic that in most relevant posts the justification for the haircut as a national and financial threat for Cyprus is remedied through recourse to emotion, which makes the accounts more convincing.

> 'The struggles of our nation are leading us [like] a lighthouse. Long live March 25th, 1821. Long live Cyprus. Long live the Nation !!!!!'

In order to add objectivity and veracity to the accounts, the users invoke other crisis cases as examples that confirm their fears, which in fact verify that the proposed anti-crisis measures result in 'enslaving' the countries without curing the financial crisis. By recalling other examples in crisis countries, like Greece, Ireland, Iceland and the European South more generally, the users also attempt to derive legitimacy for the instrumental positions they adopt and the radical solutions they propose in order to change the situation. Such solutions refer to the exit of the Eurozone which is purported to be a 'heroic exit' that will lead to the collapse of the EU.

> 'The Troika Group (same actors) tried to apply the same trap on the Irish people and the attached video shows how they refuse NOT to disclose their hidden agenda. They have tried the same on us'.
>
> 'PEOPLE SAY NO, you saw that your enemies have not realised any of their threats, do not let them fool you now with their propaganda and lies! We have experienced the same in Greece which is today enslaved and people live in hunger and unbearable poverty. WE WILL SAY NO AND WE WILL SEND BACK OUR ASPIRING CONQUERORS!'
>
> 'An exit by a member state and an exit from the Euro, will be the detonator of dissolution and financial collapse of Europe. Firstly all depositors owing big capitals in Europe will immediately take their money from all European banks FEARING of a haircut in other European countries. Simultaneously, countries likes Spain, Italy will react with backlash since they will go completely bankrupt after the transfer of the capital outside their boundaries. We have to understand. We are the detonator for the end of Europe.'

The way shared grievances are constructed in this category is in accord with one representation of intergroup relations that is described below and personifies the in-group as Cypriots and the out-group as enemies of the nation.

B.   *Adversarial Attributions*

In this section the effort to unpack the meaning of the politicised collective identities in the posts of the selected Facebook groups is concentrated on the construction of the in-group and out-group. The logic, on which the categories of 'us' and 'others' are constructed, is rationalised by identifying the common characteristics that people who are

members in a Facebook group share (in-group) as opposed to others (out-group), which are normally represented in negative terms.

The analysis brought to the fore three main versions of intergroup relations that are discussed in detail below. In all versions the in-group is attributed with similar qualifications and with a basic reference to 'the people of Cyprus'. The out-group is symbolised in more intense terms such as an 'enemy'; an aspect that concurs with the concept of politicised collective identities.

B1. *The Cunning Troika and the EU against Cypriots*

In this line of argumentation users define the in-group as the Cypriots. In particular, the unifying element is identified in relation to two attributes: a) the nation and the danger of losing the national sovereignty and b) the difficult financial situation of the nation rather than that of its individuals. These two characteristics become apparent in accounts such as 'us – brothers of a proud nation Cypriots' and 'us – as debtors' ('we are currently slaves suffering from hunger').

> 'A PROUD NATION of Cypriots shows once again that during times of adversity and national hardships, they are a united proud nation. With dignity, maturity and solidarity, they have shown the world and all the others who seek the destruction of the Republic that Cypriots will never submit to injustice. The young, the old, housewives and business persons have behaved with the utmost civilised manner on the very first day of bank re-opening ... Calm and composed they lined up in silence to show Troika and those international bankers that they will never be able to break down this nation[']s spirit of defiance ...'

> 'Our Cyprus should not be left in the hands of our supposed European allies!! The Cypriot parliament should not vote in favour of the Eurogroup measures!!! If Cyprus gets into this international game of opportunists (see George Soros), there will be no way back!!!! Don't let the last Greek bastion be lost!!! Brothers we are with you!!!'

Cypriots are opposed to a common enemy, which is mainly chronicled as the Troika. The latter is represented in strong negative language, often using an ironic tone such as: 'the gang of the TROIKA', or '*Troika, driven by a cold and brutal hidden agenda*'. Thus, the Troika is constructed as an actor whose behaviour conforms to a hidden political and economic agenda, which has only recently been revealed to Cyprus, and under whose authority a new world system is now being imposed where nations lose their sovereignty. This is clarified by the deployment of the attribute 'conquerors' to the Troika. In addition, the EU is equally represented as a negative 'other' since it is perceived as part of the Troika, consisting purely of 'Brussels' bankers'. So the role of the EU is limited to a negative economic representation of being 'financially evil'. There is also an indirect attribution of

blame to the national leadership, which is rendered responsible for its surrender to the enemies or for having assimilated with the enemies in terms of common principles and ideologies.

> 'The coward give-in to Troika means loss of national sovereignty, concession of national wealth and a total destruction of Cyprus the way we know it. PEOPLE SAY NO – you saw that your enemies were not able to materialise any of their threats, do not get caught now with their propaganda and lies. We have lived the same in Greece and we saw the results – we are currently slaves suffering from hunger and unbearable poverty. We will say no and send back our conquerors!'

To protect Cyprus as a nation from the 'enemies' and to ultimately end the financial crisis, the users proposed the exit from the Eurozone as the proclaimed salvage that is shared by the in-group. Exit from the Eurozone is thus represented as a liberating solution that would allow Cyprus and its people to decide on their own fate. Again, this euroscepticist rhetoric is grounded on nationalism, which has been observed in other crisis contexts (Serricchio *et al.*, 2013; Clements *et al.*, 2014).

> 'What Troika has done to Cyprus, is a strong reminder why we should get out of the Euro, regain our right to decide our own destiny and the sooner the better!'

> 'Since Europe is failing its people, let's get our freedom back and drop the EU for it has been an absolute failure for the people of Europe and for us ... let's drop those Brussels' bankers once and for all ... and clean out this place from corruption and regain our dignity as a nation for the people ... . BUT sadly we have puppets and NOT leaders, that is a problem!'

B2.   *The President and National Political Elites against the People*

Another construction of the category of 'us' is described with more abstract and less defined characteristics such as 'people' without any other specific common denominator. The unifying element of the in-group is mostly its opposition to the out-group. The latter refers to the political elites, namely, the Cyprus President, ministers, MPs and parties. So the reasoning upon which the opposition is built is not the bailout *per se*, but instead the inadequacies of the political elites to pursue their assigned tasks. Starting with the president, who is at the centre of the attribution of blame, the main representation is: a) unreliable vis-à-vis his electoral promises; b) a traitor, since he betrayed his people's needs and behind their backs he opted to serve others' interests; c) incompetent since he was not capable of resistance against other actors who were responsible for the unwanted policies; d) powerless, since he failed to stand up and face the political situation, and e) arrogant because he failed to show empathy with poor people – he is wealthy, having secured his

own deposits. Such representations are present in many accounts and can be detected in a series of phrases, for instance; 'Mr President, you try to justify the unjustifiable', 'we need a real and responsible president', 'traitors of the nation', 'thief of the national pride', 'we need politicians with guts to face their European "friends"', 'we have incompetent people governing our nation', 'immediate resignation of all [of] them' and 'the crisis need[s] a leader – we don't have him', or 'petty politician'. Some of these phrases are uttered in an ironic tone or even loudly bellowed to undermine even more the adequacy of the President for his position, 'Master Anastasiades', 'he negotiated hard!', 'the crisis needs a leader!!!!',[3] and 'he almost said We Won'.

> 'With sadness we attend the declaration of President Anastasiades (the President whose main slogan in the recent election campaign, was "The crisis needs a leader"). For a president who receives instructions from technocrats of Troika and his "friend" Wolfgang Schaeuble, he is doing well President Nikos Anastasiades. The only thing they did not tell us is that "We won"! He does not lack the Presidential allure required, despite the storm that the country is facing, especially after his "initiative" to accept the haircut of depositors last Friday (which was the beginning of the end for Cyprus Banks and the Economy). He doesn't even consider potential resignation that would be the most honourable act after a series of amateur handlings regarding the financial crisis.'

While the President is the central actor to blame for the crisis, there is certainly animosity expressed against other political actors, domestic ('the politicians sold out the country') or international ('Troika's technocrats', 'Schaeuble', and others). The major incident that is deployed as an example in order to vividly portray the deficiency of the political elites is the first Eurogroup meeting in Brussels, in which the Cyprus leadership accepted the haircut. Users, by constructing the out-group as the political elites, deploy a common device in politicised collective identities that contrives to make those who hold the power to be the main enemy of the people. On balance, in this specific line of argumentation, the representations of 'us' and 'other' is informed by a strong anti-governmental rhetoric that has also been used by other parties in the opposition. The users, however, do not make direct reference to other parties with whom they share their views.

> 'Mr. President the agreement was not for the benefit of the people and you know this very well! It was for the benefit of the bankers, the IMF and the euro that gets an extension of life. Generally it was for the benefit of anyone else apart from the people! People demand a solution without the Troika! You insisted with the Troika and you betrayed us. My only

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3   This slogan was the central one of the Presidential electoral campaign (January – February 2013) that was considered successful for the election of President Anastasiades.

hope is that the present situation is temporary due to the critical circumstances and soon we will be able to be released gradually not just from the memorandum but also from the evil euro!'

'You are supposed to protect the people and our nation and not the banks or the EU hyenas that will rip our souls apart for profits. That is the mandate the people of Cyprus have bestowed upon you and your government ...'

While the in-group is defined in loose terms and the common denominator for its members is the identification against the out-group, a more detailed look at the accounts discloses another commonality, which refers to a common plea for resistance and action against the out-group.

'The MPs who will vote in favour of the Memorandum should know that with their positive vote they automatically become ENEMIES OF THE PEOPLE.'

B3. *Rich Powerful Elites against Poor People*

In the last construction of intergroup relations, the in-group is described as consisting of victims of the crisis, which represents emphatically the category of 'us' as oppositional to the out-group, which is recounted as the political authorities, the President of Cyprus, the EU and Troika. In contrast to the two aforementioned lines of argumentation, the emphasis of this opinion is drawn on the unifying element of the in-group, which is the sentiment of victim. The in-group, which includes 'the Cyprus debtors', the 'ordinary citizens who had their money stolen', the 'workers' and the 'poor', are all victims of the extreme financial measures imposed on them. In the respected accounts of the selected posts, the haircut – constructed as the act that rendered them victims – is further qualified as unjustified, illogical and unethical. By representing the in-group as 'victims', the responsibility and the blame is transferred to the out-group. In order to provide evidence for this argumentation, a list of personal stories regarding the users' financial situation is provided – although this is not a detailed account. Nonetheless, the use of personal statements is intended to add objectivity to their accounts. Finally, to draw attention to the reasons why the in-group is represented as victims of illegitimate actions of the out-group, the users deploy repetition and vivid description such as 'us' – the poor victims, and 'us' – the raped citizens.

Although the in-group is constructed as inclusive, those who are included in it are defined quite solidly. In contrast, however, the out-group is described to include specific political actors, yet they are mentioned in more vague terms. In particular, the denunciation against the out-group is directed against political authorities, the Troika, the EU and capitalism. Clearly, the responsibility of the difficult financial situation of the in-

group is placed squarely on the out-group, which is epitomised undoubtedly by negative attributions and illegitimate actions through the use of metaphors such as rape. The unifying element of the out-group is the intention to harm normal citizens. Capitalism seems to be the overriding factor that guides the policy and actions of these actors, yet this attribution is not absolutely clear in all accounts.

> 'They've been accusing communism because they say it eliminates the right to property. And they brought capitalism, which is a more fair system. More fair for whom sirs?; Why do they to need to privatise the profits and make the damages collective? Let's do the opposite. To make the profits collective and privatise the damage. Make a list of those who have in their possession more than €500,000 and nationalise the rest of their property. Why do you want to get the employee'[s] social welfare funds? Take from those who have profits.'

> 'THE POOR HAVE BEEN RAPED!' I am sure that the Anastasiades government and all the rest of the clowns and economists had an EU Troika plan already agreed and kept it hidden away as a top-secret in their closets so the public do not hear about it. They now presented it to us on a fait-accompli basis and to rob our accounts (by law) of up-to 10% to bailout the crooked banks. They will raise 6 billion from robbing the poor citizens who had no hand in this situation – if that's the case, why do we need the Troika?'

C.   *Action and Call for Participation in Actions*

Politicised collective identities can be detected at the level of the engagement in collective action. Engagement in collective action can be considered the mobilisation to any action such as demonstrations usually against a political actor. These actors are more likely to be the government or the general public (van Zomeren *et al*., 2008). Drawing on the concept of politicised collective identities' understanding of action, we investigate whether accounts that mobilise for action can be identified. The analysis brings to the fore two main lines of argumentation.

C1.   *Action as Resistance against the Imposed Measures*

The first type of action that is promoted in the posts of the selected Facebook groups is represented in terms of a call for adopting a position to deal with the crisis. This position is specified as a form of resistance either against the EU and the Euro, or against the Troika and the proposed measures. Resistance is suggested to take the form of an exit from the Eurozone or default of the Cyprus economy. Such actions are qualified positively through the use of metaphors that express them as the regaining of the power by the people. The rhetorical form in which the action of resistance is presented is often by the use of the word 'No'.

'We have to demand NOW our exit from the EU and the euro, we also demand a default, bankruptcy. We can go bankrupt with absolute safety and soon the world that we will create in Europe will turn for our benefit and our currency. It is our chance to make Cyprus return to the golden era of the past!'

'Let's be the leaders of ourselves and say again a sound NO!!!'

The resistance that people need to adopt as the most effective form of action is also directed against the President and to a lesser extent against the government. The President is constructed as the main responsible agent for the people's grievances. The predominant reason that emerges for the president's position is his political motives and agenda to which the adjective, 'traitor', frequently refers to in the posts. The proposed remedies for this situation take different forms which all target the removal of the President from power. Such forms are a plea to the President to resign, call a referendum in order to re-establish democracy, or early elections. It is noteworthy that the posts that promote such actions are uttered in rather intense forms using direct reference to 'the President'. Such rhetorical formation accentuates the urgency and the necessity of the proposed actions.

'THEY WONT PUT OUR FUTURE IN MORTGAGE.
TRAITOR RESIGN!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!'

'They proved unworthy of our trust. To re-establish [the] people's and foreign investors' trust in the country, the president and its party should resign and we should be led to early elections.'

'REFERENDUM NOW!!!!'

This type of proposed action is constructed on the capitulation of common interests of a wider group, which pronounces the instrumental motivation of the subjects to participate in action so as to improve the situation of the in-group.

C2. *Action as Participation in Politicised Events*

The second type of action that is constructed as important among the members of the selected Facebook groups concerns a call for spontaneous mobilisation, collective participation and immediate action through a series of politicised events in order to prevent harmful decisions, such as the haircut or cuts in salaries and pensions. The call is addressed to everyone by the use of an inclusive rhetoric. This is achieved by assembling the goal of the politicised action, as undisputable and superior from any other potential issue. In other words, the goal is defined as being able to bring all the people together to fight for it as it overcomes differences that may be caused by demographic characteristics (i.e. age), partisan support, ideological orientation, personal and practical issues (i.e. busy

schedules, physical state). Such differences may create obstacles for some people to embrace the goal but they can be transcended by the overall goal which is unifying. Very often the goal declared is 'to save our country' or to save everyone's future and dignity. The relevant accounts are framed in rather dramatic tones, using a personal sensibilisation (such as 'you' or 'your 'friend'), uttering the second person in order to make the call for action more direct and effective.

> 'We all have jobs, classes and things to do! You need to leave everything aside as we will ALL BE THERE! Because if YOU do not come my friend, do not expect the other[s] to come too.'

> 'We all without exception from all parts of Cyprus have to meet in the parliament and demand back our life, our future and we should [not] leave unless [it is given] back to us. There is a need for citizens' mobilisation, independently of their age, physical condition; we are all citizens of this country. The live[s] of all of us depends from the next day, even the life of a handicap, patient, elder, blind or deaf, nobody has the right to be absent.'

In contrast to the use of an inclusive rhetorical strategy, we came across posts in which the call for action was framed in ideological terms, clearly indicating a left-wing leaning ('companions', 'red colour of change'). Such accounts were built through recourse to previous social struggles and victories, for instance, resistance to G8, university student movements or anti-war marches. Such references help as successful examples of fights in order to both increase the motivation of potential participants and to function as empowerment mechanisms.

> 'Today outside the Parliament I wait to see you all, comrades and fellows from my childhood, my teenage years, that we made together dreams for struggles to change the world. Even if years have passed since I last saw you, even if now you are middle-aged, most of you with families facing the problems of everyday life (with some more kilos), even if you have not participated in similar activities, even if you feel disappointed from many facts. You comrades who fought together in Cyprus, Athens, England, everywhere. In the summits of G8, the war in Afghanistan, Iraq. I hope to see you all today, I will put on my nice clothes, the red colour of change.'

In this study various forms have been identified in which action is constructed. The most common one concerns participation in demonstrations and the provision of practical information regarding the time and place of the events, plus bus timetables and so on. Demonstrations outside the President's building and the Parliament are the most frequent events mentioned. In addition, boycotting German products is framed as another crucial form of action, which is targeted against Germany – indirectly constructed as one of the responsible actors of the crisis. Participation in action is

promoted through the provision of constant news and updates from traditional media – national and international – regarding the Parliament's vote or other related news stories. Moreover, lists of the email accounts of the MPs are provided in an effort to mobilise people to make contact and exercise pressure on them. In this way a readiness for action is built up in a less direct manner. This information is provided mostly through hyperlinks to news websites. As an alternative method of promoting action, hyperlinks, to online petitions are also employed in relation to action against the crisis. Another interesting account is built around the use of Facebook. While the latter is practically used by the groups' members as a way of advertising and disseminating action along with promoting the politicisation of the organised events, at the same time the use of Facebook is undermined and constructed as an 'inadequate' form of protest.

> 'We watch constantly the developments and we act accordingly. If eventually the Parliamentary meeting will be held tonight we will be there. If the declaration of the president does not satisfy us, we will be there. It is necessary to be organised, but let's not wait for someone to create an event in Facebook in order to get in the streets. You need to be mobilised spontaneously and immediately, and if we want them to take us in[to] consideration while they're deciding.'

> 'Let's unite again, as we did in the past in difficult situations. Let's not leave the revolution in a Like and a Comment in Facebook.'

> '18/3 time 15:00 everybody outside the parliament in the demonstration against the catastrophic proposals of Troika – haircut, privatisation, etc.'

Discussion

The focus of the present paper has been the analysis of posts by Facebook users who are also members in Facebook protest groups against the haircut imposed on Cyprus banks. The analysis has concentrated on untangling the meanings that construct politicised collective identities online. The investigation of politicised collective identities constitutes a crucial area in social movement studies since it has been linked to levels of participation in protest actions, and the longevity as well as the effectiveness of social movements. In this case we have aimed at the exploration of the meanings attributed to the politicised collective identities shared by members of a new movement in a context in which protest actions have been rare (Katsourides, 2013). The nucleus of a protest movement against the financial crisis in Cyprus can be viewed as part of the rise of crisis movements throughout Europe and beyond in a compelling area of research in social movements. In conclusion, the fact that the study involved online Facebook groups in order to investigate primarily a social movement that was active offline, is justified by the relevant literature's postulation that online social media serve as a resource for collective

identities and are perceived as supplementary tools of offline social action (Valenzuela, 2013). Presented in the results section are the various categories of meanings attributed to the three constituent components of politicised collective identities, namely shared grievances, adversarial attributions and the call for action. Two major forms of collective identification among the members of the selected group were verified when bringing together the various lines of argumentation contained in the three components.

The first presents a rather classic form of collective identity that is informed ideologically by nationalism. Its manifestations may vary from the deployment of conspiracy theories and hidden agendas regarding the 'Cyprus issue' for constructing as illegitimate the proposed measures to face the crisis, to representations of the enemies as 'conquerors' and calls for radical solutions such as exiting the Eurozone. This form of politicised collective identity is not uncommon in crisis contexts for it has been observed in other cases too. Theodossopoulos (2014), for example, uncovers the use of an anti-hegemonic and defensive nationalistic discourse against the crisis in the Greek case. More crucially, however, this form of collective identity is not uncommon at all in the case of Cyprus. The 'Cyprus issue', a deeply national concern, has been a stable source of political activism in the country (Christoforou, 2007). Although the Cyprus issue *per se* is not the actual theme around which the members of the groups unite, it is still a source of unity for the members of the group against the crisis.

The second form of collective identity to emerge from the analysis is oppositional to the government or, more specifically, the President, since the blame is frequently personified in President Anastasiades. This form of collective identity is apparent either through the portrayal of the haircut as a capitalist project that fits the President's values and beliefs, or via a high degree of intergroup polarisation, which constructs the President as an enemy of the people of Cyprus. This anti-president identification becomes ever more politicised through the direct call for the president's resignation and early elections. Though the degree of animosity directed against the president is steep, this is not uncommon. Such negative meanings attributed to the out-group are expected to be found generally in politicised collective identities, especially where the actions of the movements are directed against the government or the leading political elites (Simon and Klandermans, 2001). Moreover, the emergence of a strong collective identity against the political elites has also been diagnosed in other social movements against the crisis, as witnessed with the Indignados. In particular, in the case of the Indignados and the 15M movement in Spain, the collective identity that was constructed among the members of this movement was further consolidated through increased membership and continued politicisation to an extent that it led to the formation of a political party 'Podemos' that challenges the dominant bi-polar party system.

The anti-president collective identity that is shared among the members of the groups against the crisis on the island is not even unique for Cyprus. Initially, this collective

identity echoes the voices of some of the opposition parties but without a direct or indirect reference to the parties by the members of the groups. To have linked some of the basic arguments to specific parties by the group members would have definitely limited the openness of the group; the in-group would have been represented as less inclusive by being confined purely to the opponents of the President. Secondly, an anti-president collective identity emerges and becomes more politicised in times of crisis. A vivid example of this is the Mari explosion, which led to the movement of some indignant or outraged citizens demonstrating against the then president Christofias. In that case, as probably is the case for the movement against the crisis, the collective identity against the president had not been built on a rhetoric that transcended party lines, which is why the movement itself was characterised as predominantly supported by DISY – the major opposition party.

To summarise, the two forms of politicised collective identities that we encountered in online groups against the crisis are neither new for the context of Cyprus nor for the other social movements against the crisis in Europe. But then an inevitable question emerges: Why did the anti-crisis movement in Cyprus not manage to last for more than a month and why did it not become as influential as in other crisis cases? Was it a matter of collective identities of the group? The present analysis has determined that the collective identities were pre-existing, informed ideologically by past dividing mechanisms (e.g. nationalistic values, partisanship), which may have impeded the openness of the movement and its embracement by the critical mass. An alternative explanation might be that it was rather more an issue of political opportunities. The President had been elected only one month before the outburst of the crisis, a fact that may have played a role in the degree of politicisation of the movement's claims. What is so striking in the Cyprus case is that given the unprecedented nature of the bail-in of depositors – which has not occurred in any other bailout country – there have been such apparently minimal effects. This includes, for instance, the effects of the protest actions on party dynamics, the pressure exercised on the government, or the absence of an emergence of a new political organisation; phenomena that were common in other crisis cases. And, finally, another assumption might link the social protest events to specific characteristics of the Cypriot civil society. If this is the answer then the Cypriot anti-austerity protests would challenge a well-embraced and prominent argument in the literature, in accordance with the spirit of online social media which transforms political activism by facilitating and increasing citizens' participation and engagement. Certainly these are open questions for future research in order to unravel the puzzle regarding the stoicism with which the Cypriot protesters dealt with the most unprecedented shock to the Cypriot economy.

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Social Media and its Role for Cypriot Members of Parliament in Times of Crisis

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Abstract

Social media are becoming progressively more important in the role they play in any organisation's marketing and client-base development platform, performing a strategic function in providing information sources for everyone. Recently, for instance, microblogging services such as Twitter, along with social networking sites like Facebook, are reputed to have the potential for increasing political participation nationally and internationally. In times of crisis, social media offer a different approach to stimulate citizen engagement in political life, reshaping creative structures and methods of contemporary political communication in the way that politicians and citizens can interact with one another. The goal of this study is to investigate the current role of the social media used by Members of Parliament and politicians to reach, communicate and network with their audiences (citizens), or groups of people, in times of political change and crisis in Cyprus. A qualitative study is adopted using face-to-face interviews in order to explore the views, experiences, beliefs and motivations of individual participants in Cyprus.

Introduction

Social media may embrace political parties or politicians to promote their image and political messages, and this capability has prompted major changes to the style of political communication used before. In the immediate past, social media are reported to have impacted the public discourse and communication in society (Stieglitz and Dang-Xuan, 2012). In Cyprus, the newly discovered media resources chosen by politicians and Members of Parliament (MPs) such as blogs, websites, Facebook, Twitter, Google Plus, YouTube and so on, verify a two-way discursive identity that contributes to the customising of the political arena.

At the time of writing, results on the sites of the most popular social media networks worldwide indicate that Facebook is the first social network to surpass 1 billion registered accounts, Google Plus has 343 million active users, Twitter has over 284 million monthly

active users, and Tumblr has more than 230 million active blog users (Statista, 2015). Given the tremendous growth of social media, particularly Twitter and Facebook, these instruments of communication are being utilised more and more in a partisan context by citizens, MPs and political institutions alike. Since 2008, this medium appears to have assisted active participation in political communication especially during election campaigns in Cyprus.

The island of Cyprus has been undergoing an economic crisis in recent years. The financial crises in the USA and in Europe, together with the global processes of social and economic change, have contributed to a large degree to the economic and political situation in Cyprus. The financial watershed in Cyprus involved the exposure of Cypriot banks to overleveraged local property companies, together with the Greek government-debt crisis, the downgrading of the Cypriot government's bond credit rating to junk status by international credit agencies (Moody's; Standard and Poor), and the weakness of the government to restructure the troubled Cypriot financial sector. The ramification is that Cyprus was unable to raise liquidity from the markets to support its financial sector, and requested a bailout from the European Union (Annual Report, 2013).

More specifically, on 25 March 2013, a €10 billion international bailout by the Eurogroup was announced in return for Cyprus agreeing to close the country's second largest bank, the Cyprus Popular Bank (Laiki), in addition to imposing a one-time bank deposit levy on all uninsured deposits, and converting 47.5% of deposits exceeding €100,000 in Bank of Cyprus to equity in order to recapitalise the bank (*ibid.*).

Social media have at length been using the above debacle in a political context. With the changing politics in Cyprus, MPs and politicians have found different ways of reaching out to their audiences: embracing the social media to encourage their publics by informing, persuading, and promoting their interactivity. The aim of this study is to explore the current role of social media adopted by MPs and politicians to reach, communicate and interact with their audiences (citizens), or groups of people in times of crisis and political change in Cyprus. It is expected that communication between the majority of MPs and society members will move to a virtual environment as people use social media more actively.

In the move to promote 'self' or enhance political groups on social media there is a need for organisations to implement guidelines in order to safeguard their present competitive positions during the change implementation process (Longenecker, Neubert and Fink, 2007; Franken, Edwards and Lambert, 2009). Agrawal, Budak and El Abbadi (2011) suggest that the process by which people locate, organise, and coordinate groups of individuals with similar interests, and the ability to solicit and share opinions and ideas across various topics have all undergone dramatic change with the rise of social media.

The private sector has long recognised this media's potential as a route for influencing consumers, and many professionals are aware of the power at its disposal as an advocacy

tool. In the current changing economic environment countless organisations are undergoing some type of change or are facing economic crises. These periods of adaptive change are often characterised by radical modifications (Schildt and Sillince, 2012).

Because of the far-reaching effects of information technologies and social media sites like Facebook and Twitter, the role of new information technology in politics has been kindled in the area of political communication and attention is focused on what it offers. Early researchers support that the label 'social media' has been attached to the growing number of Web 2.0 websites or services whose content is primarily user-driven, hence the targeting of interactivity between users such as blogs, social network sites, micro-blogs (i.e. Twitter), and digital media sharing formats (Agichtein, Castillo, Donato, Gionis and Mishne, 2008). Today, almost every Cypriot politician has a Twitter or a Facebook account or both, and many employ specific staff or even social media consulting companies to maintain such accounts.

Social media may be used to effect change in a variety of ways, from shifting consumer behaviour to strengthening a citizen's commitment to voting. This medium first made an appearance in Cyprus in the 2008 presidential elections but a more notably intense and heavy application was made in 2011 during the parliamentary elections. Following on from that point we have several examples of politicians who employed social media which played a crucial role during the presidential elections in Cyprus in 2013 – Nicos Anastasiades, Stavros Malas and Giorgos Lillikas – who, via their official Twitter and Facebook accounts, responded to questions posted by users of social networking services. It is worth mentioning that Cyprus is ranked as one of the top thirty countries with the highest rate of Facebook users per capita, estimated at 520,000 users in a country of 838,897 inhabitants (EworksWSI, 2014).

As Internet technology evolves and is adopted, there is a strong thrust in the literature gains in technology (Nicoli and Komodromos, 2013); more specifically it allows politicians to engage in the same tried and true behaviours via social media channels (Druckman, Kifer and Parkin, 2010). Researchers confer that social media have the potential to powerfully and significantly affect political knowledge formation, and the individual's view of the world (*ibid.*). Often, as a result, the show of disapproval of communication in social media implies a fundamental change in traditional public communication, which has usually been exclusively initiated and managed by politicians, political parties and other organisations as well as journalists (Chadwick, 2006).

The uses of social media in a political framework are rising steadily in Cyprus. The potential of this networking method appear to be most promising since it empowers active participation and democracy. As an illustration, a recent study by Larsson and Moe (2011) reveals that Twitter was employed during the 2010 Swedish general election and served as a channel for disseminating political content. Twitter users are more likely to interact with others who share the same views as themselves in terms of retweeting.

Furthermore, they can actively engage with others with whom they disagree, and the upshot is that interactivity is encouraged.

Political communication has become a major focus in the growing field of social media studies. Nonetheless, in political communication from Cypriot politicians toward their publics, little is known about the role of social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter. By means of the conceptual lenses of information technology and social media networks, this paper considers the current role of the social media networks used by thirteen MPs (government) and politicians to reach, communicate and interact with their audiences (citizens), or groups of people, in times of strategic political change in Cyprus. The study is based on a qualitative study (face-to-face interviews) so that the views, experiences, beliefs and motivations of individual participants in Cyprus are examined. The researcher conducted thirteen in-depth interviews with MPs in Nicosia.

Communication and Technology

Noveck (2009) suggests that the Internet advocates have traditionally claimed that the World Wide Web (www) can potentially improve democratic practices by connecting citizens through virtual networks and communities of interest, and in this way the users can participate in collaborative platforms that facilitate increased information flow and diversity of opinion. This may help government decision-making to be more expertly informed and democratic. Additionally, advances in technology create great opportunity for Public Relations practitioners: 'A fundamental reason why public relations practices exist today is the loss of community resulting from the new means of communication and transportation ... especially the escalating development of technology, multiculturalism and globalism' (Kruckeberg and Starck, 1998, p. 11).

Scientific literature emphasises that qualitative and effective communication of business organisations with target groups is one of the most important factors which helps businesses to compete in the market successfully (Jucaityte and Mascinskiene, 2014). Communication is one of the main resources employed to form public opinion, and this is supported by the participants in the study. Kotler, Armstrong, Saunders and Wong (2003) propose that every organisation eager to reap the best results from a communication process must harmonise interdependently all the marketing elements, including which social media tools and techniques to use for these make up a part of it too. Estanyol (2012) argues that social media is a broad term that often defines something which is not attributed to traditional media. It is a tool of the World Wide Web which enables users to become active creators of the content in order to communicate with one another effectively, and generate and exchange varied information (Garnyte and Perez, 2009). This is how present day MPs use social media to express their political, individual and personal attitudes, opinions, and reviews.

Online communication began with the introduction of the Internet in the 1990s. When the Web 2.0 started to develop in the mid-2000s, people discovered that they could form groups much easier. They could share knowledge and experiences with others around the world as well as share photographs and videos, and this altered the communication balance – people were able to form groups and actually influence an organisation. Since the technical development of Internet e-mail and the World Wide Web, the two-way communication has been made simpler, less time-consuming and more cost effective. It might be interpreted thus: 'as technology develops, PR needs to move ever closer to the "excellence" model – two way symmetrical communication' (L'Etang, 2008, p. 64), because the advances in technology facilitate exchange of information from organisations with their publics to effectively receive more feedback.

Breakenridge ably describes that Web 2.0 is no longer simply about good communication but about finding the path to conversations. 'Traveling this path will enable you to directly reach and communicate with the people who will influence decisions and ultimately carry the brand forward, which ultimately leads peer to peer influencer driven customer loyalty' (Breakenridge, 2008, p. 261). At present, the focus of the role of communication is in relationship building wherein communication is managed by public relations practitioners to cultivate healthy alliances between organisations and stakeholders (Komodromos, 2014).

Many researchers argue that public relations facilitate dialogue by establishing channels and procedures for dialogic communication to take place: Online communication, in particular, is an ideal venue for fostering dialogue. Scholars suggest that organisations and government have an opportunity to build dialogic relationships with their publics through the use of strategically designed websites (Rybalko and Seltzer, 2010). Golden (2011) strongly emphasises that in order to succeed in social media, communication practitioners have to respect the aversion of the community to advertising, PR spin, and blatant self-promotion, therefore, practitioners should adopt the approach that the online community respects: usefulness, authenticity, altruism, and validation from outside parties. 'Social media are not just the tools or the mediums, for they could not exist without their users – not a nameless, faceless TV or radio audience, but real people with whom relationships are possible' (Golden, 2011, p. 4).

Social media experts highlight the need to listen to, and be aware of the desires, interests, and needs of diverse publics. This is essential in order to be able to produce marketing and communication programmers that enable the different publics to play a much more active role (Estanyol, 2012). As Argenti and Barnes (2009) suggest:

'companies must invest resources to establish an intimate understanding of their stakeholders' identities and preferences, a clear picture of the innovations that will

enhance their brand identities in a digital context, and a thorough awareness of the risks and challenges that could derail even the sturdiest of business strategies' (p. 58).

Bortree and Seltzer (2009) reveal that neither traditional online tools such as corporate websites, nor social networking tools such as Facebook, have been employed to their full dialogic potential. Rybalko and Seltzer (2010) suggest that websites and social networking sites provide useful information to the public and are easy to use, but they do not fully realise the dialogic potential of online tools. The authors report that although previous studies examine how organisations use online communication to facilitate dialogic communication with publics and demonstrate that organisations are using technical and design cluster principles, they are still not fully utilising the dialogic cluster.

The Role of Social Networks

As technology develops, it is necessary for public relations to move ever closer to the 'excellence' model – two way symmetrical communication (L' Etang, 2008). It could be argued that the model is normative and 'idealistic' rather than reflecting the conditions in the world where public relations operate (p. 64). Nevertheless, technological development provides innovative opportunities for organisations and their publics to practice two-way communication, thus enabling people to engage in the transmission of messages more efficiently and effectively so that appropriate feedback is retrieved. This ongoing expansion in technology has become part of human life.

The progress of technological advancements has created an imaginative and ultra-modern world with new-fashioned values and experimental methods that have led to the revaluation or to the revision of relationships between people. Konijn, Utz, Tanis and Barnes (2008) explain that although a great deal of interpersonal communication is now mediated by technology, the new ways of communication such as computer-mediated technologies in chat rooms, weblogs, virtual group work, sms, and others can sometimes facilitate or impede communication and can alter interpersonal interactions (p. 3).

Due to the technology boom, communication is still the key to building relationships and finding solutions in various fields. Brown (2009) implies that it is 'more significant than the introduction of the printing press' (p. 1). Breakenridge (2008) adds that social media is 'anything that uses the Internet to facilitate conversations between people' and refers back to the 'two way' approach of PR that Ivy Lee discussed in his day. It is about listening and, in return, engaging people on this level. It forces PR to stop broadcasting and start connecting.

'Monologue has given way to dialog' (Breakenridge, 2008, p. 128). A number of researchers put forward the notion that if politicians prefer to be involved and aware of how technology progresses – and more specifically with online communication – then all

they need to do is become a faithful follower and enter the dialogue in their own way. Following on from this, Brown (2009) argues that:

> 'changes are taking place in the way we use the media channels that have been available to us for many years. Totally new communications channels are emerging. The PR practitioners of the 21st century must understand all of them and how they are controlled and influenced if they are going to adapt and survive in this new environment' (p. 4).

Other researchers such as Haenlein and Kaplan (2010) concede that social media is a group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, which allow the creation and exchange of user generated content. They also acknowledge that the growing availability of high-speed internet access further adds to the popularity of the concept, leading to the creation of social networking sites such as MySpace (in 2003) and Facebook (in 2004), and the aptly coined term 'social media', which contributes to the prominence it has today (pp. 60–61). The traditional way of communication has transformed. It is changing endlessly and will continue to fluctuate throughout people's lives.

In political communication the consequence of online communication is vital in times of strategic change. Online communication has recently been used successfully by political parties, MPs or candidates in their campaigns as the Internet is an expedient and powerful tool. It offers an opportunity to political parties or candidates to search for data at any time or place, wherever they are, making it possible not only for politicians to give advice or exchange ideas, but also to influence floating or absent voters as to how they might vote. In light of the benefits the Internet may provide, new communication platforms have been created on all channels where consumers, the media, celebrities and different organisations can interact.

Moreover, journalists see the need for posting less formal and more personal opinions through their blogs to effectively and efficiently convince their audience. The role of the media in political campaigns is important because publics (possible voters) may be influenced by them. Media are often perceived as representatives because their decisions affect the population as a whole. It is vital to focus on suitable audiences, at the proper time through the use of the relevant media.

Today, whether the emphasis in social networks is on Facebook or on immediate information via Twitter, social media offers new opportunities to link supporters and voters directly. With this in mind, the newer forms of media provide a good case to study (i.e. Twitter, Facebook, or other social-networking sites), particularly in relation to the role of social media used by Cypriot MPs and politicians in their ambition to reach their audiences in times of strategic change. How does this new technology as used by political members work? Who uses social media and why do some MPs and politicians utilise more

social media networks than others and why do some do neither? Additionally, this paper aims to explore the electoral motivations, if any, as regards adoption and use of social media networks by Cypriot MPs and politicians. It is to these questions that we now turn in our attempt to find parallels in the outcome of this study.

Methodology

A qualitative research methodology has been selected for this study in order to facilitate the interpretation and understanding of the phenomena that may emerge from the in-depth interviews conducted. In all, nineteen MPs were contacted either by telephone or in person and invited to participate in the study; however six of them declined to partake for personal reasons. Thirteen MPs and politicians from Cyprus constituted the units of analysis for this study, the objective being to replicate findings across cases. The aggregate number of thirteen in-depth face-to-face interviews is an acceptable number for this qualitative multiple-case study (Patton, 2002).

Data was collected using purposive sampling through individual, in-depth interviews which were semi-structured. That said, this particular research strategy may be useful in illustrating and determining areas for future research. The in-depth interviews took place in November 2014 with a fixed selection of participants who were interviewed to generate responses. A qualitative approach was chosen given that the aims of this study were primarily related to questions of 'how' and secondly to 'the extent of use'. A further reason for the qualitative focus was the dearth of qualitative research in this area.

Research Results

Data for the study was collected through individual, in-depth, semi-structured interviews. Evaluations of the findings have been provided and focus on participants' responses to the following semi-structured interview questions that were used in this study:

*Q1:   How can social media improve communication and
        interaction between you and your publics/followers?*

Most of the participants agreed that social media has changed the way politicians communicate with their publics/followers. Nine of them suggested that a micro-blogging tool such as Twitter will undoubtedly be transformed or replaced within the near future because it is only convenient in a world of messaging typed on very small keyboards. Three participants noted that Twitter's 140 characters could be replaced by 140 words without difficulty. All thirteen respondents noted that social media can be viewed as one method of recruiting, motivating, and empowering supporters.

Social media makes it much easier to spread the word concerning events, schedules

and current events in the political environment as well as dealing with important talking points. Four of the respondents confirmed that interactivity is encouraging via social media, and added that it is more than welcome for their followers on Twitter or their friends on Facebook to agree or disagree with their posts. Using this they can begin a dialogue via social media with their friends and followers. Ten of the respondents added that because of the tremendous political and economic changes that have taken place in Cyprus over the past two years, social media are used by politicians and MPs in order to focus on relationship building via dialogue as well as a long-term world views on what is currently happening in Cyprus, in addition to the relationship or any political changes between Cyprus with other nations.

Six of the participants reported that effective communication and interaction between their publics can be improved via social media but only when users of social media – and in this case politicians and MPs – understand the new rules of the social media 'world'. They went on to state that using social media to engage the different publics, people want to have a meaningful dialogue, promote engagement and involvement in the process, and especially in times of strategic change in the political 'arena', to increase their personal interactions with others and be listened to. Four of the respondents suggested that communication is improved considerably with social media since it promotes two-way conversation, and often a multidimensional conversation. Seven of the respondents remarked that it had been noticeable following the various political changes that had taken place in Cyprus, that people were very frustrated and anxious, and that social media helped them to engage more with their politicians and MPs which, in turn, encouraged contributions and reactions from their publics.

Furthermore, two of the participants suggested that the key to explaining the power of social media, especially in times of strategic political change, is 'to encourage participation', meaning that social media can solicit an interaction, positive or negative, by making it uncomplicated and straightforward to contribute. Nine of the respondents reported that social media promotes an exchange of information between them and their audiences by inviting participation, and trying to create a quick and simple collaborative platform which requires information that is organised and communicated by them. Seven of the respondents added that social media allowed them to speak directly to their publics/voters with no additional expenditure, and also permitted politicians to circumvent the traditional method of reaching voters through paid advertising or earned media.

In addition, five of the participants noted that Twitter and Facebook have become instrumental in managing (in a way) the communication between their publics in times of political change, because they allow like-minded supporters (or voters) and activists to easily share news and information with each other such as campaign events. This

phenomenon was revealed during the latest presidential elections campaign in 2013 in Cyprus. Eight of the respondents said that social media tools can improve communication as well as maintain effective interaction with their publics which they considered to be a good thing, expressly when they request feedback from voters or constituents. On the other hand, three of the participants said that feedback can be a very bad thing depending on how politicians respond. There are some politicians and MPs that hire staffers to monitor their social media channels for negative responses and to clear anything that they consider to be of little importance to answer, or they never give an answer to people who ask questions.

Finally, eleven of the participants strongly advocated that communication and interactivity via social media, if monitored effectively on an everyday basis, will engage the public regardless of whether the feedback is negative or positive. Five of the respondents agreed that the social media tool allowed Cypriot citizens to easily join together to petition the government and their elected officials, leveraging their numbers against the influence of the House of Representatives, lobbyists and monied special interests. Two of the participants said that communication and interactivity via social media is powered because it allows like-minded citizens to join together in ways that will be equally as powerful.

Q2: *Which social media have you used for political communication*
and why did you choose to use those specific ones?

All thirteen respondents agreed that the use of social media became a feature of political engagement, especially after the political change that took place in Cyprus after 2012. Nine participants use Twitter on a daily basis, 'tweeting' on average 2–3 times a day to their followers. On the other hand, all participants use Facebook as their main social media tool, suggesting that via Facebook they try to increase political participation characterised by this technological innovation, offering rich user experience and multimedia content dissemination. Seven of the respondents noted that using Facebook can be described as a way of facilitating people to engage directly and interactively with audiences.

Seven of the participants advised that they use Facebook and Twitter because of the characteristics of sharing of content, online collaboration, the socialisation among people, networking, user generating content, and especially in times of political change, the social media offer opportunities to positively increase dialogue between people. Four of the participants reported that they use social network sites as well as blogging, Twitter, Facebook and YouTube because they can individualise and personalise campaigns, messages, and, as politicians or MPs, they have greater autonomy due to a more direct and intense approach to communication. Six of the respondents reported that social media contributes to the destabilisation of political communication systems and offers new

opportunities for interactivity, allowing for symmetrical relations and more social control. Seven of the respondents stated that the use of Twitter has helped to improve their political communication because the information can be transmitted rapidly to their audiences, without interference from traditional media, and their audiences have better access to political information.

Three of the participants advocated that using both Facebook and Twitter offered more options for direct and interactive communication with citizens, plus individuals could select and filter information based on their interest. Another three respondents added that Twitter offers more engagement of citizens in the political process and at the same time provides more opportunities to communicate ideas, suggestions and exchange of information. Six of the participants said that they use YouTube, Facebook and Twitter because – for their political communication – these social media have managed to 'democratise' political participation, particularly in times of political strategic change, as in the case of Cyprus, and citizens are now able to interact easily with their political representatives, as well as monitor, provide suggestions, or criticise their work. Nine of the participants added that this creates transparency, which is what publics are desperately looking for in periods of strategic political change. Only two of the participants said that they mostly use Twitter as their main social media tool because it helps them to profile themselves better and they can respond straightforwardly to their followers, providing better and frequent interaction with them to promote trust, increase their popularity, and their influence on them.

*Q3: What does interactivity mean for MPs and politicians
     in the context of their political communication practice?*

MPs and politicians defined interactivity in different ways, the common ground being the use of the term relationship. Eight of the respondents noted that interactivity between politicians and their publics/voters mainly concentrated on the interests-focused relationship, which is pitched at individual objectives and orientates toward the maintenance and strengthening of the relationship between politicians and their publics. Four of the participants added that interactivity essentially helps them in creating more effective campaign strategies, particularly in the case of elections. Five of the participants endorsed that their aim is to encourage dialogue orientation via social networks in the context of their political communication practice plus encourage participation because they want to demonstrate to their publics that they are listening to their concerns and are willing to collaborate with them.

Additionally, two of the respondents reported that the Cypriot government must realise the importance of the Internet and other new media tools in promoting their public diplomacy efforts. MPs together with politicians should also be familiar with the

features of the new media and include them as part of their current political communication practice. Eight of the respondents suggested that in this new environment, political communication has become more personalised due to the fact that Cyprus is still undergoing strategic political change. Social networking, blogging, micro-blogging and other new media tools can give citizens the opportunity to communicate directly with MPs or politicians, and provide the opening for them to share their experiences and information through an effective virtual connection and interaction.

Q4: What kind of information do MPs and politicians read or use via social media tools such as Facebook or Twitter, in their political communication?

All participants in the study reported that they often use Facebook and Twitter to search for political information from other political parties. Sometimes they read humorous content related to politics or watch a political video. Seven of the respondents countered that they use Facebook to forward to, or share political information with their publics (friends on Facebook), or search for information on a Facebook political profile page. Nine of the participants noted that they post political information on their profile page, and sometimes even post a 'like', message or a comment on someone else's message on their own political party or profile page. Seven of the respondents agreed that the share and use of information via their personal profiles on Facebook or Twitter has an influence on the turnout, and in the long term it may affect the outcome of elections.

Twelve of the respondents replied that publics in Cyprus are increasingly connecting with politicians and MPs through new media technologies, and that both Facebook and Twitter can be used in election campaigns as a means of informing voters and engaging stakeholders. Four of the respondents reported that Twitter simulates word of mouth marketing and dramatically improves audience reach, serving also as a framework for discussion. Six of the participants added that Twitter's potential efficiency in voter engagement can become very effective when they share video links or tweets that can open a direct dialogue with their followers, stating that online relationship management success is largely dependent on fulfilling the information needs of the stakeholders. Moreover, three of them added that social media does help them in promoting their image and political message, thus ensuring active participation of their supporters on Facebook and Twitter at the same time.

In addition, twelve of the respondents reported that providing extra information to key publics through Twitter can inform and engage the supporters of candidates, especially during election periods. Most of the respondents supported the idea that Twitter and Facebook have been credited for their ability to quickly gather, connect, and engage people of common political goals and aspirations, particularly throughout the past two years when Cyprus has experienced strategic changes in the political environment.

Videos, photos, and links that create a 'buzz' for political discussion, form the basic information shared or read by participants via social media. Eight of the participants strongly supported the idea that Twitter was used as an alternative avenue of participatory politics and gave Cypriots a sense of empowerment in March 2013 when the Eurogroup agreed to bailout the Cypriot economy. All thirteen participants in the study noted that Twitter can be used to foster two-way communication with political publics, to engage with publics and develop strong relationships with politicians and MPs. As a consequence, positive relationships should translate into increased support at the polls during elections.

Conclusion

As previous studies have shown, social media have, in recent years, become an important political communication channel (Haenlein and Kaplan, 2010; Agrawal, Budak and El Abbadi, 2011). Social networks and other forms of interactive communication are repeatedly portrayed as quite revolutionary in the political communication of MPs and politicians in Cyprus during periods of change in the political environment. What is more, political activities might gain more transparency, and citizens become more involved in the political decision-making processes. Social media enables MPs and politicians to directly interact with their voters, and together the aim is to make honest and forthright discussion visible so that citizens are able to understand and embrace methods of policymaking.

This research has probed the current role of social media adopted by MPs and politicians in Cyprus with the aim of reaching out, communicating and interacting with their audiences (citizens), or groups of people, in times of strategic political change. Social media are considered to be an influential political communication channel in Cyprus, and globally.

This qualitative study has been undertaken using face-to-face interviews with thirteen participants so that their views, experiences, beliefs and motivations may be examined. The focus of the study is on how MPs and politicians currently use social media in the context of their work practice, in times of strategic change in the Cypriot political environment.

Despite the limited geographical reach of this fieldwork, the outcomes resonate with research carried out in other countries, which conclude that MPs and politicians use social media tools in order to connect with citizens interested in politics, raise the level of engagement, encourage dialogue orientation via social networks in the context of their political communication practice, boost participation to demonstrate that they are listening to the concerns of their publics and are willing to collaborate with them (Haenlein and Kaplan, 2010; Stromback and Kiousis, 2011). Most notably, this study determined that both Facebook and Twitter, currently used by MPs and politicians in

Cyprus, are effective tools for political communication, offering a powerful way to support political goals associated with influencing outcomes in elections.

Considering the ultimate goal of politicians to gain as many voters as possible in presidential or parliamentary elections, these findings provide campaign strategists and political public relations professionals with some evidence that social media tools like Facebook and Twitter, or YouTube and blogs, yield benefits that may help achieve such goals (Grant, Moon and Grant, 2010). The findings also indicate that social networking, blogging, micro-blogging and other new media tools can provide citizens with the opportunity to communicate directly with MPs or politicians and share their experiences and information through an effective virtual connection and interaction, which is on offer by the relatively new media (Nicoli and Komodromos, 2013).

Perhaps the most important insight, however, is that MPs and politicians use social media to engage with the different publics, and thus create a meaningful dialogue, promote engagement and involvement in the process, as well as help to increase the personal interactions with others and indeed listen to one another too in times of strategic change in the political environment (Noveck, 2009; Komodromos, 2014). The outcome reveals that on the Internet, MPs and politicians must continuously keep attention alive, and communicate constantly with their publics.

If users do not communicate, it means that they have nothing to say, so they must create content to publish in their social media networks. Survey results corroborate that microblogging services (e.g. Twitter) and social network sites (e.g. Facebook) are believed to have the potential for effective political communication (Stromback and Kiousis, 2011). Results also signify that while Twitter can be considered an ideal platform for users to disseminate information in general, political opinions can be posted publicly through their networks too, and Facebook pages or groups have started to be used additionally for the purpose of boosting interactivity with publics and entering into direct dialogues with citizens. With these innovative approaches, more political discussions are being encouraged.

The domino effect is evidenced by the fact that respondents are highly involved in online political communication through their Facebook profile pages or Tweeter accounts. Their aim is to increase interactive political communication for future campaign efficiency in the run-up to elections. Therefore, political parties ought to encourage their political members to create social media profiles and be actively involved in their use on a daily basis, since the possible benefits to be reaped in the future, specifically during an electoral campaign, can be very good.

In conclusion, this research is the first step toward understanding and discovering how MPs and politicians are currently using the social media networks for political communication in times of strategic change in Cyprus, and the door can be opened wider for further studies in this field which may offer more overarching and definite results by

implementing a quantitative study with more samples. Political activities or any kind of communication from MPs or politicians might gain more transparency and thus enable citizens to interact with them directly via social media. On a final note, supplementary studies incorporating research teams from different EU countries may well lead to broader and further conclusions that may be favourable not least for the political communication arena but for PR professionals as well.

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Critiquing the Crisis through Music
– Three Songs about Life in Cyprus
Before and After the 'Haircut' of March 2013

MIKE HAJIMICHAEL

Abstract

This essay reflects on three songs from Cyprus written, released and performed on/or about/around the bailout crisis of March 2013. While the songs come from three different musical genres and artists they articulate a number of themes which are pertinent to understanding the economic crisis as a possible succession of a number of political crises and unresolved wounds that go back to the 1970s. One of the essay's main objectives is to contribute to an emerging field in contemporary Cypriot scholarship, namely that of popular music studies through a contextual analysis of songs and the art of listening (Back, 2008). The essay also aims to develop an understanding of songs as commentary, as a form of media narrative on everyday lived experiences as reflected by musicians living through economic and political crises in Cyprus.

Keywords: popular music, protest, songs, ethnomusicology, Cyprus, crisis, ethnography

Introduction

Music has always been a barometer of society's problems, often reflecting on social, economic and political conditions. Musicians act as commentators on the present, reflecting on society's anxieties, injustices and problems. We listen to songs by modern day 'troubadours' who express ideas through the looking glass of music on the world around them, as they see it.

Every generation and moment in history has its own epoch-defining music. Bob Dylan's 'Blowin in the Wind', John Lennon's 'Imagine', The Sex Pistols 'God Save The Queen' and Bob Marley's 'Redemption Song'. Songs are contextually bound time and again, defining shared experiences or exploring narratives that are often unspoken. For instance, Linton Kwesi Johnson's 'Sonny's Lettah' on the unjust British Police Force's 'Sus' laws or Gil Scot-Heron's moving ambient declaration 'Poem for Jose Campos Torres' reflecting on the 'dogs' and 'police' in every street around the world. In this paper my aim is to reflect on the issue of how artists critique a crisis by exploring specific songs and the context leading to the economic and political watershed in Cyprus, more commonly

known as '*to kourema*' – 'the haircut' – which took place in March 2013. What interests me is how music presents a critique by relating and reflecting on the situation from which it emerges.

Generally speaking this method of contextualising songs invests effort in understanding possible meaning(s) as a process of unpacking, deconstructing and reflecting on how songs acquire a life form of their own within particular contexts, and how these songs in turn become a form of alternative critique to the contexts from which they came. Authors who have adopted similar approaches include Goldman's 'The Book of Exodus: The Making and Meaning of Bob Marley and the Wailers' Album of the Century' and Maconie's 'The People's Songs: The Story of Modern Britain in 50 Records'. In terms of ethnography and data, these texts provide a great deal of insight in relation to a wide range of detail on circumstances of creation and interpretation. I have found them to be valuable in the teaching of courses on popular music studies with regard to how songs are and can be interpreted by different audiences, and how important context is to the development of particular artists and the music they make. In addition, I would like, by way of introduction to stress the value of auto-ethnography in the processes and practices of making and sharing music which I am bound to do as part of the process/subject matter of this paper. Occupying this kind of position within musical culture as a creative person and critiquing author has at times been problematic – particularly given the canonical requirements of academics being peer reviewed. However, this position of subjectivity also has a key advantage of living through and in creative musical processes and being witness to significant cultural manifestations which can sometimes be lacking in critical works on popular music in specific and media studies in general. As Attfield states on the value of auto-ethnographic contributions on Punk music they are 'potentially more useful to readers interested in understanding the music, the specific circumstances of its creation and how it has inspired and endured'.[1] That being the case, all songs have an experiential quality; we hear them, view video clips that feature them, and relate to music in all kinds of different settings and environments. As a person involved with the creation and sharing of music, as an artist and DJ, I sense that some data comes from within these experiences and this reflects something ingrained in me from Cultural Studies and Sociology. It is that 'capacity to hear' and to 'listen more' which is so important in the process of conducting ethnographic research. Les Back applies this capability meticulously in understanding everyday culture:

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1   S. Attfield (2011) 'Punk Rock and the Value of Auto-ethnographic Writing about Music', *Journal of Multidisciplinary International Studies*, Vol. 8, No. 1, p. 2.

'If a writer's experience and subjectivity is useful we need to think why? Here I am suggesting that these experiences are of little use if they are not put to work in service of reaching out to others.'[2]

In a bid to comprehend criticism towards authority and the status quo in Cyprus during the period leading up the financial crisis of March 2013 three songs by radically different groups in terms of genre, sound, production ethics and performance are considered including: 'Zitame' ('We Demand') by hiphop Reggae fusion group Fort Bravo (2011); 'Paiakin Miroaton' ('Young upwardly-mobile professional') by acoustic world music trio Monsieur Doumani featuring Maroulla Constantinou (2013); and 'It Does My Head In' a dub poetry song by Haji Mike & Dub Caravan (2013). By conducting this kind of qualitative and at times auto-ethnographic analysis of these songs an important aspect of responses to the crisis is explored through a medium, popular music, which is often underestimated or ignored. Indeed it will be argued that music forms an alternative style of media which offers a somewhat different resonance and perception of understanding society which is important due to the lack of work in this area and context. While there is a relatively rich bibliography on Cyprus and Cypriots in areas such as Anthropology, Sociology, and Politics (for example, Loizos, Anthias, Trimikliniotis, Argyrou, Officer and Hadjipavlou, to name but a few) very little research has been undertaken in the field of popular music studies and ethnomusicology which this article makes a direct contribution to.[3]

Before moving on to discuss the songs themselves, the method and process used for the sample should be explained briefly.

First, a sample was selected of three songs containing a number of messages relating to Cyprus before and after the 'haircut' of 2013. These songs were chosen for their narrative content which represent alternative ways of seeing things. I next listened to the songs carefully with the intention of interpreting their deeper meanings and offering translations into English. I then decided to share some of my interpretations with their creators. This process was largely undertaken online through text exchanges in Facebook. It was important for me to do this as I wanted to understand the songs fully. I also wanted to share my initial ideas with the people who had created the music and lyrics. Generally my approach needed to be grounded in the texts and what they would uncover, each

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2   L. Back (2007) *The Art of Listening*, Oxford: Berg Publishers, p. 160.
3   With the exception of a forthcoming book (to be released in fall 2015) by J. Samson and N. Demetriou, *Music in Cyprus* (Farnham: Ashgate), and M. Hajimichael (2013) 'Hip Hop and Cyprus – Language, Motivation, Unity and Division', in S.A. Nitzsche and W. Grünzweig (eds) *Hip-Hop in Europe: Cultural Identities and Transnational Flows*, Münster: LIT Verlag, pp. 37–55.

doing so in different ways. I am not in favour of a systematic analysis of songs as this, in my opinion, might lead to misinterpretation and a misperception of intricate details. Lastly, in understanding the songs, which was more relevant to 'Zitame' and 'Paiakin Miroaton' I explored issues of metaphor, use of language, double entendre, emotion of performance and contextualisation.

Fort Bravo – We Demand ... A New System[4]

Fort Bravo is a hybrid Hip-Hop/Reggae group from Paralimni in the Famagusta District of Cyprus. Formed in 2010 by Andreas 'ICY' Michael and George '2J' Ioannou the group set up an existence/fan base in Cyprus and Greece releasing their own independently made songs and video clips. Many of their songs reflect on their existence in Cyprus. Andreas was inspired to write the lyrics of 'Zitame' by a number of events he had witnessed, experienced and grown up around:

> 'The song was written around 2009 and was recorded and released in 2010. It was written with Cyprus in mind because my house is near the occupied area of Famagusta and specifically near the ghost town. It talks about the corrupted system and how media manipulate people's mind.'[5]

Generally, in terms of textual structure 'Zitame' is a tale of four parts. The first verse by Andreas describes the way things are and how people are fed false information by the media. We live in a world where even the Ghost Town referred to above has become worn out, and people are ruled by the 'Tsunami' of money and we forget what we are struggling for. The chorus line, repeated three times, follows like a chant on a protest march, '*We Demand! A New System*'. The phrase '*We Demand*' is broken down into its three syllables, '*Zi–ta–me*', to emphasise the urgency of the issue while the rest of the line, '*Kainourgio Systima*' – '*A New System*' – rolls off the tongue in a melodic yet fast manner. After the three-line repeat the last line stresses the need for change as a kind of craving and something which is fought for yet starved of the process of being able to forget – devoid of amnesia. The chorus is repeated twice as well, which again delivers a more chant worthy and memorable refrain.

The third part of the song, again by Andreas, indicates the kind of difference its message demands; an image of a Utopia where '*women and children*' dressed in '*blankets and throws*' (evoking a kind of caped female super hero) fly across '*lakes and valleys*' to a place where everything is '*fantastic*'. Here '*trees mature into big hearted men, who don't get*

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4   Listen to Fort Bravo, 'Zitame', at: [https://soundcloud.com/fort-bravo/fort-bravo-zitame].
5   Andreas (ICY) Fort Bravo, interview via Skype 15 November 2014.

conned for the sake of two bit second homes'.[6] The reference to second homes is a critique of a fashion in Cypriot society of owning more than one home but never really able to pay for it and being conned in the process. The thrust of this is reflective of a common theme (with Monsieur Doumani) of people borrowing more than they can afford to pay back. This line is followed by a reference to slavery and starvation becoming extinct, being wiped off the map of the world by government. It is not clear which government is actually being referred to but the implication is that a fairer world can only come about if these inequalities are eradicated once and for all. When all of these changes happen the '*tanks will be like trucks giving out ice creams to five year old[s]*' and the idea of *war* will shift from being a memory based on protest to one that has been turned into a coffee shop anecdote.[7] The chorus is again repeated twice before being followed by a lacklustre kind of saxophone solo, which does not actually feel like a solo, but suggests a more tortuous meandering walk which leads into the fourth part of the song. This verse is radically different because it is written by 2J and is entirely in English. This is largely delivered as a first person commentary with reference to an uncle who died in 1974 and a statue in Ayia Napa Park. The verse similarly echoes the sentiments of the first two parts of the song by criticising the falseness of things. A '*beautiful picture*' is painted of the way things are but the *Artist* (the person who created it) is a '*Farcist*'.[8] The theme of money re-emerges again but recall in the first verse it was referenced as a kind of *addictive Tsunami.* Here, this idea is extended through the line '*Money and power has made all the powerful heartless*'. As an alternative, '*we ask for something new*' (echoing the chorus, but in English) for something '*with no boundary*' (meaning the 'Green Line' that divides Cyprus). The song then ends with the repeated chorus.

Overall, Fort Bravo reflects on the past as a daunting memory, as something that cannot be shaken off, but at the same juncture its essence posits a longing, a craving, for a future, an alternative with no boundary. The imagery of the past as something worn out is heavily anchored to the Ghost Town of Famagusta which is suggestive of a shattered semiotic cliché of the past. The town has been empty since 1974 following the invasion by Turkish armed forces. Technically under United Nations control the 'Ghost Town' feels like one of the '7 human blunders of the earth' with bomb-shelled buildings, broken glass and a promenade of once busy hotels frozen in time by a wind of intransigence and obstinacy. The chorus in 'Zitame' simply says '*we demand a new system*', stating that the one in place is corrupt and rotten to the core. Fort Bravo not only present an alternative perspective but they express a young generation's view of being let down for 41

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6   'Zitame', Fort Bravo.
7   *Ibid.*
8   *Ibid.*

consecutive years by their political leaders, all of whom make promises about many things, including Famagusta, but nothing essentially changes. While the song has a certain specificity it could, from my own supposition, relate to the financial crisis of 2013 which many people viewed as another let down in a long succession of political let downs. For many decades a whole stream of events has passed by, unresolved with no one accepting responsibility. These actions epitomise a serious crisis of trust in governance, which is after all an essential element of any democratic process. Events such as the military coup of 1974 and subsequent invasion and colonisation of northern Cyprus by Turkish armed forces;[9] the mysterious S-300 Missiles that never actually came to Cyprus (1997);[10] the stock market swindle and the falsehood surrounding it (1999–2000);[11] the Helios Airways Flight 522 crash when 121 people died (2005);[12] and the Mari Disaster with 13 innocent people losing their lives over and beyond frequent electricity cuts (2011).[13] More recently, we have experienced the financial crisis of 2013 and its fallout. Taking everything into account it is no wonder that Andreas ICY and 2J from Fort Bravo are clamouring for a '*change of system*'. All of the aforementioned crises remain unresolved, without anyone accepting responsibility (let alone punishment) which typifies in all respects contemporary Cyprus as a state in constant crisis.

I would also like to share some reflections on the song in a club setting. Clearly from video clips available online '*Zitame*' was a popular hit among youth in Cyprus and Greece. Sometime in 2011, shortly after the Mari incident, on a night when there were no power cuts, I was DJ'ing at Scarabeo *STATE of Reggae* in Nicosia, one of the longest running Reggae nights in Cyprus. About 300 people had gathered into the small venue, which resembled an old house turned into a club/bar. In reality it felt as though someone was throwing a birthday party due to the intimacy of the atmosphere and interior décor. At around 2.30 a.m. Mr Pakman the DJ played '*Zitame*'. I had heard the song before, mainly on Andreas MegaHz Sunday Hip-Hop radio show on Zenith Radio. This was probably the first time I had heard it in a club and watching 300 people bouncing and skanking to the song in a kind of disorderly unison was moving. Thinking about the lyrics, the

9   F. Mirbagheri (2010) *Historical Dictionary of Cyprus,* Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, p. 38.

10   S. O'Connor (2008) *The Cypriot Missile Crisis,* 1 May 2008, available [on-line] at: [http://geimint. blogspot.com/2008/05/cypriot-missile-crisis.html], accessed on 10 April 2015.

11   B. Taylor (2013) *The Worst Bear Market in History* available [on-line] at: [https://www.globalfinancial data.com/gfdblog/?p=2254], accessed on 10 April 2015.

12   A. Weir (2006) 'Behind Closed Doors' *The Guardian*, Tuesday 19 December 2006, available [on-line] at: [http://www.theguardian.com/business/2006/dec/19/theairlineindustry.travel], accessed on 10 April 2015.

13   BBC News Europe (2011) 'Cyprus Protest over Deadly Blast at Navy Base', 12 July 2011, available [on-line] at: [http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-14132130], accessed on 10 April 2015.

militancy and urgency one sensed a revolution was about to happen. Revolutions however, in my opinion do not simply happen through songs, but songs can locate themselves historically by playing a significant role in particular struggles. El General's 'Rayes Le Bled', a scathing anti-establishment rap comes to mind here. It became an overnight *YouTube* viral hit resulting in the rapper's arrest at the height of the Tunisian uprising against the 30-year rule of former ruler Ben Ali.[14]

'Zitame' is subsequently a landmark by an independent group who made a thought-provoking song that was equally very danceable. The metaphors, particularly in the first two parts of the song by Andreas ICY offer a critique packed with imagination and realism, full of a unique sense of idealism and clever reference points. All of this acts as a kind of omen. How much longer would people be asking the same question(s), demanding a change? The fact is that at least someone was still asking the question ....

Monsieur Doumani – Paiakin Miroaton – The Yuppie in Cyprus[15]

My second example is a song by Monsieur Doumani, a group totally immersed in struggles on the economic crisis in Cyprus. As their official band web site states in their blog section:

> 'Next Thursday 20 Nov, Monsieur Doumani will participate in the protest against the privatization of the public wealth in Cyprus. We strongly urge our friends and everyone living in Cyprus to be there.'[16]

The song I would like to reflect on by Monsieur Doumani is taken from their CDLP release entitled 'Grippy Grappa' (2013*)* and it is called 'Paiakin Miroaton' which the group metaphorically translate to mean *Young upwardly-mobile professional* or to put it in another vernacular way, 'Yuppie'. The literal meaning of the term differs as it can mean a '*nice smelling/or a nice young man*'. The group's translation is an allegorical and witty take on the term. Monsieur Doumani stands out in the contemporary music scene of Cyprus for a number of reasons. First of all the group is one of the few to express songs in the vernacular Cypriot dialect. This is accomplished by exploring traditional folk melodies and tunes to which the group adds its own rendition besides composing their own

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14 V. Walt (2011) 'El Général and the Rap Anthem of the Mideast Revolution' *Time Magazine*, Tuesday 5 February 2011, available [on-line] at: [http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2049456,00.html], accessed on 10 April 2015.

15 Listen to Monsieur Doumani, 'Paiakin Miroaton', at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VRWZ5kXzmwY].

16 Monsieur Doumani website, available [on-line] at: [http://www.monsieurdoumani.com/index.php?page=806], accessed on 10 April 2015.

songs/lyrics that reflect on Cyprus today. Secondly, they are a working group too, in that they try to survive through their music, performing concerts, touring in Cyprus and abroad, which is not an easy concept given the smallness of the island in terms of building audiences for live gigs and the limited support offered to local musicians. A third dimension relates to their success outside of Cyprus and their acceptance in world music and 'roots' music circles worldwide. This is a big achievement given that Cypriot musicians often rely on a local or diaspora demographic. Of course all of this has been said by introduction and the group's names have not been mentioned yet. Monsieur Doumani is actually three musicians who formed the band in 2011. Antonis Antoniou (tzouras), Angelos Ionas (guitar) and Demetris Yiasemides (wind instruments) make up one of the most refreshing groups to ever come out of Cyprus. While the song itself does not say anything directly about the financial crisis it certainly touches a lot of raw nerves on the themes of overhyped consumerism and the way people became dependent on a debt-to-banks type of lifestyle – which by implication led to the crisis. What carries this along in a perfect fashion is the use of the Cypriot vernacular, articulated in a unique tone of voice by guest vocalist Maroulla Constantinou whose likeable repetitive call and response element to most lines in the song from the rest of the group, make it very catchy. It is worth considering some possible interpretations of the original language, issues of double entendre and some key themes/lines in the song.

Structurally the song has four verses of which the ending phrases/words are repeated in call and response style. This makes the words almost like a chorus that is repeated line by line, which is a common trait of many traditional Cypriot folk songs which reflect an oral participatory audience/creator style. It is an irresistible song, and one that finds listeners singing along to. Each verse also begins with the phrase 'Eeeeeeh' which is a characteristic trademark of many traditional Cypriot folk songs (for example 'I Vraka' and many 'Chiattista' exchanges).[17]

Central to understanding the song is the title 'Paiakin Miroaton'. Metaphorically the phrase can be translated to mean a 'winnable' rich kid who desires fast cars, hence the '*BMW*' reference and the implication of building an enormous house: All of which is undeniably achieved with that illusive capital, borrowed cash. 'Now', the song says, in its opening two lines '*you've run out of money*' and '*you bow your head down in shame, you look down*' (implying for the first time) or as the translation online says '*you hit hard earth with a bump*'.[18] What is more the 'Yuppie' character is compared to a 'bithikos' and an 'ape'. This is a popular vernacular term which can vary from a mild form of insult, as in 'could you have done better you ape' to a more aggressive epithet used in a heated argument. The

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17   'Chiattista' (also spelt 'Tsiattista') is a form of traditional rhyming poetry.
18   'Paiakin Miroaton/Young upwardly-mobile professional', Monsieur Doumani.

implication is the 'ape', ruled by all kinds of financial fetishes and consumerism, actually thought, by having all these materialistic possessions, he would 'become a man'. But he remained, an 'ape', a capitalist primate. If this line is the icing on the cake of the song, the cherry on the top is the last stanza. '*You can't run fast enough, it's the end of the road now no more easy pickings*'. This phrase harks back to the recent past, when there were easy pickings, meaning by implication, bank loans, and making fast money speculatively. But today, the '*perfumed boy*' – the Cyprus version of the Yuppie – is too busy running, and running so much that he runs out of time itself because he is too '*busy kissing ass*', and trying desperately to hold on to all the luxuries he has acquired in life – the materialistic commodities that he used to have and grew accustomed to having, for instance, the big car, the big house, that '*abracadabra*' style of magic, the capitalist dream. As the description says on *YouTube*, this is 'A *satirical song by Monsieur Doumani inspired by the financial crisis in Cyprus*'.[19] Part of the satire is also produced from clever use of double entendre. From the second verse of the song words such as '*Danistikes*' which means that you borrowed (the money), are slightly altered in the call and response part of the stanza to '*Distikes*' which means you got tied down. Many loans have this quality in our lives when we take them out and have to pay them off for years or decades. This is used in the third verse as well with the phrase '*tin gravatou tin liftikes*' which translates to: 'you're missing that little tie' (as in, you do not have that any more, that symbol of your formality/success/consumerism) to the call and response part '*tyliktikes*' which insinuates that you wrapped the tie around you, even forcibly. The tie metaphor has a kind of self-strangulation connotation here too.

The key themes of the song are subsequently interlinked: The self-destructiveness of the capitalist dream – how people borrow in excess for more material possessions. It follows then that the real power of the borrowers, the banks over people is incredible. The word bank is never used, although the word '*danistikes*' hints at a relationship with a lender. So now all that remains is grovelling and a desperate longing for all those material possessions, to the same people who destroyed society in the first place, the borrowers.

In addition, some reference must be made to both the sound and acoustic chemistry of the song. Although Monsieur Doumani is usually a three-piece band, on this particular tune they feature Maroulla Constantinou on lead vocals and Dimitris Aristidou, Symis Sioukouroglou, and Efthymia Alphas on backing vocals. Over and above this Symis Sioukouroglou plays clarinet on the song. This gives a much fuller sound which also maintains acoustic roots character. The actual mix is quite intricate, particularly with the stereo panning of the trombone, sometimes note for note from left to right, giving a wide feel and space for the satirical take on a heavy situation by the group. The tone of

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19   *Ibid.*

Maroulla's lead vocal voice is equally relevant as it has a unique vernacular quality. She even sounds like a coffee-shop philosopher who is reasoning on the crisis from a corner somewhere proclaiming 'what did you think you ape, you was going to now become a man'. To conclude, as in the previous song by Fort Bravo, reference should be made to a live rendition of the song I experienced at the University of Nicosia's *Diversity Festival* in 2013. Monsieur Doumani took to a rather large stage, backed by the University Amphitheatre and the group filled up the space with its unique sound. It was actually on this particular night that something 'clicked' for me with the group. I had heard their music before, and followed their news on various social media websites and in magazines such as *Songlines*. Something however on this evening, post-haircut, in Nicosia, Cyprus was different. Watching a few hundred people dancing to this particular song, 'Paiakin Miroaton' had a special resonance, reasoning on the times. And what made it better was that people were dancing, quite joyfully to the song. 'Thinking folk music' that can be danced to with a strong potent political bite is not an easy achievement for a group anywhere. Again, comparable with the previous example, this song represents an alternative Cyprus, a voice of people often unheard.

Haji Mike & Dub Caravan – It Does My Head In[20]

A good place to start is how the song began. On the night of 15 March 2013 like many people in Cyprus I was eager to find out what was actually going on behind those closed doors in Brussels between President Nicos Anastasiades and the Euro-Group in Brussels. At about 1 a.m., CyBC TV, the state broadcaster's main anchor-man, Yiannis Kareklas, had given up waiting and began to wind up the show. '*All we can say then as far as tonight is concerned, is there is no agreement, that is all we know*'[21] Of course everyone awoke to a different kind of Cyprus on 16 March. One thing that was noticeable in the media was how many economists seemed to come to light like mushrooms. It was also apparent that many of these experts were stating completely different viewpoints, which likewise was reflected by numerous politicians. The timing of the first bailout was significant too. The following day was Carnival with street parades in Limassol and other towns on Sunday 17 March. With many people having had their savings cut overnight, this festival appeared somewhat bizarre. Crowds were later dancing in the streets. A day after Carnival it was 'Kathari Deftera', 'Green Monday', which again had a subdued feeling to it.

The President of the Republic of Cyprus in his publicly televised address regarding

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20 Listen to Haji Mike & Dub Caravan, 'It Does My Head In', at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v
=rnEfhTtkfvU].

21 Yiannis Kareklas, *'Proextasis'*, CyBC TV, 12 March 2013.

the initial bailout cast a choice between the 'catastrophic scenario of disorderly bankruptcy and the scenario of a painful but controlled management of the crisis'.[22] The House of Representatives convened on Tuesday 19 March to discuss the first bailout. Protesters gathered en mass outside parliament and being there, I felt a need to document the demonstration on a mobile phone. Part of my interest in doing this was the innovation of some of the banners. A woman held up a piece of cardboard cut out roughly like a placard which simply read in bold hand-scrawled capital letters 'APHRODITE IS ANGRY'. A priest held up high a flag showing a coiled snake with the slogan 'do not disturb'. Alongside these were the traditional and expected party cadres with their respective banners, political chants and emblems. Inside, the MPs debated as night fell and eventually they rejected the first bailout decision. This demonstration certainly set me thinking that I had to write something on this as an artist, about the entire information overflow, the demonstration, and a whole range of politicians who had led voters to the situation before us. Around that period, Dub Caravan, musician and producer, had sent a piece of music called 'Timeless Dub' which the poet decided to develop some lyrics on. Feeling inspired by what I had seen and heard during the lead up and immediate aftermath to the first bailout decision I wrote a set of lyrics around it called 'It Does My Head In'. It is quite an angry song, performed in a Dub Poetry style, a rhythmic spoken word delivery with an angry chorus that repeats the loud chant of the title. I would like to focus more on the video for this song rather than the song itself. The clip is a treated and edited version of the film taken from the demonstration on the mobile phone. There is no real plot as such or sophistication in the editing. It is a stark document of what happened, the only addition being a colouring effect through the movie maker editing programme. I elected to deliberately change the colours on the party flags. This was decided in response to an atmosphere at the protest which felt intensely sectarian. Supporters of the recent AKEL government exhibited a kind of 'we told you so' presence on that evening outside parliament. A chant for example like 'the left government must come to power again'[23] was a deliberate attempt to erase from memory any kind of responsibility of being in government apropos the negotiation of the 'bailout'. This position made them in part responsible for the economic catastrophe that had struck Cyprus. So, in the video the red flags turn green, blue and purple. The blue and white Greek flags, turn red, and black and white. It portrays the kind of revolutionary change that is needed in Cyprus; in a place where not only the football teams that people support, but also the coffee-shops they

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22   BBC News 'Cyprus Bailout: Parliament Postpones Debate', 17 March 2013, available [on-line] at: [http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-21819990], accessed on 11 April 2015.

23   Demonstration outside the House of Representatives 19 March 2013.

frequent and even the coffee and beer they drink, are stigmatised along the political divide of left and right.

The colours of politics and their entrenchment are a key theme of the song because the prognosis to this 'laboratory' experiment, the bailout, sets a precedent that so far has not been repeated. However the way things are going, this could, the song implies develop into something much worse. Although the song never mentions anywhere the word Cyprus, it places the experience of being an 'experiment' into a worldlier context as indicated in the chorus line '*the way the world is heading ... it does my head in*'. The way that societies are still presided over, based on various forms of inequality (such as race, gender, class) and division, the people in the context of the world, and *my people* in the context of the reference in the song (to Cyprus), are '*yet to be free*'. The main conclusion is that '*you get the leaders you deserve*', and by not learning from this lesson things could become even worse, as those in power might take away '*your liberation – your right to persist insist express yourself*.'[24] As a consequence, what happened in Cyprus could become a worldwide trend with the 'bailout' effectively being a 'bail-in' financed by imposing a cap on people's savings. Once the model has been tested in Cyprus, a relatively small economy, it could become a template for other states around the world.

Unlike the first two songs the makers of 'It Does My Head In' rarely perform together as they are based in two different contexts, London and Nicosia, and as such are not a group but simply two individuals who from time to time make music together in an online/virtual production sense. Though I have performed the lyrics to the backing track on a number of occasions in Cyprus, performing the lines time and time again feels like reliving the crisis. So the song stands as a kind of universal warning with a resolute message of this happened to us, and you could be next.

Conclusion

The 'art of listening' is, as Les Back says, the art of listening more carefully, more attentively and I have done this by reflecting on three completely different songs about aspects of everyday life in Cyprus in the last two years. It has been a difficult mission to write about the present, which is always an engaging and fluid task as so many things have happened and are happening all the time. From this experience of listening to the songs in my sample the main conclusion I have drawn is that music offers forms of critique which are often lacking in many other more conventional types of media. This may be due to performativity – the ways in which songs are expressed/acted out acoustically as multi-layered texts full of meaning and possible readings. By way of illustration, the creative

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24   'It Does My Head In', Haji Mike & Dub Caravan.

fabric of music itself – sound – is like paint on a canvass, which is something that can be crafted to express ideas. We can hear music, read lyrics, watch videos, dance to it in a variety of places and situations, and take it in as a live performance. All of that gives music an unusual kind of informative quality beyond being viewed plainly as entertainment. To quote a phrase from Hip Hop Legend KRS1, the songs in this article are 'Edutainment' which offer completely different ways of reading society in Cyprus. The texts can be described as forms of counterculture too – alternative takes on things which go against the grain of constructed 'game show' media consumerism (which are so prevalent with music, such as 'Popstars' and 'Pop Idol') and the vast amount of social media voyeurism and self-promotion which we are bombarded with/engage in every day.

There are, with hindsight, certain dangers with the approach adopted which relate mainly to the generalisation of diverse musical forms and genres, created, made, released and performed by radically different people. It could be argued that this makes my analysis a little disjointed too. But it was never my intention to take these songs as a uniform voice or to claim that they are a reflective sample of contemporary Cypriot music. What I have aimed to do is to explore three songs that have something to say, that have a barometric quality about them which relates to the way society is perceived by the artists who have made them. I think this is significant for a number of reasons that relate to the qualitative characteristics of popular music as a form of counterculture in times of crisis in the specific context of Cyprus. It is important to consider the three songs as completely different musically and thematically as well, yet sharing a similar spirit of independence often found in music produced by people who are not tied down by a recording contract from a label which tells artists what to say, and when and how to say it. That spirit of independence calls for a new system. It rejects overhyped consumerism, and warns of the dangers of being a 'laboratory experiment' for neo-liberalist financial dictums. The countercultural quality is also echoed by the reality that these songs are rarely heard or seen through the traditional media in Cyprus. None of the songs are included as regular musical content by Radio or TV outlets. So in a number of ways this music is sought out by people seeking to find something alternative, at live gigs organised by Fort Bravo, Monsieur Doumani or Haji Mike, through online sources like *YouTube*, net based radio and various blogs that may have given some coverage of these artists.

A further conclusion is to try to move things forward through further research which I aim to do in the near future. Are there more songs with messages like these in Cyprus? Is music becoming more about raising awareness on the way our society is? Can this similarly be explored in other countries in crisis such as Ireland, Greece and Spain? Within such a wider contextual framework a set of more generic observations would be worth considering on the relationship between social commentary and popular music. Additionally, it is worth bearing in mind the specificity of vernacular culture in such

processes. Monsieur Doumani's back to the roots approach is an example of this. It is important for future research to explore songs comparatively with regard to vernacular dialects which may for one reason or another be marginalised or even dying out. Moreover it would be interesting to observe how these relate to issues of culture and national identity. Martin Stokes, for instance, in his pioneering work on popular music icons in Turkey reflects that artists such as Zeki Müren, Orhan Gencebay, and Sezen Aksu represent a different and more ambivalent conception of Turkishness.[25] Similar themes could be explored with future studies of Cypriot artists and musicians.

Finally, on an individual level, as an artist, performing songs about the crisis has allowed me to reflect on my own role as a creative person. Feeling the need to get out there and do something and not just sit back and take it is a form of artistic calling. As Martin Luther King once said when contemplating the background to the Vietnam War in the 1960s 'Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter'.[26] This argument could also be understood as an adaptation and extension of Gauntlett's Web 2.0 transformation in media from a passive to a more active role in creative processes. Not that this is necessarily new. I have always viewed performance in this alternative voice manner. Conversely, making in a creative process is not just for the sake of art itself, it has to provide something beyond the act and process itself. Making a song about the crisis is an act of critique, an alternative offering, an insight relayed through music that is free from the usual control of music companies (who may not endorse such songs being released) and the usual media filtering processes of TV, Radio and newspapers who often marginalise artists for being too outspoken. More than anything, music challenges the increased authoritarianism of neo-liberalist politics which prefers silence and complacency over asking questions and the resonance of critique.

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Andreas ICY (Fort Bravo) conducted over a number of exchanges online (Skype, Facebook and E-mail), summer/fall 2014.

Antonis (Monsieur Doumani) conducted over a number of exchanges online (Facebook and E-mail), summer/fall 2014.

Cypriot Economic Crisis – Crime and Punishment: Great Expectations or Realistic Possibility?

Nicos Pavlides

Abstract

For many an ancient Greek tragedy, a precondition for the arrival of the effect of catharsis (renewal and restoration), is the attribution of nemesis, the just punishment for wrongdoings, arrogance and hubris before the Gods. Wrongdoings, arrogance and hubris were palpably present in the Cypriot economic crisis, in the banking as well as the fiscal sectors of the economy, but catharsis has yet to arrive.

As the people and the society slowly come to grips with the effects and consequences of the catastrophe, a number of burning questions are on every sufferer's mind which this article will discuss and strive to provide meaningful answers from a legal practitioner's perspective: Why did the legal and regulatory system prove unable to prevent such a catastrophe by allowing the banks to fail in so many respects? Is the arsenal of the legal and regulatory system strong enough to enable it to rise to the challenge of doling out just punishment? Are people's expectations for the punishment of those who are to blame, fanned by politicians' rhetoric, too high? What changes and improvements to the legal and regulatory system are necessary so as to substantially reduce the likelihood that similar failings will occur in the future?

Keywords: Cyprus economic crisis, corporate governance, legal system, punishment, personal responsibility, corruption

Section I

Introduction

After having spent eight years in a *katorga* prison in Siberia[1] for political disobedience to the Tsar, finding himself unable to pay his bills or afford proper meals, and owing large sums of money to his creditors, the great Russian author Fyodor Dostoevsky found success when his novel *Crime and Punishment* was serialised by a Russian literary journal in 1866.

The story focuses on the mental anguish and dilemmas faced by Raskolnikov, an impoverished ex-student in St Petersburg who devises and carries out a plan to kill an

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1   *Katorga*: A Russian word for hard labour, derived from the ancient Greek word *katergo*.

unscrupulous money lender for her cash. At the end, after having had the opportunity to get away with murder for lack of evidence, he chooses to confess for his crime and, echoing the life of the author, is consequently sentenced to eight years' of penal servitude in Siberia.

Such mental anguish and a desire to atone for one's failings appears to be lacking in our times, and following the financial catastrophe that recently befell Cyprus this seems to be especially absent from the consciences of the unscrupulous bankers, creditors and money lenders who contributed to the crisis. The possibility of sending those responsible for this crisis and the ensuing economic catastrophe to a *katorga* prison in Siberia also appears to be rather remote, although one would venture to think that this is the wish of many of the victims of this tragedy.

A central theme in the ancient Greek tragedies is that punishment serves not only as a just form of retribution for wrongs committed, but it is also a precondition to achieve *catharsis*; that is, the renewal and restoration of balance. In ancient Greece, this was known as *nemesis*, the punishment for wrongdoings, arrogance and hubris before the gods. Wrongdoings, arrogance and hubris were palpably present in the recent Cypriot economic tragedy, in the banking as well as the fiscal sectors of the economy, but catharsis has yet to arrive.

As the Cypriot people and society slowly come to grips with the effects and consequences of the recent financial catastrophe, they are faced by the following burning questions which my contribution to this Special Issue of *The Cyprus Review* will discuss and attempt to answer from a legal practitioner's perspective:

> ➢ Why did the legal and regulatory system prove unable to prevent such a catastrophe by allowing the banks to fail in so many respects?
> ➢ Is the arsenal of the legal and regulatory system strong enough to enable it to rise to the challenge of doling out just punishment?
> ➢ Are people's expectations, fanned by politicians' rhetoric, for the punishment of those who are to blame, too high?
> ➢ Is there a realistic possibility of 'justice being done'?
> ➢ What changes and improvements to the legal and regulatory system are necessary so as to substantially reduce the likelihood that similar failings will occur in the future?

SECTION II

Why Did the Legal and Regulatory System Prove Unable to Prevent Such a Catastrophe by Allowing the Banks to Fail in so Many Respects?

International experience has shown that the aversion to or limitation of financial or banking crises of this magnitude that are connected to the actions or negligence of

financial institutions, presupposes, from a legal and regulatory point of view, the existence of a number of lines of defence, that are employed at different levels or stages:

(i)   At the **first level**, there must exist **effective corporate governance** of the banks.

(ii) At the **second level**, a capable and independent system of **internal audit** must be in place which should detect and bring forward to the relevant committees and to the board of directors any misgivings relating to the functioning of the financial institution and its board committees.

(iii) At the **third level**, there must exist **prudential supervision by the regulatory authorities** that is based on a sound legal system; and clear guidelines that effectively prevent or limit the abuses of regulatory rules by senior officers, board members and the financial institution in general.

(iv) The **last line of defence** must be the presence of a **deterrent framework of personal administrative and criminal responsibility** of board members and senior managers who may – through their decisions as to the way in which the business of the financial institution is carried on, or their failure to take steps that would prevent such decisions being taken – bring about, contribute to or otherwise fail to prevent the demise of the financial institution.

In the case of the Cypriot banking system, each of the above four lines of defence either failed or was palpably deficient or absent. The failure of each of the above lines of defence will be examined in turn.

It should also be borne in mind **that the crisis was not only economic-banking in nature, but deeply political as well, and was politicised both in Cyprus and overseas**. During the electoral frenzy of 2012–2013 public perceptions roared both in Cyprus and in Germany, and using the handling of the crisis to gain political capital was always high on the agendas of the main players and decision makers. Under a normal, non-polarised (due to elections and other factors), political landscape, the legal and regulatory system might have been better able to cope, and the economy could at least have avoided some of the more draconian and dramatic aspects of the crisis, mainly the haircut of deposits and the wiping out of banking bonds. The political dimension of the crisis, as presented (or fuelled) by the media, will also be considered in this part.

The Failure of Corporate Governance

Bank of Cyprus Public Company Ltd and Cyprus Popular Bank Public Co Ltd, the two major Cypriot banks which were mostly affected by the crisis, in respect of their corporate governance, had to comply with two detailed sets of rules:

(a)   In respect of their status as licensed credit institutions, they had to comply with the Central Bank Directive on 'The framework of principles of operation and

criteria of assessment of banks' organisational structure, internal governance and internal control systems' of 2006–2012[2] (the 'Corporate Governance Directive').

(b) In respect of their status as companies with titles listed on the main market of the Cyprus Stock Exchange (the 'CSE'), they had to comply with its Corporate Governance Code (the 'CSE Code'),[3] and report back on their compliance with the CSE Code in their annual, audited Financial Report, in a special section of the Directors' Report.

The Corporate Governance Directive included such lofty principles as:

➢ The Board of Directors should establish the strategic objectives and ethical standards which will direct the ongoing activities of the bank, taking into account the interests of all stakeholders.

➢ The corporate values should recognise the critical importance of the timely and frank discussion of problems.

➢ The Board of Directors should ensure that Senior Executive Management implements strategies, policies and procedures designed to promote professional behaviour and integrity.

➢ The Board of Directors should have sound knowledge of each of the types of material financial activities the bank intends to pursue.

➢ The non-executive and independent Board members should maintain, under all circumstances, his/her independence of thought and opinion when analysing, deciding and acting for the bank; and that s/he must clearly express his/her opposition to any decisions of the Board of Directors which may harm the interests of the bank.

The CSE Code also includes the following cardinal principles:

A1: Every listed Company should be headed by an effective Board of Directors, which should lead and control the company.

A3: The Board of Directors should be supplied in a timely manner with valid, correct and complete information, enabling it to discharge its duties.

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2   Regulatory Administrative Decision 460/2006, published in the Greek language, in Part I of the Third Annex of the Official Gazette of the Republic on 8 December 2006.

3   The Cyprus Stock Exchange Corporate Governance Code, available at: [http://www.cse.com.cy/el-GR/regulated-market/listing/corporate-governance], retrieved 14 December 2014. The Code existed since 2002 and was updated a number of times. Its adoption is compulsory in respect of the issuers that have titles listed on the main market of the Stock Exchange.

C2: The Board of Directors should maintain a sound system of internal control to safeguard shareholders' investments and the Company's assets.

The rules, therefore, were present. But they were not effectively applied.[4] Year after year, the banks presented Potemkin villages in their Directors' Reports, regarding their reportedly sound corporate governance structures and compliance ethos. The Central Bank was supposed to oversee the implementation of the Corporate Governance Directive at all times, but it does appear that it failed to effectively carry out its prudential responsibilities as will be analysed in the ensuing paragraphs. The Cyprus Securities and Exchange Commission ('CySEC'), which is the Cypriot capital market's regulator, had only *ex post* authority to the extent that misleading statements for supposed compliance with the Corporate Governance Code of the CSE were included in the Annual Financial Reports[5] of the listed companies (the banks) or prospectuses for the public offer of securities.[6]

According to the Final Report of the Independent Commission on the Future of the Cyprus Banking Sector[7] (also referred to as the 'Future of Banking Commission' or the 'Future of Banking Final Report'), the failure of corporate governance was one of the most important factors in explaining how Cyprus' largest banks brought disaster upon themselves. The Future of Banking Final Report notes at par. 12.1[8] that:

'12.1 The evidence from bank documents and recent investigations supports the now widely accepted view that:

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4   As the great enlightenment philosopher and jurist Montesquieu states in his monumental work 'The Spirit of Laws' [*De l'esprit des lois*], 'When I visit a country, I do not examine if it has good laws, but whether the existent laws are effectively enforced, because good laws exist everywhere' ['Quand je vais dans un pays, je n'examine pas s'il y a de bonnes lois, mais si on exécute celles qui y sont, car il y a de bonnes lois partout'].

5   Misleading statements leading to market manipulation would infringe Sections 19 and 20(1)(c) of the Insider Dealing and Market Abuse Manipulation (Market Abuse) Law of 2005, No. 116(I)/2005, as amended, Republic of Cyprus.

6   Misleading statements included in prospectuses for the public offer of securities would likely infringe Section 8(1) of the Public Offer and Prospectus Law of 2005, No. 114(I)/2005, as amended, Republic of Cyprus.

7   The Final Report of the Independent Commission on the Future of the Cyprus Banking Sector, 31 October 2013 (the 'Future of Banking Final Report'), available at: [http://www.icfcbs.org/], retrieved on 14 December 2014. The Commission was set up by the Central Bank of Cyprus to make recommendations on ways to raise the strength of the sector, to improve supervision, and to promote banking competition in Cyprus for the benefit of consumers and businesses.

8   The Future of Banking Final Report, at par. 12.1–12.1.5.

12.1.1 While banks were formally compliant with relevant EU/EBA governance requirements, their performance in practice was woefully deficient.

12.1.2. Weak boards, with inappropriately qualified members, failed to carry out their responsibility to ensure that their banks were run prudently, with strong policies and an attitude of independence and challenge.

12.1.3. This allowed powerful senior executives to pursue risky strategies that were strongly influenced by personal ambition, and to bypass internal controls and procedures.

12.1.4. Proper board procedures were flouted, reporting lines were diverted, and necessary information did not reach the directors. In some cases, nonexecutive board members were deliberately kept in the dark about controversial management decisions, and board minutes did not always accurately reflect what had actually happened at board meetings.

12.1.5. A risk management culture was missing at all management levels.'

Also, the Future of Banking Final Report links the risky and aggressive growth strategies pursued by the two major banks in the 2000s with weak bank governance. It states at par. A.9[9] that:

'A.9 These reckless ventures were made possible by the failure of the boards of the banks to put independent checks on the ambitions of strong-willed chief executives and to ensure that their banks had risk strategies and controls that were enforced. Instead, directors lived by a culture of deference which was nurtured in some cases by loans and supply contracts. There were also serious weaknesses in the governance of the co-operative banks, particularly as regards the independence of directors and the quality of credit and risk controls. It is no exaggeration to say that the effectiveness of corporate governance in Cyprus' banking sector, while possibly compliant in a formal sense, was close to non-existent in practice as the crisis evolved.'

Following the disaster in relation to the Greek Government Bonds ('GGBs') which wiped out the two major banks' own funds to amounts equivalent to about 23% of the national GDP through their imposed haircut,[10] the CySEC also conducted an

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9 *Ibid.*, at par. A.9.
10 In late July 2011, private creditors had agreed to a Greek Government debt cut to the tune of 21%. Early on the morning of 27 October 2011, the 17 Eurozone heads of state and government, agreed to a haircut in the magnitude of 50%. The private sector participation ('PSI') eventually reached, in March 2012, the level of 75%. The two major Cypriot banks had invested a very high portion of their own funds in Greek Government Bonds. Further, the balance sheets of Cypriot banks were about seven times as large as the islands' annual GDP in 2011, and the two major banks accounted for more than 60% of the total banking activity in Cyprus. Using data from the European Banking Authority, Professor Stavros A. Zenios of the University of Cyprus, calculated that the PSI participation of the Cypriot banks in GGB's

investigation into the matter of investments of the two banks in bonds. The CySEC had no authority to investigate the soundness of the banks' investment decisions as they occurred, or to ask them to reduce their exposures or take further provisions. Its investigation centred on alleged breaches of the obligations of the two banks to properly inform investors via their obligatory financial reporting regarding the magnitude of their investments in GGBs and their investment grade downgrading by the international credit rating agencies, and to include this information in their prospectuses for the public offer of securities issued by the two major Cypriot banks in 2010 and 2011.

Within this regulatory framework, CySEC also examined the application by the two banks of the Corporate Governance Code of the CSE, and in 2014 it found that the two banks were in breach of the cardinal corporate governance principles mentioned above in the CSE code (pp. 252–253).[11]

According to the two decisions, CySEC found each of the two companies in breach of principle A1, that: 'Every listed Company should be headed by an effective Board of Directors, which should lead and control the company', **since they did not manage the risks effectively in relation to the investments in GGBs.**

The CySEC also found the two companies in breach of principle A3, that: 'The Board of Directors should be supplied in a timely manner with valid, correct and complete information, enabling it to discharge its duties', since **a crucial letter sent in March 2010 by the Central Bank to all banks that had holdings in GGBs, asking them to report to the Central Bank their strategies to confront the risks from the high holdings in GGBs, was not communicated to the Board of Directors, but was handled only by executives.**

The CySEC further found the two companies in breach of principle C2, that: 'The Board of Directors should maintain a sound system of internal control to safeguard shareholders' investments and the Company's assets', since it found **that the two banks did not**

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imposed haircut was equivalent to 23.03% of the national GDP, as compared to 11.65% for Greece, 0.25% for France and only 0.14% for Germany: See p. 35 of the Report of Stavros A. Zenios, *The Destruction of the Cypriot Economy: From Lapse of Judgment to Mismanagement*, 26 September 2013, available at: [www.zenios.wordpress.com], retrieved 2 December 2014. The combination of the above factors along with the rapidly growing public debt of Cyprus (the public debt had increased from around 47% in 2007 to over 85% of the annual GDP in 2012), meant that it was impossible for the Cypriot government to bail-out the two banks without external assistance, which led to the Troika Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

11   CySEC decisions of 28 April 2014 regarding the imposition of administrative fines to Cyprus Popular Bank Public Co Ltd and Bank of Cyprus Public Company Ltd, to their Members of the Board and to other persons (investigation regarding Greek Government Bonds) [in Greek], Public Information, Announcements, 5 June 2014. Available at: [http://www.cysec.gov.cy/en-GB/public-info/announce ments/], retrieved on 2 December 2014.

maintain sound internal auditing systems enabling their internal audit function to detect the problematic risk management of the two banks in relation to investments in GGBs.

This last finding of the CySEC brings us to the failure of the second line of defence of the two major financial institutions, that of the Internal Audit, which will next be examined.

The Failure of the Internal Audit

The system of the internal audit of large organisations consists of a number of key components: the internal audit department headed by the Internal Auditor, the audit committee of the board of directors which should be chaired by an independent director with audit experience and to which the Internal Auditor must have a clear reporting line, and the Board of Directors which should maintain a sound system of internal control to safeguard shareholders' investments and the company's assets. It appears that, in the case of the two major Cypriot banks, all the above components were problematic.

We already noted that, according to the CySEC decisions, the two banks did not maintain a sound internal audit system enabling their internal audit function to detect the problematic risk management of the two banks in relation to their investments in GGBs. The prevalent culture was also not conducive to this end. As stated in the Alvarez & Marshall report on the investigation regarding the Bank of Cyprus' holdings of Greek Government Bonds, **'there was a dominance of senior executives within the Bank ... resulting in a culture whereby senior management decisions were not challenged'.**[12]

Particularly in relation to the internal audit department of large organisations, its role is to provide independent, objective assurance and consulting activities and to assist the company to accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes. Key to the successful execution of its duties is having the ability to raise an independent challenge, audit the key controls and formally report on assurance. However, in the case of the two major Cypriot banks, evidence points instead to a lack of sufficient independence of the Internal Auditor from the executive arm.

As stated in the CySEC decision regarding the Bank of Cyprus' investments,[13] the then Group Internal Auditor, in its report dated 31 January 2012 regarding investments

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12 Alvarez & Marshall, Global Forensic and Dispute Services, LLP, *Investigation Report Bank of Cyprus – Holdings of Greek Government Bonds*, 26 March 2013, par. 2.4.1.2; available at: [http://cdn.cyprus-property-buyers.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/April04_2013_AM.pdf], retrieved 5 December 2014.

13 CySEC decision of 28 April 2014 regarding the imposition of administrative fines to the Bank of Cyprus Public Company Ltd, p. 27.

in Greek Government Bonds, did not detect any problems in relation to risk management. However, in its report on the same subject in November 2012 under a different Bank CEO, the Internal Auditor changes his position and detects a multitude of problems regarding risk management. The Group Internal Auditor at that time made the following statement to the Tri-Partite Commission of Investigation on the 'State of the Cypriot Banking System and the Economy of the Republic of Cyprus':

> 'Summarizing the re-purchase of GGBs, it occurred without the prior notification and approval of the Board of Directors and with the purpose of increasing revenues from high-performance interest and financed by a large sum through low-cost finance by the European Central Bank, completely ignoring the assessment of risks as required by pillar 2 and by the guidelines of the Central Bank of Cyprus, as well as by the risk-taking policy of the Group.'[14]

Without assessing the substance of the above statement, it seems that the Internal Auditor's independence had been compromised, since his views changed fundamentally with the change of leadership at the bank, and his initial report appears to have been tailor-made to suit the requirements of powerful executives.

There are also grounds for arguing that the functioning of the audit committees of the boards of directors of the two major banks was also problematic:

(i) Doubts can be raised regarding the true independence of some of the board members that comprised the audit committees. As will be expanded upon further below (see pp. 261–262), there was laxity regarding the satisfaction of important, minimum criteria for establishing and maintaining independence.

(ii) Doubts can also be raised regarding the audit experience of the Chairs of these committees. For example, no particular audit experience is evident from the CVs of the chairmen of the Bank of Cyprus' audit committees of the board of directors for the years 2010–2011.[15]

In light of the above, it can be argued that, in the case of the banks, the operation of all the key components of their internal audit systems either did not or could not rise to

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14 Tri-Partite Commission of Investigation Report on the *State of the Cypriot Banking System and the Economy of the Republic of Cyprus*; available at: [http://www.stockwatch.com.cy/media/announce_pdf/ Report_Committee_Ypourgiko_3.10.2013.pdf], pp. 111–112, retrieved 5 December 2014.

15 Corporate Governance Reports of the Bank of Cyprus for the years 2010 and 2011, are available at: [http://www.bankofcyprus.com/en-GB/Start/Investor-Relations/Corporate_Governance/Board-of-Directors/], retrieved 20 December 2014.

the challenge of adequately meeting the heavy demands of the highly complex environments found in the largest Cypriot organisations.[16]

The Failure of Prudential Supervision by the Regulatory Authorities

It is clear that it is my view that the prudential supervision of the two major Cypriot banks by the Central Bank of Cyprus was seriously wanting. I cannot but agree with the Report of the Parliamentary Committee of Institutions, that found that the Central Bank of Cyprus showed a lapse of duty in relation to the exercise of the effective monitoring of the investments made by the Bank of Cyprus in GGBs, since **it took no measures when the Bank did not answer the crucial Central Bank letter of March 2010, nor did it take any measures when it became obvious that the Bank was still purchasing bonds despite the oral assurance given to the Central Bank that this practice would cease.**[17] It should be added that, according to the testimony given by a senior Central Bank official to the CySEC regarding the investments made by the Cyprus Popular Bank in GGBs, the Central Bank did not make a request in writing that it ceases to purchase GGBs, as this would have been considered 'non-filial' to a brother nation, or even 'unethical'.[18] **It appears, therefore, that not only was the government at that time acting on political motives for accepting the significant haircut on Greek Government Bonds in October 2011, but also that the Central Bank of Cyprus was affected by extra-institutional considerations in its decision making.**

Consequently, the Central Bank of Cyprus, whilst exercising its role as a **regulatory**

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16   The Members of the Board of Directors of the Bank of Cyprus, maintained different views as to the quality of information they received and the execution of their functions. Some of them stated to the Alvarez & Marshall investigators that they did not have sufficient banking experience and insufficient information was given to them in relation to the actions of the executives so that they could challenge them. However, the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Bank of Cyprus in the period May 2008–August 2012, at his testimony to the Tri-partite Commission of Investigation stated that the Bank of Cyprus 'had a good and effective system of controls': Report of the Tri-Partite Commission on the state of the Cypriot Banking system and the economy of the Republic of Cyprus, p. 86.

17   House of Representatives, Parliamentary Committee of Institutions, *Supplementary Report on 'The Functioning of the Institutions of the Financial System'* (May 2014) [in Greek]; available at [http://www.parliament.cy/easyconsole.cfm/id/220], p. 35, retrieved 1 December 2014.

18   Testimony to the CySEC of Costas Poullis, senior manager of the Central Bank of Cyprus, and author of the Central Bank Letter of March 2010: «*[Ο]ύτε νομική εξουσία είχαμε, ούτε ηθική, να πούμε για ένα αδελφό κράτος να μην αγοράζεις τα ομόλογά του ....*»: ['We had neither legal nor moral authority, to say for a brother nation, do not buy its bonds ...'] (included in the CySEC decision of 28 April 2014 regarding the imposition of administrative fines to the Bank of Cyprus Public Company Ltd, p. 24). It should be remembered that the political decisions regarding the 50% haircut on GGBs were taken 18 months later, in October 2011.

authority (by promulgating directives and rules), failed to effectively exercise its role as a **supervisory authority** and did not utilise the powers provided by the legislation to lead, or enforce, compliance.[19] Two other examples lend further credence to support this conclusion:

(i)   In relation to the evident non-compliance of the two major banks and their Boards with the Central Bank Corporate Governance Directive, the Central Bank had the power to investigate and impose sanctions on the financial institutions and penalise the board members or executives involved. However, the Central Bank has never taken any measures against either of the two banks or any of the board members or executives involved.[20]

(ii) The Central Bank conducted special investigations into the practices employed by the two major banks for the sale and promotion of the bonds they issued in the period 2007–2011. Having found both banks to have committed a multitude of violations contravening the relevant legislation[21] in its decision of

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19   The distinction between banking *regulation* and *supervision* should be borne in mind. According to the glossary used in the Special Report of the Court of Auditors of the European Union on the European Banking Supervision:

   Banking regulation is a form of government regulation which imposes on banks certain requirements, restrictions and guidelines. The regulatory structure creates transparency between banking institutions and their clients. The objectives of banking regulation inter alia are prudential (to reduce the level of risk to which bank creditors are exposed), systemic risk reduction (to reduce the risk of disruption resulting from adverse trading conditions for banks causing multiple or major bank failures), and rules about the fair treatment of customers.

   Banking supervision is the act of monitoring the financial performance and operations of banks in order to ensure that they are operating safely and soundly and following rules and regulations. Bank supervision is conducted by governmental regulators and occurs in order to prevent bank failures.

   Reference: European Court of Auditors Special Report 2014 No. 5: European banking supervision taking shape – EBA and its changing context, available at: [http://www.eca.europa.eu/Lists/ECA Documents/SR14_05/SR14_05_EN.pdf], p. 5, retrieved 15 December 2014.

20   Section 42 of the Business of Credit Institutions Law of 1997, as amended, Cyprus, empowers the Governor of the Central Bank to impose administrative fines ranging from €1,000–€5,000 and in case of a continuing violation the Governor is additionally empowered to impose a further administrative fine, ranging from €100,000–€500,000 for each day during which the violation continues. Further, if proven that the violation was due to fault or negligence or omission or in the knowledge of the member of the management body and/or of its chief executive officer and/or of a manager, the Governor has the power to impose personal fines, ranging from €1,000–€5,000 and in case of a continuing violation the Governor is additionally empowered to impose a further personal administrative fine, ranging from €100–€5,000 for each day during which the violation continues.

21   The relevant legislation is the Investment Services and Activities and Regulated Markets Law of 2007 as

September 2013, the Central Bank's Governor imposed only insignificant fines to the Bank of Cyprus and no fines at all to the Cyprus Popular Bank.

It should not be forgotten that the two abovementioned banks constituted the only systemically important banks of Cyprus. In light of the fact that they made very significant investments of their own funds into Greek Government Bonds – of which the Central Bank was well aware – the failure to take sufficient supervisory measures to guard against the risks that these investments entailed for the entire banking system of Cyprus, points to a larger failure to adequately manage the banks' systemic risks by the Central Bank of Cyprus. Systemic risk is not managed with the benefit of hindsight but with the prudence of prevention. Who guarded the guardians (in this case the banking supervision department of the Central Bank of Cyprus)? No-one, really. As noted in the Future of Banking Final Report:

'Poor governance arrangements of the Central Bank of Cyprus contributed – over a number of years – to the 2012 crisis by concentrating too much power in the hands of the Governor, and by exempting the supervision department from the internal audit process which meant it did not receive board level scrutiny.'[22]

The Failure of Attribution of Personal Responsibility of Board Members and Senior Managers Regarding Banking Business

During his presidency, US President Harry Truman kept a sign on his desk at the Oval Office with the simple phrase: 'The Buck Stops Here'. The phrase refers to the fact that the people at the top of the chain of command have to make the decisions and accept ultimate responsibility for those decisions.

Let us juxtapose this mentality with the situation existing in the board of the Bank of Cyprus. When requested by the Parliamentary Committee of Institutions to provide information regarding the purchase of GGBs, the board responded that it did not approve the purchase of bonds, since it had no such authority. According to the Alvarez & Marshall Report, the board had responsibility for the risk management of the bank's investments, which had been delegated to the Board Risk Committee. This committee in turn entrusted the risk management to the Executive Risk Committee and the Assets and

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amended, Law No. 144(I)/2007, and the Central Bank Directive for the Directive for the Professional Conduct of Banks when Offering Investment or Ancillary Services and when Performing Investment Activities, R.A.D. 558/2007.

22 Future of Banking Final Report, par. 17.10.

Liability Committee, which reported to the Board Risk Committee, which in turn reported to the full board.[23]

In other words, **an almost impenetrable accountability firewall of committee and collective responsibility was created in the Cypriot banks and regulatory system that prevented corrective action being taken against individuals**. One of the main conclusions of the UK Parliamentary Commission on Banking Standards which examined the recent failings of the UK banks could well have been written for Cyprus' banks and their supervisors:

> 'One of the most dismal features of the banking industry to emerge from our evidence was the striking limitation on the sense of personal responsibility and accountability of the leaders within the industry for the widespread failings and abuses over which they presided. Ignorance was offered as the main excuse. It was not always accidental. Those who should have been exercising supervisory or leadership roles benefited from an accountability firewall between themselves and individual misconduct, and demonstrated poor, perhaps deliberately poor, understanding of the front line. Senior executives were aware that they would not be punished for what they could not see and promptly donned the blindfolds. Where they could not claim ignorance, they fell back on the claim that everyone was party to a decision, so that no individual could be held squarely to blame – the Murder on the Orient Express defence.'[24]

To be fair, although some members of the boards of the two major banks did voice, at certain stages, their criticism of the actions of certain executives, none of them refused to sign accounts or prospectuses for the public offer of securities, or alert the authorities in advance about any perceived riskiness of the investments or growth strategies pursued by the banks. The main reason that this occurred, is that it appears that the boards were lacking sound foundations in their structures and did not have a culture which fostered independent challenges and critiques of executive decisions. It has been stated above (p. 254) that one of the findings of the Future of Banking Commission was that 'directors lived by a culture of deference which was nurtured in some cases by loans and supply contracts'. Mr Pikis, the former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Cyprus, when heading the Tri-Partite Investigatory Commission on the 'State of the Cypriot Banking System and the Economy of the Republic of Cyprus', enquired into the former bank directors regarding the significant credit facilities that their companies were receiving

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23 Parliamentary Committee of Institutions, *Supplementary Report 'The Functioning of the Institutions of the Financial System'*, pp. 21–22.

24 House of Lords, House of Commons, Report of the Parliamentary Commission on Banking Standards, *Changing Banking for Good*, Volume I: Summary and Conclusions and Recommendations, 12 June 2013, available at: [http://www.parliament.uk/bankingstandards], at para. 14, retrieved 25 November 2014.

from the banks, during the same period of time they served as independent, non-executives on the boards.[25] The former directors pointed out that the credit facilities were covered by floating charges and personal guaranties. The tolerance for deviations from central principles of the directors' independence was, unfortunately, also supported by laxity in the regulatory standards. By way of example, in the third revised edition of the Corporate Governance Code of the CSE of March 2011, a provision was added that allowed listed companies to consider directors as independent although they would not satisfy the minimum criteria of independence stated in the CSE Code, by providing an explanation in their annual corporate governance report.[26] In the Annual Corporate Governance Report of the Bank of Cyprus for 2011, the bank made use of the above provision to state that although five out of nine of its stated independent directors did not satisfy the minimum criteria for independence (two of them did not satisfy the criterion of not taking out loans for more than €500,000 and three of them did not satisfy the criterion of holding a maximum tenure of nine years), the bank still considered them to be independent directors.[27]

The Political Landscape in the Unfolding of the
Crisis and the Positioning and Stance of the Media

The Cypriot economic crisis coincided with three major political events and one major economic event. The political and economic events are interlinked, and created a snowball effect which had a very significant bearing on the Cypriot crisis. The political events were the two elections that took place in Cyprus and in Germany and the change of leadership of the Eurogroup. The Cypriot presidential elections took place on 17 February 2013, with a runoff on 24 February. The German federal elections were held on 22 September 2013. The change at the helm of the Eurogroup took place on 21 January 2013. The economic event was the most serious crisis in the euro currency union that had ever been experienced, the effects of which forever changed the European project between late 2011–late 2012. As noted by Peter Spiegel in an in-depth article in *The Financial Times*, 'strict budget rules were made inviolable; banking oversight was stripped from national authorities; and the printing presses of the European Central Bank would become the lender of last resort'.[28]

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25   Report of the Tri-Partite Commission of Investigation, pp. 67, 71.
26   The Cyprus Stock Exchange Corporate Governance Code, 3rd revised edition March 2011, available at: [http://www.cse.com.cy/el-GR/regulated-market/listing/corporate-governance/], par. A.2.3; retrieved 20 October 2014.
27   Corporate Governance Report of the Bank of Cyprus for the years 2011, par. 1.2.
28   Peter Spiegel, 'How the Euro was Saved, Part One', *The Financial Times*, 11 May 2014, In-Depth, retrieved 25 February 2015.

Therefore, by focusing on the developments leading up to the crisis and the events of March 2013, the media coverage of the Cypriot economic crisis will be examined in the following paragraphs, from three different angles:

(i)   The stance and positioning of German newspapers;
(ii) The view of the international financial newspapers; and
(iii) The Cypriot daily newspapers at the opposite ends of the ideological spectrum.

German Politics and Media

In the light of the upcoming German federal elections and the country's position as the Eurozone's paymaster, the debate over how to deal with the Cypriot crisis provided all the main parties in Germany with a way to gain political capital and differentiate themselves in order to attract the popular vote. The German public was never enthusiastic about bailouts and matters were further complicated by the internal divisions in the ruling Christian Democratic Union party ('CDU'). This meant that the Chancellor could no longer rely on her government's ability to secure a majority vote at the German Federal Parliament from its own benches alone regarding an aid package for Cyprus, and would therefore need support from the main opposition party, the Social Democratic Party ('SPD'). The German media took a stance that ranged from the sensationalist – with inflammatory headlines and content coming from the tabloid *Bild* – to the much more measured and analytical approach of the journal *Der Spiegel*.

At one end, *Bild* (the best-selling non-Asian newspaper in the world) bore article headlines in March 2013 such as **'Attention, CyprIDIOTS!'**[29] (a conjunction of the words 'Cypriots' and 'idiots') in relation to the Cypriot Parliament's decision to reject the original haircut on deposits, and **'Alles Zypr-IDIOTEN? Machen sie den Euro Kaput?'**[30] ['Are they all CyprIDIOTS? Will they Destroy the Euro?'], scorning the German government's handling of the crisis and for putting the euro in danger. The playing on the German fears of the Russian element also appeared in a sensational way in *Bild,* with headlines in relation to the Cypriot crisis such as **'Blitz Law to Stop Russians'**[31] and **'Rich**

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29   Nikolaus Blome, 'Attention, CyprIDIOTS!', *Bild* Internet edition, 20 March 2013, available at: [www.bild.de], retrieved 10 December 2014.

30   'Are they all CyprIDIOTS? Will they Destroy the Euro?' [in German: 'Alles Zypr-IDIOTEN? Machen sie den Euro Kaput?'], *Bild* Internet edition, 24 March 2013, political discussion between two commentators, Augstein and Blome; available at: [www.bild.de], retrieved 10 December 2014.

31   'Blitz Law to Stop Russians' [in German: 'Blitzgesetz Soll Russen Stoppen'], *Bild* internet edition, 16 March 2013; available at: [www.bild.de], retrieved 10 December 2014.

Russians are Packing Suitcases'.[32] It should be mentioned that the above articles of the tabloid were written in the German language and the target audience was the average reader. *Bild* is considered as a high-risk factor for every public figure as its wide circulation and its constant readiness to judge and to condemn give it the capacity to cause a great deal of political damage.[33]

At the other end, *Der Spiegel*, in its online English edition, featured two well-structured and thought-provoking commentaries on the crisis. Its commentary of 26 March 2013, entitled '*Bailout Insights: What Cyprus tells us about Germany's Character*', began with the following statement:

> 'The Cypriot government was willing to do anything to save its banking industry. Yet Berlin, driven by a deep-seated fear of tax havens, sought the opposite. The resulting deal may have driven a stake through the heart of the euro-zone's much ballyhooed banking union.'[34]

In its 3 April 2013 edition, *Der Spiegel* hosted a commentary with the title '*Abject Error: How the Cyprus Deal Hurts EU Strategic Interests.*'[35] The commentator, an EU and NATO specialist, argued that it was a myth that the Cypriot president alone was responsible for at first wanting to impose a levy on savings accounts below €100,000 and that the Germans were in fact both complicit and actively in support of this action. The author also argued that, despite the Cypriots' responsibilities in allowing their banks to grow too large (to be all saved), their actions did not justify the harshness of the final deal and the risks that lay ahead for the EU because of it.

In between the above commentaries and articles of *Bild* and *Der Spiegel*, other German newspapers aired politicians' views with an eye to the upcoming elections. *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (the German daily newspaper with the largest number of subscribers) led with a

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32 'Rich Russians are Packing Suitcases' [in German: 'Reiche Russen Packen Koffer'], Bild internet edition, 25 March 2013; available at: [www.bild.de], retrieved 10 December 2014.

33 Michael Steiniger, 'German Tabloid Bild Takes Down Politicians With Its Unmatched Megaphone', *The Christian Science Monitor* 18 January 2012, citing Hans-Jürgen Arlt, a professor of political communication at Berlin's Free University; available at: [http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Europe/2012/0118/German-tabloid-Bild-takes-down-politicians-with-its-unmatched-megaphone], retrieved 10 December 2014.

34 Tyson Barker, 'Bailout Insights: What Cyprus tells us about Germany's Character', *SpiegelOnline*, 26 March 2013; available at: [http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/the-cyprus-bailout-reveals-german-fears-of-tax-havens-a-891063.html], retrieved 10 December 2014.

35 Jeffrey Stacey, 'Abject Error: How the Cyprus Deal Hurts EU Strategic Interests', *SpiegelOnline International*, 3 April 2013; available at: [http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/cyprus-bailout-woes-harmful-to-eu-strategic-interests-a-892331.html], retrieved 10 December 2014.

front page article in January 2013, entitled: '2013 Will be the Year of the Financial Transactions' Tax', in reference to the demand of the German opposition parties for Cyprus to adopt the financial transactions' tax. The article highlighted the views of the Social Democratic Party (SPD) and the German Greens Party which was that Cyprus must be willing to reform its taxation system in order to ask for the EU's solidarity. The German financial daily *Handelsblatt* had an article in its print edition on 31 January 2013 entitled 'Merkel Falls into the Trap of Cyprus',[36] which referred to the SPD's refusal to support the economic aid package to Cyprus. The article referred to the main factors upon which the SPD ostensibly based its negative stance in relation to the Cypriot economic aid package, as being the allegations for systematic money laundering and taxation dumping. However, the article's authors postulated that the real reason for the stance of the SPD was the political calculation that if it rejected the package, due to the Christian Democratic Union's (CDU) internal divisions (p. 263 above), the aid package would not be approved by the Bundestag and Chancellor Merkel's approval ratings would suffer.

The International Financial Media

With only six days remaining before the Cypriot Presidential elections in 2013, *The Financial Times* sent shockwaves through the political spectrum in Cyprus with the publication of its article entitled 'Overblown Cyprus Discovers Painful Truths'.[37] That was the first time that a major international financial newspaper, also considered to be one of the worlds' most credible, reported that according to a confidential paper drafted by the European Commission, the Cyprus rescue plan would not be sustainable (hence impossible), without bailing-in of the bank depositors. This caused a new wave of statements by all presidential hopefuls to assure the public that bailing-in of bank depositors would not be accepted under any circumstances, and resulted in the well-known pledge of the current President Anastasiades (then a candidate) against accepting any bailing-in; a promise that was to be broken only two weeks after the elections' runoff. The article was authored by *The Financial Times'* correspondent in Berlin, who correctly observed that in Germany, the bailout had become a matter of acute political controversy for a number of reasons.

The Economist financial newspaper, published in the UK, never hid its scepticism of the euro-currency union and its future prospects. Its article of 16 March 2013, entitled

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36   'Merkel Falls into the Trap of Cyprus', *Handelsblatt*, 31 January 2013.
37   Quentin Peel, 'Overblown Cyprus Discovers Painful Truths', *The Financial Times*, 11 February 2013; available at: [www.ft.com], retrieved 10 December 2014.

'The Cyprus Bail-out: Unfair, Short-sighted and Self-defeating',[38] considered the initial haircut plan for Cyprus[39] and argued that the euro-zone bailout in Cyprus appeared to move Europe further away from the institutional reforms that are needed to resolve the crisis; and that the Cypriot deal has no coherence in the larger context. The deal, *The Economist* argued, reawakened contagion risk and increased the chances of big, destabilising movements of money.

The Cypriot Newspapers at the Two Ends of the Ideological Spectrum

The two Cypriot daily newspapers at the opposite ends of the ideological spectrum generally followed pre-determined ideological affiliation paths in their treatment of the Cypriot crisis. The right-wing *Alithia*, with a headline article 'Heavy Pressures' (7 March 2013) stated that Eurozone member states attempted to put heavy pressure on Cyprus regarding the aid package but that the Cypriot government had ruled out a depositors' bail-in and any increase of the company profits taxation rate.[40] On the same day, the left-wing *Haravghi* featured the headline: 'Exiting the Euro' which argued that in case the Troika insisted on the haircut, it could not be ruled out that Cyprus would leave the monetary union.[41]

The contrast between the two newspapers became even more acute the day before the first Eurogroup council which commenced on 15 March 2013. On 14 March *Alithia* had a front page main theme with the title 'Final Touches,' reporting that the remaining chapters for the Cypriot aid package were being finalised rapidly, and highlighting President Anastasiades' statement that 'hard work brings good results', and that the government was assuring the people that there would be no haircut on deposits.[42] On the same day, *Haravghi* had a headline article on the 'Negative Climate at Eurogroup', stating that in EU circles, with Germany taking centre stage, a plan was being promoted whereby the aid-package would be limited to €10 billion and the remaining €7.5 billion would have to be found by utilising 'other measures'.[43]

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38   *The Economist*, 'The Cyprus Bail-out: Unfair, Short-sighted and Self-defeating', 16 March 2013; available at: [http://www.economist.com/blogs/schumpeter/2013/03/cyprus-bail-out], retrieved 10 December 2014.

39   The original plan provided for an across the board haircut for all deposits kept in all Cypriot banks, with no insurance ceiling of €100,000 and was eventually rejected by Cypriot idiots – according to the *Bild* newspaper (page 263 of this paper).

40   *Alithia*, 'Strong Pressures', 7 March 2013, front-page.

41   *Haravghi*, 'Exiting the Euro', 7 March 2013, front-page.

42   *Alithia*, 'Final Touches', 14 March 2013, front-page.

43   *Haravghi*, 'Negative Climate at Eurogroup', 14 March 2013, front-page.

The day after the second Eurogroup ended (26 March 2013), *Haravghi*'s main theme was entitled 'The Beginning of New Evils', and it argued that the achievement of the Eurogroup agreement would bring new evils rather than solve the existing problems.[44] *Alithia* had as its headline article the President's statement that 'Criminal Investigators will be Appointed Regarding the Bankruptcy'.[45] This political promise will be considered in the context of the next part of this paper.

SECTION III

Is the Arsenal of the Legal and Regulatory System strong enough to enable it to Rise to the Challenge of Doling Out Just Punishment?

Are People's Expectations, Fanned by Politicians' Rhetoric, for the Punishment of those who are to Blame, too High?

Is there a Realistic Possibility of 'Justice being Done'?

According to the Future of Banking Report of the Independent Commission on the Future of the Cyprus Banking Sector,

> '[D]uring the 2000s, the two major Cypriot banks used the excess liquidity available in the Cyprus banking system to embark on aggressive growth strategies which included lending far beyond prudent levels, and making overseas acquisitions which they had difficulty controlling.'[46]

The Report also notes that

> 'although domestic sources of funding began to run low, the [banks] engaged in further expansion, including the fatal step of acquiring €5,7bn of Greek Government Bonds (GGBs), which was to cost them €4,5bn in losses'.[47]

This Independent Commission was not, of course, a court of law, and its fact finding mechanisms were different from those of criminal investigations. However, for the sake of argument, let us take its word for granted and accept all of the above as facts.

Therefore, based on the above, is there a case to be made for imprudent behaviour by the banks and/or their supervisors? **Certainly.** Risky ventures? **Absolutely.** Negligent conduct? **It follows from the rest.** Unethical? **It could also be supported.** However, the crucial question

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44 *Haravghi*, 'The Beginning of New Evils', 26 March 2013, front-page.
45 *Alithia*, 'Criminal Investigators will be Appointed Regarding the Bankruptcy', 26 March 2013, front-page.
46 The Future of Banking Final Report, par. A.8.
47 *Ibid*.

that remains to be answered is whether this behaviour was also criminal in nature. And if it was criminal in nature, is there personal criminal responsibility for the wrongdoers?

The general principle, enshrined in Article 7(1) of the European Convention of Human Rights and Article 12(1) of the Cypriot Constitution, is the Latin maxim, '*Nullum delictum sine lege*' (there is no crime without a pre-existing law).[48] To use a metaphor, it is known that when World War II began, Prime Minister Winston Churchill told President Roosevelt: 'Give us the tools, and we will finish the job', meaning that Britain was requesting ammunition and materials from the United States. **The tool, in this case, is the criminal legislation that existed at the time of the commission of the relevant acts. Is it sufficient?**

The Anglo-Saxon legal system on which the Cypriot legal system is based, has traditionally not placed criminal responsibility on the boards of directors of limited liability companies, or even banking corporations, which may take excessive risk with the assets of their clients, make toxic loans or carry out reckless ventures which may even lead to the failure of – or need of – the bailing out of their banks. It may also well be argued that the business of banking, even in its traditional sense of deposit taking and providing loans, inherently involves the assumption of risks.

With regard to the above, if criminal charges are brought, there are three main areas around which the accusations will centre. The first relates to charges based on general economic offences, such as embezzlement of funds, fraud, obtaining benefit by deception and so forth. The second area is in relation to potential violation of the Business of Credit Institutions Laws. The third area relates to the role and responsibilities of the two major banks as listed companies on the Cyprus Stock Exchange, and the actions of their executives, board members and chief financial officers. In terms of the probability of indictments being brought against any of these companies or individuals, I would characterise the first area as questionable and the second as possible. The third area has already, to a certain extent, begun to materialise, and it shall be analysed further below. It should be noted that none of the three areas is free of problems or entirely straightforward.

The Great Expectations for Criminal Prosecutions – Prosecutions Based on General Economic Offences and Business of Credit Institutions Laws

The first area is in relation to charges based on general economic offences, such as fraud, embezzlement of funds, obtaining benefit by deception and so on. Here, it all depends on the evidence that can be found. Criminal intent would have to be proven, which is no

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48 Article 12(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of Cyprus reads: 'No person shall be held guilty of any offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute an offence under the law at the time when it was committed; and no person shall have a heavier punishment imposed on him for an offence other than that expressly provided for it by law at the time when it was committed.'

small feat. It is also often the case that the ranks of top management are several levels removed from those who are taking the actions; therefore evidence of their intentions is hard to find. It is noteworthy that in relation to the subprime mortgage crisis which led to the recent Great Recession in the United States, justice officials and even President Obama defended the lack of prosecutions, saying that even though greed and other moral lapses were evident in the run-up to the crisis, the conduct was not necessarily illegal.[49] The case of the former Central Bank of Cyprus Governor Mr Christodoulos Christodoulou is illustrative: although he pleaded guilty for failure to report to the tax authorities the receipt of a significant sum linked to the banker one year after the expiry of his term as Governor, no satisfactory evidence has been found up to now to link this money with the criminal offence of receiving a bribe during the exercise of his responsibilities.[50] This does not mean that regulators and supervisors cannot be subjected to criminal prosecution for their failings if the evidence is present (especially in cases of corruption in the exercise of their functions) and suggestions for the overhaul of the legislative and enforcement anti-corruption framework in Cyprus are made in pages 283–286 of this article.

The second area is in relation to the potential violations of the Cypriot Business of Credit Institutions Law.[51] Reliance, in this case, would probably have to be placed on Section 43, which stipulates that the infringement of any provisions of this law or any regulations or directives issued by the Central Bank under this law is – apart from its administrative consequences – a criminal offence punishable by imprisonment of up to five years. Liability, here, would have to be proven in an indirect way. Specifically, that due to a breach of a directive issued by the Central Bank under this law, for example the Corporate Governance Directive, there is also potential liability for breach of the criminal provision. Doubts can be maintained as to whether this course can withstand the scrutiny

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49 'No Crime, No Punishment', *The New York Times* editorial, 25 August 2012; available at: [http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/26/opinion/sunday/no-crime-no-punishment.html?_r=0], retrieved 2 December 2014. The Justice Department in the United States closed its criminal investigation of Goldman Sachs, and its greatest achievement in relation to the subprime mortgage mis-selling has been seen as the settlements/fines it reached with a number of large banks over shoddy mortgage securities transactions in the years immediately before the recent financial crisis in the United States. Citigroup reached a settlement of $7 billion, JPMorgan Chase & Co settled in 2013 for $13 billion, and Bank of America settled in August 2014 for a record of $17 billion. A significant portion of the fines was used to provide relief to the victims. In its settlement announcements, the US Government stated that the banks had committed 'egregious misconduct in the lead up to the financial crisis'.

50 Section 100 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Cyprus, Cap. 154. An offence under Section 100 is punishable with up to 7 years imprisonment.

51 Business of Credit Institutions Law of 1997, Law No. 66(I)/1997, as amended, Republic of Cyprus.

of a criminal trial: Firstly, because no investigation has been made by the Central Bank in relation to the potential breach of its Corporate Governance Directive or any other regulation or directive issued by the Central Bank. Secondly, as noted by the Commission on the Future of Banking, there appears to have been, at least with respect to corporate governance, *formal compliance* with governance requirements. That is to say, the relevant committees existed, meetings were convened and minutes were taken. In the absence, therefore, of a clear position and decision by the regulatory authority entrusted with the responsibility to supervise compliance with its issued directives, that in practice there was no true compliance with governance requirements, criminal liability is very difficult to prove.

The third area relates to the actions of the banks in their role as listed companies on the Cyprus Stock Exchange. Due to the likelihood, the publicity and complexity of this area, it will be examined in the following separate section.

SECTION IV

The Realistic Expectations for Criminal Prosecutions:
Prosecutions Based on Breaches of Listed Companies' Obligations

In the past two years, CySEC found the two major banks, their board members and their chief financial officers to be implicated in a number of administrative violations of the Cypriot Market Abuse Law,[52] of the Public Offer and Prospectus Law[53] and of the Transparency Law[54] and imposed upon them significant administrative fines. All three pieces of legislation regulate the information that must be provided to any potential and existing investors of listed companies in relation to offers made to the public to acquire new securities, as well as the information that needs to be provided to investors and the general public following the listing of securities. Therefore, this legislation **does not relate to the core business of banking**, but to the peripheral activities of certain banks as listed companies that raise capital from the public that is used for further expansion and/or the improvement of their bank capital.[55]

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52 Insider Dealing and Market Manipulation (Market Abuse) Law of 2005, No. 116(I)/2005, as amended, Republic of Cyprus.

53 Public Offer and Prospectus Law of 2005, Law No. 114(I)/2005, as amended, Republic of Cyprus.

54 Transparency Requirements (Securities Admitted to Trading on a Regulated Market) Law of 2007, Law No. 190(I)/2007, as amended.

55 According to the Financial Times Lexicon [www.ft.com/lexicon], 'bank capital is the funds – traditionally a mix of equity and debt – that banks have to hold in reserve to support their business. Bank

The administrative decisions made by CySEC led to the imposition of significant administrative fines on the two major banks, on a number of their directors and on the chief financial officers of the two groups. However, according to statements made in the autumn of 2014 by the Chairperson of the CySEC, Ms Demetra Kalogerou, the majority of the people fined did not pay their fines, and the CySEC will proceed with legal measures for enforcing their payment. The fact that the fines were administrative in nature and imposed by the said regulatory authority and not by a court of law – as would have been the case if the fines were imposed by criminal courts – means that their payment cannot be directly enforced by the regulator, but only through civil law suits, which might take a long time to adjudicate.

It could, therefore, be argued that the administrative sanctions alone are not considered as a 'just punishment' for the catastrophe that was brought upon or allowed to occur by the two banks and caused the suffering of thousands of people. The question now becomes whether these administrative decisions either lead or pave the way for criminal prosecutions to follow.

The first point to note is that there is a high likelihood that the laws upon which the CySEC based its administrative decisions will be used as the legal tool for the filing of criminal indictments against the individuals involved. This prospect is based on the following factors:

A. Legal Factors

    (i)   Same provisions constituting administrative and criminal offences: The same provisions of the Transparency Law and the Market Abuse Law that sanction the provision of misleading information to the public or the failure to publicise price-sensitive (insider) information following a listing of securities, constitute, at the same time, both administrative and criminal offences, with no need to prove the element of intent.[56]

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capital has been in the spotlight since the financial crisis began. The two capital ratios that banks routinely cite are the tier one capital ratio and a subset of that – the core tier one capital ratio, also called the equity tier one ratio. Tier one is essentially top-notch capital, with core tier one a subset comprising the best of the best. The Basel Committee on Banking Supervision, whose Basel III rules form the basis for global bank regulation, is focused on the core tier one ratio, which, like the Americans, it refers to as the equity tier one ratio. It essentially will consist of only equity and retained profits.'

56 For instance, pursuant to the Transparency Law, Law Nu. 190(I)/2007 Section 40, the provision of false or misleading data or information is, at the same time, an administrative offence (punishable by a fine of up to €341,000) and a criminal offence, punishable by up to 5 years of imprisonment. Also, pursuant to the Market Abuse Law Section 19 as detailed in Section 20(1)(c), the dissemination of information through the media which gives, or is intended to give, false or misleading signals as to financial instruments, including the dissemination of rumours and false or misleading news, where the person

(ii) Assignment by law of personal responsibility: The laws regulating the admission of securities to the Stock Exchange and the information that must be publicised by the listed companies following listing, assign direct, personal legal responsibility on the directors signing the prospectuses and the financial reports.

B. Practical Factors

The CySEC has already found a number of bank board members and executives of the two major banks in administrative violations, and there is a significant body of data and material collected for the CySEC investigations which will be utilised for the speedy progress of criminal investigations and indictments. The prosecutorial effort would focus on building up strong enough criminal cases premised on the CySEC findings which could lead to criminal convictions, where the criminal standard of proof of guilt is higher than in administrative cases (i.e. beyond reasonable doubt as compared to the balance of probabilities).

The second point to note is that, as stated in the publicised CySEC decisions, the CySEC found the two banks and a number of their directors and responsible persons in a number of violations in relation to certain provisions of the capital markets laws. It is expected that, in taking decisions on whether or not to criminally prosecute any of the individuals that have been found administratively liable, factors such as their position and involvement in the running of the banks will be taken into consideration. The stronger cases from a prosecutorial point of view, and thus more likely to be prosecuted, will be in respect of those individuals who held executive positions and were involved in the everyday running of the affairs of the two banks. The abovementioned CySEC decisions will be analysed in the following paragraphs.

Cyprus Popular Bank Ltd

CySEC decision of 28 April 2014, announced on 5 June 2014:[57]

Violations of Section 40(1) of the Transparency Law and ensuing fines and reprimands of 15 Directors and the Chief Financial Officer of the Group in respect of signing the Half-

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who made the dissemination knew, or ought to have known, that the information was false or misleading, is both an administrative offence punishable with an administrative fine up to €855,000 and a criminal offence punishable by imprisonment of up to ten years and/or by a fine up to €171,000.

57 CySEC decision of 28 April 2014 regarding the imposition of administrative fines to Cyprus Popular Bank Public Co Ltd, to its Members of the Board and to other persons (investigation regarding Greek Government Bonds) announced on 5 June 2014. Notably, this was the first time ever that CySEC made available its full decision regarding administrative violations against any person on its website and not just a summary announcement.

According to the Announcement, the CySEC's investigation focused, among others, on the following:

1. The information that Cyprus Popular Bank Public Co Ltd and Bank of Cyprus Public Company Ltd

Yearly Financial Reports and the Annual Financial Report for 2010. Fines imposed in relation to the signing of the Half-Yearly Financial Report totalled €595,000 and ranged from €15,000 to €130,000. Fines imposed in relation to the signing of the Annual Financial Report totalled €680,000 and ranged from €20,000 to €140,000 per person.

CySEC decision of 28 April 2014, announced on 5 June 2014:[58]

Violations of Section 20(4) of the Public Offer of Securities Law, Law No. 114(I)/2005 and ensuing fines of five Directors in respect of signing four prospectuses for the public offer of securities: Prospectuses dated 28 May 2010 (total fine €320,000), 1 September 2010 (total fine €270,000), 21 December 2010 (total fine €410,000) and 19 May 2011 (total fine €500,000). Fines imposed ranged from €20,000 to €140,000 per person.

CySEC decision of 28 April 2014, announced on 5 June 2014:[59]

Pursuant to the same decision of 28 April 2014, the CySEC also found the body corporate (the Cyprus Popular Bank Ltd) in a number of violations, including six counts of violations of Section 19 of Market Abuse Law as detailed in Section 20(1)(c) for spreading misleading indications in six financial reports in the period 2010–2011 regarding the banks' investments in Greek Government bonds, and three counts of violations of the same provision resulting from provision of information from prospectuses. The total administrative fine to the Bank as a consequence of the CySEC decision of 28 April 2014 amounted to €1,050,000.

CySEC decision of 30 September 2013, announced on 10 October 2013:[60]

Violation of Section 11(2)(b) of the Market Abuse Law by a former Chief Executive Officer of Marfin Popular Bank, for making a misleading statement regarding the financial soundness and capital reserves of the Bank. The imposed fine amounted to €100,000.

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provided to investors and the public at large, through the publication of their Financial Reports and the publication of Prospectuses for the year 2010 and the year 2011 until the first Private Sector Involvement (PSI), in relation to the amount of their investment in GGB and the risks of this investment at a time when the GGB were undergoing continuous downgrades;

2. Whether Cyprus Popular Bank Public Co Ltd and Bank of Cyprus Public Company Ltd applied the Principles of Corporate Governance of the CSE (CGC), which, as stated in the Financial Reports and Prospectuses, both Companies had adopted in 2010 and 2011.

58 CySEC decision of 28 April 2014 regarding Cyprus Popular Bank Public Co Ltd.

59 *Ibid*.

60 CySEC decision of 30 September 2013 regarding administrative sanctions imposed on Mr Efthimios Bouloutas [in Greek]. Public Information, Announcements, announcement date 10 October 2013; available at: [http://www.cysec.gov.cy/en-GB/public-info/announcements/], retrieved 5 December 2014.

Bank of Cyprus Ltd

CySEC decision of 28 April 2014, announced on 5 June 2014:[61]

Violations of Section 40(1) of the Transparency Law and ensuing fines and reprimands of 18 Directors and the Chief Financial Officer of the Group in respect of signing of the Half-Yearly Financial Report for 2010 and the Annual Financial Report for 2010. Fines imposed in relation to the signing of the Half-Yearly Financial Report totalled €620,000 and ranged from €30,000 to €120,000 per person. Fines imposed in relation to the signing of the Annual Financial Report totalled €860,000 and ranged from €50,000 to €140,000 per person.

CySEC decision of 28 April 2014, announced on 5 June 2014:[62]

Violations of Section 20(4) of the Public Offer of Securities Law and ensuing fines and reprimands of 16 Directors in respect of signing of two prospectuses for the public offer of securities: Prospectuses dated 20 August 2010 (total fine €440,000) and 5 April 2011 (total fine €560,000). Fines ranged from €30,000–150,000 per person.

CySEC decision of 28 April 2014, announced on 5 June 2014:[63]

Pursuant to the same decision of 28 April 2014, the CySEC also found the body corporate (the Bank of Cyprus Ltd) in a number of violations, including six counts of violations of Section 19 of the Market Abuse Law as detailed in Section 20(1)(c) for spreading misleading indications in six financial reports in the period 2010–2011 regarding the Banks' investments in Greek Government bonds and two counts of violations of the same provision resulting from provision of information from prospectuses. The total administrative fine to the Bank as a consequence of the CySEC decision of 28 April 2014 amounted to €950,000.

CySEC decision of 11 November 2013, announced on 27 November 2013:[64]

On 29 July 2013, CySEC found the Bank of Cyprus Ltd in violation of Section 11(1)(a) of the Market Abuse Law, on the grounds that it failed to publicise, as soon as possible, namely on 15 June 2012, insider information, to the effect that its capital needs for

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61 CySEC decision of 28 April 2014 regarding the imposition of administrative fines to the Bank of Cyprus Public Company Ltd, to Members of its Board of Directors as well as to other persons (Greek Government Bonds).

62 CySEC decision of 28 April 2014 regarding Bank of Cyprus Public Company Ltd.

63 *Ibid*.

64 CySEC decision of 11 November 2013 regarding Bank of Cyprus Plc [in Greek]. Public Information, Announcements, announcement date 27 November 2013; available at: [http://www.cysec.gov.cy/en-GB/public-info/announcements/], retrieved 5 December 2014.

covering the requirements of the European Banking Authority had increased from €200 million to €400 million with the likelihood of further increases. Further to this decision, the CySEC decided, on 11 November 2013, to impose an administrative fine on the body corporate of €70,000, and personal fines to four Directors (the three Executive Directors and the Chairman in June 2012), since it found that the violation of the corporation was due to their fault and negligence. Fines to the four directors totalled €220,000 and ranged from €50,000 to €60,000 per person.

It should be highlighted that the power of CySEC to impose administrative fines on directors of corporations for their corporations' breaches of provisions of the Market Abuse Law is founded on Section 48(4)(a) of the Market Abuse Law. Importantly, Section 48(4)(a), stipulates that in cases where a breach by the corporation is found, the burden of proof is shifted onto the shoulders of directors, managers and officials of the corporation who must prove that the violation was <u>not due</u> to their own fault, wilful omission or negligence.

The Attorney General proceeded in December 2014, to file criminal charges against the body corporate and the same four directors plus the Vice-Chairman in June 2012, based on the same facts, that is, for failure to publicise, as soon as possible, that the bank's capital needs for covering the requirements of the European Banking Authority had increased significantly from the initially publicised figure of €200 million. Also, two of the Directors were charged with spreading misleading indications at the annual general meeting of the shareholders of the bank that took place on 19 June 2012 regarding the true capital needs of the bank, and at the same AGM, they concealed information available regarding the true capital needs of the bank. The above charges are based on provisions in the Market Abuse Law,[65] the violation of which constitutes both administrative *and* criminal offences. The criminal offences related to the failure to publicise material information and the spreading of misleading indications at the AGM, fall under Part IV of the Market Abuse Law (Market Manipulation), and are punishable by imprisonment of up to ten years and/or a fine of up to €170,000. The criminal offences related to the concealment of material information fall under Part III of the Market Abuse Law (Obligations of Issuers), and are punishable by imprisonment of up to five years and/or a fine of up to €85,000.

CySEC decision of 30 September 2013, announced on 4 October 2013:[66]

On 2 July 2013, CySEC found the Bank of Cyprus Ltd to be twice in violation of Section 11(1)(a) of the Market Abuse Law, on the grounds that it failed to publicise, as soon as

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65   Sections 20(1)(c) and 23(3) in relation to the spreading of misleading indications and Sections 11(2)(b) and 15(3) in relation to the concealment of material information.

66   CySEC decision of 30 September 2013 regarding administrative sanctions imposed on Bank of Cyprus

possible (on 13 January 2010 and on 28 April 2010) insider information; that is, in relation to the magnitude of the investments of the Bank in Greek Government Bonds.

Further to this decision, the CySEC decided on 4 October 2013 to impose an administrative fine to the body corporate of €70,000 on the first count and €90,000 on the second count, and issue personal fines and reprimands to six directors, since it found that the violation of the corporation was due to their fault and negligence. Fines to the directors totalled €110,000 regarding the first count and €190,000 regarding the second count and ranged from €10,000 to €80,000 per person.

In respect of the above imposed administrative fines, the analysis above (p. 275) regarding the shifting of the burden of proof to directors of corporations found in breach of the Market Abuse Law, also applies here.

To Boldly Go, Where No (Cypriot) Prosecutor Has Gone Before

The prosecution of banks, and bankers, for peripheral, non-banking activities in relation to the banking crisis in Cyprus, is certainly not an ideal state of affairs. However, for the reasons that have been analysed above, it appears to present, at this stage, the most realistic possibility for criminal indictments to be filed. As we have seen already, the Attorney General filed one criminal indictment in relation to the potential criminal violations of the Market Abuse Law regarding a certain set of facts that were originally administratively examined and pursued by the CySEC. The charges are based on provisions of the Market Abuse Law, the violation of which constitutes both administrative *and* criminal offences. The people who were charged are former executive directors of a bank, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman. As analysed in pages 272–276 above, the CySEC found a significant number of former directors and high-ranking officers to be in administrative violation of the Market Abuse Law, the Transparency Law and the Public Offer of Securities Law. The filed indictment points to the conclusion that, especially in relation to the violations of the Market Abuse Law and the Transparency Law which contain sections providing for both administrative and criminal offences with no need to prove the element of intent, criminal indictments will follow the administrative decisions where evidence to the criminal standard can be found. In such a case, consistent with the policy applied in respect of the current prosecution, the executive directors and senior board members and/or officers of the banks will likely be indicted. Although not an ideal state of affairs, such prosecutions, if effectively pursued, will not be devoid of utility; they will send a

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Plc and Board Members [in Greek]. Public Information, Announcements, announcement date 4 October 2013; available at: [http://www.cysec.gov.cy/en-GB/public-info/announcements/], retrieved 5 December 2014.

strong signal of discouragement to potential future offenders. They will also meet, to a certain extent, people's expectations for the punishment of wrongdoers and can help to rebuild the eroded public confidence to the administration of justice.

It should, however, be borne in mind, that the Market Abuse Law, Transparency Law and Public Offer and Prospectus Law have never before been used for criminal prosecutions in Cyprus. This is not a Cypriot-specific phenomenon. In most of the European jurisdictions, there has traditionally been a preference for employing administrative measures in respect to punishing capital market violations (by contrast with the US, where market abuse has, since the early 1930s, always constituted a criminal offence). This policy has been gradually changing.[67] In Cyprus, since the enactment of the above legislation (e.g. since 2005 for the Market Abuse Law) the CySEC has been forwarding the briefs of cases where it had found administrative violations of various persons to the Attorney General's department and the same violations could give rise to criminal prosecutions. The Attorney General has never, up to now, acted to file criminal indictments in these matters, perhaps casting doubt on whether the guilt of the persons involved could be proven beyond reasonable doubt which is the standard for criminal proof of guilt, and/or whether the seriousness of these violations justified criminal prosecutions. There is, therefore, no precedent in the Cypriot legal system in relation to the interpretation of the criminal provisions of the above legislation and as a result, their effectiveness and application remains to be seen.

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67   The case of *R.* v. *Christopher McQuoid* [2009] EWCA Crim 1301 (10 June 2009), is the first criminally prosecuted case in the UK for insider dealing, and is illustrative of the policy shift in the area of capital markets crime. The offender, a UK solicitor, was sentenced to 8 months imprisonment (and confiscation of £35,000), for a single count of insider dealing. McQuoid appealed against the severity of his sentence and submitted that this should be reduced, because this happened to be a case under consideration by the regulator when it decided to change policy in relation to whether to proceed by way of criminal prosecution rather than, as before, administrative measures. The appellant, he contended, was the first; and others, no less culpable, were not prosecuted but were dealt with through the regulatory system. The UK Court of Appeal (Criminal Division) noted in its decision: 'We .... emphasise that this kind of conduct does not merely contravene regulatory mechanisms. If there ever was a feeling that insider dealing was a matter to be covered by regulation, that impression should be rapidly dissipated. The message must be clear: when it is done deliberately, insider dealing is a species of fraud; it is cheating. Prosecution in open and public court will often, and perhaps much more so now than in the past, be appropriate. Those involved in the earlier investigations when a different policy was apparently adopted (and assuming that a different policy was adopted) may have been very fortunate. But their good fortune cannot endure to the benefit of anyone else.'

SECTION V

Recent Developments and Recommended Changes and Improvements to the Legal and Regulatory System Considered Necessary so as to Effectively Guard against any Similar Future Failings

No system or set of measures can provide an absolute guarantee against future failings in the financial system. Furthermore, it is generally accepted that any measures to be adopted must not be unduly draconian, in order to avoid stifling the functioning of the banking and capital markets and stunting economic growth. Having said that, a number of changes and improvements can be considered that would substantially reduce the likelihood of any similar failings reoccurring. The changes and improvements should also take into account recent developments in the regulatory and supervisory framework[68] for the operation of the Cypriot credit institutions. Therefore, in this part, the recent developments will first be briefly considered and then, taking those into account, a number of recommendations will be put forward.

Recent Developments in the Regulatory and Supervisory Framework

The Regulatory Framework

The regulatory framework for the governance of the Cypriot credit institutions has been recently (2014) strengthened by the Central Bank of Cyprus' issuance of two directives:

(i) The Central Bank Directive to authorise Credit Institutions on the Assessment of the Fitness and Probity of the Members of the Management Body and Managers of Authorised Credit Institutions of 2014 (the 'Fitness and Probity Directive'), and

(ii) The Central Bank Directive on Governance and Management Arrangements in Credit Institutions, which came into force on 8 August 2014 (the 'New Corporate Governance Directive').

The Fitness and Probity Directive outlines the procedure (in Parts IV and V) and the criteria (in Part VI) for the assessment of the fitness and probity of candidate members and managers for the boards and senior positions of the Cypriot Authorised Credit Institutions ('ACIs') by the Credit Institutions themselves at the first stage, and by the Central Bank at the final stage. The procedure utilises a detailed questionnaire. Importantly, at paragraph 9 of the Fitness and Probity Directive, it is stated that the fitness and probity of a member or manager of a Credit Institution 'shall be continuous and,

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68   See Note 20 for the distinction between banking regulation and supervision.

therefore, it shall not be assessed by the ACI only during the time of appointing the person to the position of a member or of a manager but also throughout the whole term of his/her appointment'. The criteria for the assessment on fitness and probity include general assessment criteria, reputation criteria, experience criteria and governance criteria.

The New Corporate Governance Directive states, among others, the duties of individual members of the management body and stresses that:

'26 Each member of the management body must engage actively in the business of the institution and must be able to make their own sound, informed, objective and independent decisions and judgements to fulfil their individual and collective responsibilities; in this respect, each member of the management body must –

(a) ensure they have a clear understanding of the institution's governance arrangements and their role in them;

(b) ensure they have an up-to-date understanding of the business of the institution including areas for which they are not directly responsible but are collectively accountable;

...

(d) act with honesty, integrity and independence of mind to effectively assess and challenge the decisions of the senior management where necessary and to effectively oversee and monitor management decision-making.'

The Supervisory Framework

Following the positive results of the stress tests that were performed in 2014 on the four significant Cypriot banks, these banks have come under the Single Supervisory Mechanism (SSM) since 4 November 2014, and are therefore directly supervised by the European Central Bank ('ECB'). Each of the four entities has total assets over 20% of the national GDP. Their day-to-day supervision will be conducted by Joint Supervisory Teams, which will comprise of staff from both the Central Bank of Cyprus and the ECB.[69] In carrying out its prudential tasks, the ECB applies relevant EU laws, and, where applicable, the national legislation transposing them into Member State law.

Changes and Improvements Considered Necessary so as to Substantially Reduce the Likelihood that Similar Failings will Occur in the Future

The passing of the baton to the European Central Bank and the enhancement of the regulatory rules, should not, however, be seen as a panacea for the regulation and

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69   European Central Bank, *Guide to Banking Supervision*, November 2014, at p. 16.

supervision of the banking sector in Cyprus. Firstly, because, as argued above (end of p. 251 to p. 256) there was in place certain compliance with the fundamental corporate governance rules, but of a formalistic, rather than substantial nature; and the need to supervise compliance in *substance* would still present a challenge. Secondly, because one of the root causes of the crisis was, as analysed in pages 260–262, the failure of attribution of personal responsibility and this is an area which is not addressed in the current legal framework (see p. 268 above). Thirdly, because, as will be expanded upon in pages 283–286, there is a strong correlation between economic crimes and the corruption of public officials found on the international stage, and the current legal and enforcement system in Cyprus does not constitute an effective deterrent against the dishonest or partial exercise of public officials in their duties. Therefore, changes and improvements in the regulatory and supervisory framework are still necessary, and will be considered below.

Corporate Governance, Senior Officers and Personal Responsibility

We have seen above an enhancement of the regulatory rules regarding governance for all Cypriot credit institutions and a shifting of the responsibility for supervising the four largest Cypriot banks to the European Central Bank. Nevertheless, as argued earlier in pages 251–256, corporate governance in Cypriot banks failed so dismally in practice, not as a result of an absence of rules, but rather due to the non-application of the existing rules by the banks and their formal, rather than substantial, compliance. Simply making the rule-book more voluminous and detailed will not, in and of itself, improve the sense of personal responsibility and accountability of the board members and senior officers of the banks.

It can, however, provide the necessary foundation upon which to base a framework which would create a *presumption* of personal responsibility for any administrative breaches of the rules and place the responsibility for the failures of the banks on the shoulders of their directors and other high-ranking officers; and by creating a clear framework for establishing personal criminal responsibility for the failure of banks.

If, according to the new Central Bank directives, the individual board members and senior officers must continuously adhere to high standards of fitness and probity and they must be able to make their own sound, informed, objective and independent decisions and judgements in order to fulfil their individual responsibilities, then it is fair, reasonable and justified, for them to be presumed to be responsible for the breaches of the rules and failures of the banks that they lead, direct and rule; unless they can prove otherwise. It is a fact that large and complex corporations often make strategic and far-reaching decisions through committees or boards and these decisions may sometimes lead to the failure of the banking institutions. This should not, however, operate, as a firewall, or shield that can be used to deflect from the personal responsibility of the board members and senior managers in making important decisions.

More specifically, in respect of the breaches of the Central Bank directives (e.g. of the

New Corporate Governance Directive and the Fitness and Probity Directive) which could give rise to the imposition of **administrative sanctions** by the regulator, **the burden of proof can be shifted** to the senior managers and board members in charge. Consequently, if an administrative breach of the rules or directives by the financial institution is initially proven, the senior managers or officers in charge would not be guilty of misconduct if **they can prove**, on the balance of probabilities, that they took all reasonable steps and measures to avoid the commission of the breach. The existing reversal of the burden of proof in Section 48(4)(a) of the Market Abuse Law (discussed on p. 275), in relation to capital markets' breaches, is also a good model to follow in respect of the breaches of banking laws and directives by the banks.

It is also necessary **to put in place a clear and sufficiently deterrent legislative framework of personal criminal responsibility for directors and senior officers of banks, starting from the most serious cases which are those of bank failures.** By 'failure', it is meant that the bank has had to enter insolvency, administration or resolution. The UK Financial Services (Banking Reform) Act ('FSBRA') created such a deterrent framework with its 2013 amendment.[70] According to the amendment, personal criminal responsibility is held by the board members and senior managers who may, through their decisions regarding the way in which the business of the financial institution is carried out, or through their failure to take steps that would have prevented such a decision being taken, have brought about, contributed to or otherwise contributed to the financial institution's collapse. The presumption of innocence would not be negated, but criminal responsibility would not be based on criminal intent – which is very difficult to substantiate in cases of collective decision making – but on negligence instead. Section 36 of the FSBRA 2013 creates personal criminal responsibility for senior managers for the taking of a decision on behalf of the financial institution which eventually leads to its failure, whilst being *aware*, at the time of the taking of the decision, of the risk that the implementation of the decision may cause the failure of the institution.[71]

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70 Financial Services (Banking Reform) Act 2013 (chapter 33), UK. Available at: [http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2013/33/contents/enacted], last accessed on 14 May 2015.

71 Section 36(1) of the FSBRA 2013 states:
'**36 Offence relating to a decision causing a financial institution to fail**:
(1) A person ('S') commits an offence if—
   (a) at a time when S is a senior manager in relation to a financial institution ('F'), S—
      (i) takes, or agrees to the taking of, a decision by or on behalf of F as to the way in which the business of a group institution is to be carried on, or
      (ii) fails to take steps that S could take to prevent such a decision being taken,
   (b) at the time of the decision, S is aware of a risk that the implementation of the decision may cause the failure of the group institution,

The combined operation of having, on the one hand, more strict and detailed rules on governance, and, on the other, an enhancement of personal responsibility for the board members and senior managers in respect of the breaches of these rules and bank failures, would lead to a number of positive results, including:

(i)   The Filtering Effect: An effective personal responsibility system would discourage the candidacy to board membership and senior management of persons who are not able to successfully carry out the respective duties associated with such responsible positions. To paraphrase a famous quote attributed to President Harry S. Truman, if the heat is turned up, those who cannot take it, will not enter (or leave) the kitchen.

(ii) The Deterrence Effect: With respect to board members and senior managers who maintain their posts, individual responsibility would act as a significant deterrent against rule breaking and negligence in the execution of their duties. Sanctions that may only be imposed on the corporation tend to be considered by the boards as running business costs, and the shareholders absorb their effect.

(iii) The Sanitisation Effect: As noted in the Report of the UK Parliamentary Commission on Banking Standards (2013):

> 'It is imperative that in future senior executives in banks have an incentive to know what is happening on their watch – not an incentive to remain ignorant in case the regulator comes calling'.[72]

If the board member or senior manager knows that s/he will have to take personal responsibility for any breaches of the rules unless s/he can prove that s/he took all reasonable steps and measures to avoid the commission of the breach, then it is likely that s/he will wish to be kept abreast of important issues, risks and developments, and protect him or herself from liability by taking such steps and measures, and/or directing and monitoring the departments or units required (e.g. risk management, internal audit, or compliance department) in order to take the necessary measures that would absolve the senior manager from assuming personal responsibility. This would contribute to the better and more compliant functioning of the whole organisation – or in other words, its sanitisation.

(c) in all the circumstances, S's conduct in relation to the taking of the decision falls far below what could reasonably be expected of a person in S's position, and

(d) the implementation of the decision causes the failure of the group institution.'

72   Report of the Parliamentary Commission on Banking Standards, *Changing Banking for Good*, par. 14.

Corruption and Economic Crime

International and local experience shows a strong correlation between economic crimes and the corruption of public officials, who either turn a blind eye to the obvious, or are tolerant of, or even complicit in, the violations of rules.

From a legislative point of view, we can observe that the current legislative framework in Cyprus in relation to corruption and/or the abuse of power by public officials consists of an outdated 1960 law for the prevention of corruption[73] and a scattered number of provisions in the Cypriot Criminal Code, most of which are misdemeanours or punishable, at a maximum, with relatively short sentences which do not constitute an effective deterrence. For example, the abuse of power by a civil servant is punishable, pursuant to Section 105 of the Criminal Code, by a maximum of three years' imprisonment. Receiving a bribe by a civil servant under the expressed or silent understanding that s/he will exercise its authority to favour the briber or any other person, is only a misdemeanour that is punishable by a maximum of two years' imprisonment under Section 102 of the Criminal Code. Influencing a public authority, commission or officer, in the exercise of his or her disciplinary functions, is punishable by a maximum of 12 months' imprisonment under Section 105A of the Criminal Code. It is noteworthy that the above provisions have not been updated for years or decades. An exception to this is Section 100 of the Cypriot Criminal Code which was updated in 1999 and again in 2012 and criminalises the receipt of a bribe by a public official for the taking of an action or inaction in the exercise of his or her duties. An offence under Section 100 is punishable by a maximum of seven years' imprisonment and/or a fine of €100,000 while the offender's assets resulting from the bribe are subject to confiscation.

From an enforcement point of view, we can observe that, for most, if not all of the above offences, there has not been a single instance where someone has been charged and convicted for their violation in the past 15 years. A good example illustrating this is the case of the former Bank Governor Mr Christodoulos Christodoulou. Although he pleaded guilty for the submission of false tax returns in respect of the non-declaration of an amount of one million Euros deposited to connected accounts one year after he left office, no corruption charges have been brought against him up to now. If both sides of the corruption equation, (the corrupted and the corruptor), stand to benefit, then no-one talks. The victim here is usually too distant from the place of the crime and the offenders to file a complaint; it is the tax-payer, the bank depositor, the ordinary citizen.

Therefore, not only is the legislative framework for anti-corruption in need of a radical overhaul, but so is the enforcement framework.

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73   The Prevention of Corruption Law, Cap. 161, as amended, Republic of Cyprus. It consists of seven sections.

The legislative framework overhaul could come in the form of a special act of parliament, such as a Bribery or Corruption Act that would broadly define bribery and corruption. Corruption and bribery can take myriad forms, and having provisions for specific acts of corruption would unduly narrow the scope of the legislative framework and potential for enforcement. New South Wales, Australia, is a very good example of a common law jurisdiction (like Cyprus), which, in response to growing community concerns surrounding the integrity of public administrators in the 1980s, created an independent commission against corruption and endowed it with very significant powers and a wide scope of operation. Therefore, Section 8 of the Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988 of New South Wales (NSW), Australia defines corrupt conduct very widely as:

‘(1) (a)   any conduct of any person (whether or not a public official) that adversely affects, or that could adversely affect, either directly or indirectly, the honest or impartial exercise of official functions by any public official, any group or body of public officials or any public authority, or

(b)   any conduct of a public official that constitutes or involves the dishonest or partial exercise of any of his or her official functions, or

(c)   any conduct of a public official or former public official that constitutes or involves a breach of public trust, or

(d)   any conduct of a public official or former public official that involves the misuse of information or material that he or she has acquired in the course of his or her official functions, whether or not for his or her benefit or for the benefit of any other person.

(2) Corrupt conduct is also any conduct of any person (whether or not a public official) that adversely affects, or that could adversely affect, either directly or indirectly, the exercise of official functions by any public official, any group or body of public officials or any public authority and which could involve any of the following matters:

(a)   official misconduct (including breach of trust, fraud in office, nonfeasance, misfeasance, malfeasance, oppression, extortion or imposition),
(b)   bribery,
(c)   blackmail,
(d)   obtaining or offering secret commissions,
(e)   fraud,
(f)   theft,
(g)   perverting the course of justice,
(h)   embezzlement, [...]’[74]

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74   Independent Commission against Corruption Act 1988, New South Wales (NSW), Australia. Available at: [http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/consol_act/], accessed on 7 April 2015.

The broadening of the definition of corruption, from an investigatory point of view, would also provide new, direly needed tools to Cypriot investigators, extending their capabilities. This is because, according to the Sixth Amendment of the Constitution of the Republic of Cyprus (2010), the privilege of the privacy of communications, including telephone communications, can now be lifted pursuant to strict procedures including a court order, but only with respect to five types of offences. One of these is the serious corruption of public officials, which is punishable by a minimum sentence of five years imprisonment.[75]

The enforcement of such special legislation needs to be placed in the hands of a different state apparatus than the one currently used, which is the police. Firstly, because one needs a specialised unit in order to investigate these types of offences. Secondly, because, generally speaking, law enforcement is often a breeding ground for corruption. An independent commission should be hierarchically, functionally and fiscally independent from the police system. The models used in a number of other common law jurisdictions, place previous judicial office holders at the helm of such commissions. According to the Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission ('IBAC') Act 2011 of the State of Victoria, Australia, the Commissioner's status is that of an independent officer of the Parliament.[76] Crucially, according to Section 12 of the Act:

'The IBAC is not subject to the direction or control of the Minister in respect of the performance of its duties and functions and the exercise of its powers.'

The Commission's powers must also be broadly defined. Section 10 of the IBAC Act states that:

'The IBAC has power to do all things that are necessary or convenient to be done for or in connection with, or as incidental to, the achievement of the objects of this Act and the performance of its duties and functions.'

The jurisdiction of the NSW Independent Commission against Corruption also extends to all NSW public sector agencies (except the NSW Police Force[77]) and employees, including government departments, local councils, members of Parliament, ministers, the judiciary and the Head of State. Parliament may refer any matter to the Commission for investigation.[78]

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75 Article 17 of the Constitution of the Republic of Cyprus, as amended by Law No. 51(I)/2010.
76 Section 13 of the IBAC Act 2011 of Victoria, Australia.
77 There is a special Policy Integrity Commission for this purpose.
78 Section 13, Independent Commission against Corruption Act 1988, New South Wales.

Section VI

Concluding Words

The public perception of the big banks and financial institutions, not only in Cyprus, but in other countries that recently suffered from banking and financial crises as well, is that neither they, nor their leaders ever have to fully answer for the consequences of their actions.

This perception appears to be, to a certain extent, justified in Cyprus. There can be no doubt that the Cypriot legal and regulatory system was unprepared to prevent the recent catastrophe, and its lines of defence failed dismally. The crucial question now is whether this very same legal and regulatory system can bring catharsis and just punishment, where punishment is due.

Doubts can be raised regarding whether the system will be able to adequately respond to the challenge, or whether it will be found wanting. As argued in this article, the tools for placing personal responsibility on the shoulders of senior managers to answer for the wrongdoings and even failures of the banking institutions have traditionally not been sharp enough; and therefore both changes and improvements are long overdue. The more realistic expectations regarding criminal prosecutions cannot be found in relation to the core-banking business but in the peripheral activities of certain banks in their roles as listed companies. To date, the only indictment that has been filed signifies the direction that criminal indictments will follow the administrative decisions where evidence to the criminal standard can be found. This is especially true in relation to violations of the Market Abuse Law and the Transparency Law which contain sections providing for both administrative and criminal offences with no need to prove the element of intent. In such a case, and consistent with the policy applied in respect of the current prosecutions, it is probable that the executive directors and senior board members and/or officers of other banks will also be indicted.

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AFTERWORD

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Crisis and Representation:
Notes on Media and Media Studies

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An extraordinarily voluminous analytical literature addressed to the financial crisis which surfaced particularly in 2007–2008 – and is regarded now, according to location, either with a sense of retrospection (drawing the boundary at 2010–2012) or as ongoing – is in the public domain. The part played by media coverage has not been neglected; most of the highlighted crisis-struck locations, in the United States of America (USA) and European countries, have been examined in this regard. However, though the unprecedented deposit 'haircut' of 2013 in Cyprus received extensive media attention, very little sustained analysis of this coverage is available as yet. The contributions to this special issue on *Participation, Media Representation and the Financial and Political Crises in Cyprus* fill this lacuna and are a most valuable addition to scholarship.

I am not in a position to contribute to the observations and debates which feature here, only to learn from them. In that spirit, this paper does not attempt to summarise or infer from the preceding arguments but to lay out some of the broader features surrounding the area in question. The following notes may perhaps serve to locate the more contextually grounded analyses above within wider debates. Two sections follow, threaded around two abstract nouns in the issue title: one on 'crises' (financial and political) and another on 'representation' (media). The latter delineates how the role of the media apropos the financial crisis has been accounted already, but from a relatively unusual perspective: that is not so much in terms of what media coverage did, but in terms of what analysts of that media coverage have done, or, more generally, by foregrounding some of the underpinning assumptions and methods of Media Studies.

Crisis

Most immediately, a financial or political crisis suggests an interregnum in which an existing economic or political order appears to be collapsible, and either recuperation of said order (modified or otherwise) or replacement by a different order is portended. The extent to which the financial and the political are coterminous with or consequent on each other is of considerable analytical interest, as becomes apparent below. Heightened tension between the potential for recuperation and for replacement could be regarded, in the first instance, as the discursive structure which is articulated as a crisis.

The crisis of, and after, 2007–2008 is predominantly presented as a *financial* one, and as such is considered at the broadest conceptual level as a crisis of capitalism – the dominant global order of the present, with a complex history of cyclical financial crises of which this is a particularly significant one. Its grounding in the USA and European Union (EU) is generally understood in terms of their putative geopolitical centrality and waning dominance in a global capitalist order, hence a *global* financial crisis. Since the potential for replacement of an existing capitalist order had been most cogently conceptualised, indeed historically enacted, through the Marxist critique of capitalism, that continues to be influential in elaborating critiques of present-day capitalist crises. Marx's own analysis of such crises, found in the logical line developed from delineation of simple reproduction in terms of two departments (*Capital* II, chs. 20–21), to the tendency of the general rate of profit to fall where surplus value extraction remains the same (*Capital* III, Part III), to description of the credit system or relation between real capital, money capital and debt capital (*Capital* III, chs. 30–33, obviously relevant to the 2007–2008 financial crisis), was perfectly balanced at the tension between recuperation and replacement. The cyclical logic of this line consistently places capitalist crises as recuperative phases, constitutively within the process of capital reproduction and expansion itself; and yet, with a historical rather than cyclical view (in a way breaking the logical cycle by gradually and forcibly turning that logic upon itself), promises an accruing terminal crisis which would render replacement possible – perhaps inevitable. Moreover, the latter was underscored by envisaging (however hazily) a communist political *and* economic order as replacement, thus balancing the slash between recuperation/replacement with an ultimate tilt towards the latter. This ever-imminent albeit deferrable potential for replacement in a crisis phase ensures the perpetual reiteration of Marxist critique when financial crises are experienced. The twofold potential has exercised rejuvenated and updated Marxist analysis of the 2007–2008 financial crisis (e.g. Harvey, 2010 and 2014; Vasapollo, 2012 [2009]). It also simmers beneath social democratic and some left liberal anxiety about the future of capitalism (as in Wallerstein *et al.*, 2013). However, and this is a symptom of being encapsulated in totalistic capitalism, even those most optimistic of replacement seemed unwilling to envisage the modus operandi of transition, the economic pragmatics of an order that could obtain as replacement. When an actually exiting alternative economic and political order could be referred, quite different directions of Marxist analysis more or less habitually considered capitalist crisis and transition to socialism in the same breath, as in Althusser and Balibar's (1970 [1965], ch. 4) close reading of the relevant passages of *Capital* III, or in Mandel's (1968 [1962], ch. 14) observations on 'socialist accumulation', and prolifically elsewhere.

The potential for ultimate replacement has spurred analyses along the Marxist line because of its explanative power. In this line capitalist economics is regarded as activated

through social relations. The mechanics of class interests and its embedment from base to superstructure underpin the logic of the capital cycle at every point: each of the above-cited logical moves in analysing crises in *Capital* demonstrates this in detail, as do the modifications in those moves by Rosa Luxemburg, Ernest Mandel and others. Capital movements signify, and are enabled by and grounded in, social relations, and it is impossible to extricate the economic from the political. In liberal economics, cycles of capital have generally been understood in terms of an autonomous system-based rationale – with capitalism as a kind of machine (which can be modelled) functioning through fuzzily understood self-regulating principles. Political factors may interfere therein, and the working of the system always has social implications, but those are conditional to – either after or before – the activating and self-regulating principles. Political norms only allow for contingent nudges to the system and are always in danger of messing it up. So the political and the economic are held apart in liberal theories of capitalism; they bear upon each other but are not coeval. Giving the right nudge or apt exercise of restraint involves trying to work out how any intervention in the system (say, by regulation of agents and institutions or limiting capital movements) will play with those autonomous principles. Since those principles are always fuzzily understood, they need to be accessed and checked constantly, and there are two dominant methods for this: first, in terms of somewhat instinctive and individualised psychological rationales (so that factors like 'greed', 'trust', 'confidence', 'panic', 'quality-of-life' are mooted as decisive causes); second, and at odds with the first, in terms of what can be inferred in a mathematically sound way – disinvested of psychological unpredictability – from the record of how the system has behaved in the past (from the imprint the system has left in the form of data, indicative of how the autonomous principles have worked thus far). By this approach, these principles are always *within* the autonomous system of capitalism, and social relations and political imperatives are always *without* – but acting upon the system in desirable or undesirable ways.

There are several consequences to the liberal approach for analysing crises phases. One is the *desire* (even while occasionally recognising the impossibility of its fulfilment) to apprehend the autonomous principles of the capitalist system without reference to social relations, predicated on mathematical consistency. The centrality of data analysis and modelling, and an institutionalised distinction between micro and macroeconomics, follows. Another is struggling to articulate the relationship between social relations and the capitalist system, which is always a point of pressure in a crisis phase. The big division in liberal economics tends to follow as divergent articles of faith about social justice. On the one hand, it is held that the autonomous principles of the capitalist system are inherently just – though the precise rationale for this cannot be laid out and proved, the record (the run of data) shows this (the tradition from the Austrian and Chicago Schools). This entails envisaging a state that intervenes minimally in capital circulations,

or, neoliberally, a state that aligns its own functioning with the autonomous principles of the capitalist system and becomes subject to it. On the other hand, it is believed that the autonomous principles of the system are indifferent, like laws of nature, to social justice – so an ethical commitment to social justice has to be brought to nudge the system every now and then as purposively as possible (the Keynesian and 'saltwater school' tradition). This is best done, according to this line of reasoning, by states which actively define themselves as having a social justice agenda.

Yet another consequence of the liberal approach to crises is that it does not (here sharply contradicting the Marxist line) – indeed cannot – consider the possibility of replacing the capitalist order. It can consider replacing a political regime; it can (particularly if following the Keynesian or 'saltwater schools' tradition) consider modifying the economic system; but no liberal analysis can actually envisage replacing the capitalist system – capitalism is considered, in that sense, to be a final and perpetually reproductive order. The closest scenarios to replacement that liberal economists invoke are scare-inducing and apocalyptic: the replacement of reasonably good by very bad capitalism in some cases, or the return of a regressive pre-capitalist order, or a collapse into anarchy, or worse the threat of an undesirable socialist replacement. In times of crisis, the liberal economist either waits for automatic recuperation or campaigns for activating recuperation by nudging the capitalist system appropriately.

Since the 2007–2008 financial crisis surfaced amidst a capitalist global (well, centred in USA and EU) economic order, wherein the dominance of liberal economics is very nearly total, the analysis of it has been prolifically in liberal terms – at a tension between the potential for recuperation and unthinkable apocalypse (anarchy, regression). And since the agents held responsible for this crisis have derived mostly from the tradition of the Austrian and Chicago Schools – with neoliberal conviction that the capitalist system is endemically just – it is primarily the other sort, neo-Keynesians and left liberals, who have offered critiques of what went wrong and prescriptions for recuperation. These have veered from strong arguments for states to exercise their ethical commitment to social justice by nudging the system, more public investment and regulation and reform (such as Parks, 2011; Crouch, 2011; Krugman, 2012; Admati and Hellwig, 2013), to retrospection on how well existing liberal institutions/actors have worked, through appropriate interventions in the system, to enable recuperation and social justice since 2008 (Shiller, 2013; Drezner, 2014, and others).

In this process of liberal reckoning with the financial crisis, nineteenth-century political economic antecedents have occasionally been recalled – but not in the way Marxists call upon Marx, in a spirit of confirmation. After all, a long view of history is largely narrativized with social relations in view, which is central to the left tradition; whereas the liberal view reduces the past to the data imprint of the capitalist system and

focuses on the moment of crisis and its immediate precursors. Piketty's (2014 [2013]) study of inequality presents an interesting departure from and links to both sides, possibly the reason for the widespread interest it has aroused – though it was not addressed to the financial crisis. Using a liberal understanding of capitalism (as a quantum within an autonomous rational system), Piketty analyses a long range of data from different geopolitically-specific capitalist regimes to demonstrate that the general system bears upon one important social relation: exacerbating inequality. Since the data consulted is long range and across different contexts, his inferences about capitalism itself do not facilitate recourse to political intervention for social justice. Thus, the inferences seem to coincide with those offered with a quite different rationale, the mechanics of social relations, in the Marxist tradition; yet it is based on liberal methods. Naturally, this has interested liberal economists greatly, who find themselves ideologically challenged by the findings; equally, it has interested socialist economists too, who find themselves unsympathetic to the liberal methodology but ideologically attune to the findings.

Like Marx in the socialist line, nineteenth-century political economists of the liberal line have nevertheless oft been referred apropos the 2008 financial crisis – Besoni's edited (2012) volume on how crises and cycles feature in various economic dictionaries and encyclopaedias recalls numerous liberal antecedents. That this volume foregrounds the textual form and referential practices of the field (with a useful introductory discussion thereof) leads these notes towards another aspect of analysing crises. Economic and political crises are not merely analysed for an existing condition, a given economic order or political regime – out there, so to speak; perception of crisis also tends to fold in on the practice of analysis itself, the analytical enunciation of crisis. Where analysis of crisis along Marxist lines is foregrounded, the construction of knowledge is always subject to the material conditions and bourgeois interests out there, and the accounting itself seems a conditional matter. Thus, O'Connor's (1987) attempt at a 'theory of crisis theories' (grounded in Marxist accounts of economic, social and psychological crisis in capitalist society) does gesture towards more than the objective and material evidence of crises, but immediately moves towards individual commitment as response rather than analysis of the field of intellection:

> 'The practical importance of this work is to show that "crisis" is not and cannot be merely an "objective" historical process [...]. "Crisis" is also a "subjective" historical process – a time when it is not possible to take for granted "normal" economic, social, and other relationships; a time for decision; and a time when what individuals actually do counts for something' (p. 3).

There is a hint here that the 'normal' of economic, social and other relationships should entail attention to the normalising devices of knowledge formation, of academic

discourse, but that is not foregrounded; it is pointed to again only in passing towards the end of O'Connor's argument, when he speaks briefly of a 'crisis of crisis theories' (pp. 158–159). In a broader way, with conservative or liberal underpinnings or with less ideologically explicit commitments, discourses of crisis *within* knowledge formations have been an ongoing preoccupation. These have often appeared with an explicit or partially apprehended or unstated relation to economic and political conditions of crisis. And these discourses have often appeared with an expansive thrust, from specific areas of knowledge to knowledge itself and its pursuit at large. Such crises-in-knowledge discourses have appeared with growing frequency through the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries: with regard to disciplinary areas (crisis of sociology, crisis of science, crisis of the humanities, and so forth); to aspects of the undergirding structures of knowledge itself (crisis of meaning, crisis of reason, crisis of representation and crisis of theory among others); and thereby to crisis of knowledge work (crisis of communication, crisis of the university, and so on). Very seldom are such perceptions of crises in knowledge formation dissociated from political and economic crises out there; at the least, the mediation of relevant institutional factors inevitably bring in economic and political considerations. The financial crisis of 2007–2008 has understandably stirred discussion of both the condition and the content of analytical efforts: of what investigative methodologies attending to crisis entail and whether those are not brought to crisis themselves, and equally of the manner in which the financial crisis has endangered institutional support of scholarship and pedagogy. In fact, the superlative production of analyses of crisis of late has been such, the self-reflexive articulations of crisis so dense and variable, that the connotations of 'crisis' itself seem under pressure – in danger of being emptied, itself a signifier to dissect. As Roitman (2014) puts it:

> 'Crisis is a blind spot that enables the production of knowledge. It is a distinction that [...] is not seen as simply paradox, but rather as an error or deformation – a discrepancy between the world and knowledge of the world. But if we take crisis to be a blind spot, or a distinction, which makes certain things visible and others invisible, it is merely an a priori. Crisis is claimed, but it remains a latency; it is never itself explained because it is further reduced to other elements, such as capitalism, economy, neoliberalism, finance, politics, culture, subjectivity. In that sense crisis is not a condition to be observed (loss of meaning, alienation, faulty knowledge); it is an observation that produces meaning' (p. 39).

It therefore seems that 'crisis' is a signifier pushed into the anteriority of knowledge formation – and the context in which this is observed is not immaterial to the observation. Crisis both *guides* the registering and analysis of something out there, and at the self-same moment *enables* such analysis to turn upon itself – to explore how the signifier 'crisis' is enunciated and recognised and perhaps constituted as such in analysis.

Investigation of this self-reflexive turn in discourses of crisis, as much as a crisis of analysis as an analysis of crisis, seems a useful way into considering media representations of the financial and political crisis of 2007–2008. Media Studies, as the discipline devoted to analysing media representation, has the great advantage of being alert both to the object that is represented in media and to the media representation of that object (the modus of representation) at the same time. By holding media representation in focus, as an object of study, Media Studies might appear to render itself transparent – become a pure field of analytical application and practice. And yet, that could easily change: its focus on representation in media (let us say, in news discourse) could also lay bare its own representational practices and methodologies as medium (academic discourse), around the fulcrum of enunciating 'crisis'. That is where the tensions of *representing* crisis lie: in representation, and in the representation of representation.

Representation

The following observations are confined to analytical and researched accounts (academic accounts) of news media coverage of the financial crisis of 2007–2008.

Much of this research has understandably been concerned with two key and interlinked aspects of news media: presenting information (how information is selected, focalised, narrativised, interpreted) and making information public (usually considered in terms of access to information and the kinds of accountability that may be entailed). Methods for researching both – separately or relatedly – have been variously debated; this is not the place to summarise those. Two metaphors have characterised analysis of the coverage in question, and generally underpins a great deal of Media Studies research: 'framing' of news and, regarding the relationship to the public, news media as 'watchdog'. More or less rigorous definitions of these metaphors and the metaphorised objects (addressing questions like 'what is objective information?' and 'what is newsworthy and what is the public interest?') are too familiar to call for pause. But they are worth pausing on: these metaphors have an immediate suggestiveness which works through and sometimes despite specialist definition. In a way, their immediate thrust is indicative of the conceptual horizon against which the majority of Media Studies investigations are now undertaken. Metaphorically, 'framing' suggests that there is a picture (here the picture is newsworthy information) which is *not* interfered with, which is brought to view with its nuances and integrity intact, by means of strategies which work around it. Similarly metaphorically, a 'watchdog' alerts its charge (the public, news consumers) to dangers (here that means giving informing about risks to and practices against the public interest) and may even defend its charge from danger (that is, holding those endangering the public interest accountable); importantly, a 'watchdog' does not attack its charge or assist those endangering its charge. These (and such) metaphors therefore set up a

normative horizon of how news should be presented and for what purpose – an ethics of what news ought to be – against which Media Studies analysis is undertaken: in brief, news media should not interfere with the substance of information, and should not work against the public interest (in both senses of 'interest', as serving *the public's curiosity* and as working for *the public's health*). There is a normative tension there between representation and responsibility: these are not necessarily coeval and call for a balancing act. Interfering with the substance may sometimes and arguably work in the public interest and not interfering may work against; and yet, not interfering and at the same time working for the public interest are often assumed as pre-subscribed norms for media and in analysing media texts.

The tensions between these assumed norms are constantly tested in routinized academic investigation without quite being articulated. These norms prefigure a kind of ideal media condition in terms of which analysis can be normatively inclined. So, a great deal of media analysis is devoted to showing how 'framing' does not simply present the objective picture, but massages, distorts, and even constitutes it at times – indeed, that framing is actually more like (metaphorically) looking through a veil or lens or different grids, and that the implicit ideal of unframed news is an impossibility and the normative horizon of objective news a chimera (message is massage). And similarly, also that the media as 'watchdog' could work against the public interest and sometimes understand public interest in ways that the public may not accept – so that the normative standard here is unstable and set by the agent that is supposed to be regulated by it. Media Studies analysts usually foreground departures from the presumed ideal of news *habitually*, without interrogating their own normative presumptions – in other words, such norms tacitly underpin routinized methodologies for research. However, when media discourses converge on narrativizing 'crisis' the normative presumptions come under particular pressure, and become more amenable to explicit interrogation. Arguably, media discourses perceive and declare crises so often and in so many ways that such discourses unravel continuously. Nevertheless, the sheer intensity (within specific news outlets) and density (across media outlets of different orientations) of coverage of the 2007–2008 financial crisis – reflecting the perceived scale of the crisis – meant that these norms became almost opaque, tending to move from horizon to foreground in analysis, exposed as a constitutive part of exploring the crisis itself. In that process the tacit presumptions and ambivalences in the Media Studies analyst's approach to and methods for examining news media became more examinable than usual. The plethora of such analyses addressed to the plethora of media reports dealing with a Choate issue threw forth, as it were, the assumptions of news reporters/writers *and* of Media Studies academics in a mutually-clarifying fashion.

A significant amount of Media Studies research now follows a fairly routinized and

apparently empirically-grounded method, with numerous examples for coverage of the 2007–2008 financial crisis. This consists in the following steps: (1) choosing a thematic media discourse context, such as 'financial crisis'; (2) focusing on one geopolitical domain (typically a nation-state) or selecting two or more such domains for comparison; (3) identifying representative media outlets for those domains; (4) extrapolating texts relevant to the discourse context for the selected domain(s) and outlet(s) – namely, gathering a text corpus; (5) making some anticipatory hypotheses about the kinds of discourse features and contextual relations for the context that may be found within the corpus; (6) taking methodological decisions about how those features and relations may be disposed for analysis across the corpus (typically, by choosing key words or identifying discourse strategies which cohere with the defined terms); (7) coding the corpus accordingly, and generating data by statistical collation thereof; (8) undertaking regression analysis of the data obtained, so as to test the anticipatory hypotheses; and (9) thereby finding or failing to find confirmation of those hypotheses, and accordingly presenting 'conclusions' in the form of tentative or sound generalisations. Occasionally, the quantitative thrust of this method is kept at a basic level (especially at steps 7 and 8), and simple numeric observations are used to support qualitative analysis. Routinized recourse to this method has several ostensible advantages: it allows for apparent coherence between very differently contextualised researches using roughly the same method, and therefore scope for accumulative research; the relation between context and corpus seems to be empirically valid, especially if the scale of the corpus is apparently large (though 'large' is a relative term, and nothing is large enough to allow *conclusive* inferences if the notion of comprehensive corpora is kept in mind); and the numerate presentation of the research material and quantitative way of analysing it suggests that the investigator's ideological proclivities will not affect findings. To a not insignificant degree, conviction in such advantages derives from the mixed provenance of this method in linguistics. It is essentially a wedding of corpus linguistic methods to describe domain-specific language usage (especially from the 1950s) and methods for Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of applied strategies for mediating social relations through language (mainly from the 1990s). The rationale of the former is largely based on a scale of (aspiring to comprehensive) data elicitation for specific language usage contexts, typically focused on the lexical unit (such as, for English, the very large and later numerous corpora of the Survey of English Usage and the International Corpus of English). The rationale of CDA methods are grounded on qualitative (sometimes conjoined with quantitative) analysis of the post-sentential structures of language in specific contexts and categories of texts. These two rationales do not necessarily cohere when brought together, and arguably could undermine each other – though, as in Media Studies, increasingly routinized recourse to both together are found widely in sociolinguistic research.

However, a cursory survey of Media Studies researches following (at least some of) the 9-step method, especially for a superlatively productive media context like the 2007–2008 financial crisis, casts doubt on the method's putative advantages – and serves to put such routinized investigative practice itself into an interrogative perspective.

Slipping between methodological rationales, every point in the 9-step method which allows for a choice to be made also allows for *distinctive* authorial preferences – that is to say, analyst's preferences – to be inserted, despite the appearance of methodological regularity and objectivity: choice of thematic discourse context, geopolitical domain, media outlets, hypotheses for testing, keywords for coding, variables in regression analysis. Since significant degrees of variation are evident *between different analysts* for the same selected delimitation in any given step, such studies seldom have an objective or accumulative advantage. This kind of shrouded intervention by analyst's preferences constitutes academic 'framing' of the media representations (media framing) under investigation. This becomes particularly evident when several papers on the same theme (financial crisis) can be compared for each of these steps. It would be tedious to go through demonstrations step-by-step, so let me pause on one: choice of geopolitical domain – typically nation-state. Several analyses of media coverage of the 2007–2008 financial crisis compared reportage across several domains, and each articulated the domains, and outlined what is comparable across domains, with distinct emphases. Thus, Strömbäck, Jenssen and Aalberg's (2012) study of how media coverage of the crisis across six European countries impinged on public knowledge, placed these countries in three categories: liberal welfare state, conservative welfare state and social democratic welfare state. Halsall (2013) compared media coverage of the crisis in Germany and the UK in 2008–2009 by taking the former as representative of conventionally different (though converging) models of liberalism, the Anglo-American neoliberal and the Ordo-liberal. In exploring whether media reportage was itself an encouraging factor in the credit crunch, Wisniewski and Lambe (2013) disposed their findings according to three national domains (UK, USA, Canada), with the assumption that their being Anglophone offers a particular basis for comparison. Robertson (2014) compared television coverage by placing outlets in the Anglo-Saxon world (BBC and CNN) and the 'counter-hegemonic' Russian (RT) and Middle Eastern (Al Jazeera) contexts. A study of newspaper coverage of financial crisis and parliamentary responses in Spain and the Netherlands by Vliegenthart and Montes (2014) focused on differences in political and media systems in the two countries respectively. So did, but with a distinctive emphasis on policy regarding autonomy and public service broadcasting, a study of Spanish and Swedish reportage by Ibarra and Nord (2014). In each of these, not only are the selected domains focalised in quite different ways for analytical purposes (with different reductions of complexity), the bases for comparison are grounded in distinctively

ideologically-loaded (largely liberal) analysts' perspectives. Media coverage according to domains are mapped to varying mappings of international geopolitics, with analysts deciding whether to call upon globalisation theories, democratisation theories, regime theory, systems theory, neorealism according to their political inclinations.

Other Media Studies analysts used the same method to focus on how a particular national domain was represented by foreign or global (or transnational) media outlets – almost always presuming a clear separation of the latter from local outlets. The presumptive construction of such an inside/outside binary arises from ideological subscription too (with varying degrees of nationalism). In fact, in such cases it seems that a familiar frame of media representation (inside/outside; domestic/global; national/international; ours/theirs) becomes coterminous with academic framing – it is difficult to discern where the frame is constructed, or whether perhaps it has not always been pre-constructed. In reference to the 2007–2008 financial crisis, this mode of framing geopolitical domains and international relations was used variously by Media Studies researchers, for example: Chartier (2010) on how Iceland was represented in 'foreign' media; Tzogopoulos (2013) on representation of the Greek crisis in the 'international press'; Touri and Rogers (2013) on UK media coverage of Greece; Kaitatzi-Whitlock (2014) on the Greek crisis in 'transnational media'; Soto (2014) examining the 'reputation' of Spain in various 'global business newspapers and magazines'; and so on. In such researches, nationalist sentiment constructed the inside and outside with different emphases according to the strength of analysts' feelings. These differences were especially in evidence where media representation was regarded as being part of the crisis – markedly, for instance, in Greece. Thus, Tzogopoulos' (2013) study of stereotyping in the international press observed in an understated fashion that: 'Within this context, international newspapers were often entrapped in the logic of overgeneralization' (p. 113) – and ultimately concluded with lessons to be learned by Greece, since 'Those who have the fate of the country in their own hands are the Greek people themselves' (p. 165). On a contrary note, Kaitatzi-Whitlock (2014) found that the Greek crisis was represented in EU political forums and in transnational news media with a mutually supportive agenda which disabled Greek agency: 'Representations of the Greek crisis constitute particular cases of an institutional "intra-European racism." [...] Blame for corruption was attributed exclusively to Greeks, thereby purging the true corruptors: national monopoly champion companies in the North. It aimed also at punishing Greek citizens materially and intimidating them morally. This was a veritable *media war*' (p. 35). Both agreed however that Greek media had often reiterated similar frames as international/transnational media.

A number of researches based on (at least some of) the 9-step method focused on single geopolitical domains, and on news outlets representative of that domain. Shorn of a comparative dimension, not all such analyses necessarily framed their focused domains in

general ways – but some did. In the latter, given knowledge of national characteristics were brought to bear upon the hypotheses to be tested, for example: 'Sweden is typically considered a democratic corporatist country with strong journalistic professionalism', in Falasca's (2014, p. 588) investigation into media intervention in politics there during the crisis; Romania as an 'Eastern European country' in contradistinction from the 'West', in Vincze's (2014, p. 568) account of how the crisis featured as a local media framing device. But even where this was not explicitly done, and the national context was only circumstantially registered, the presumption of inside knowledge – of the analyst's location – came with its own relatively slight ideological tilt: as in studies of media coverage of the crisis in Portugal (Sousa and Santos, 2014), Ireland (Cawley, 2012; Rafter, 2014), Belgium (De Bruycker and Walgrave, 2014), Germany (Lischka, 2014), and elsewhere.

The kind of interference of the analyst's own framing devices (focalisations, ideological proclivities) that appears in one step – selecting geopolitical domains – of the 9-step method radiates across other steps involving analysts' choices: selection of news outlets, hypotheses for testing, choice of coding terms, and so forth. The variety of analysts' constructions involved at any specific step means that, despite appearances, such researches render transparent accounting of the media field and accumulative observations unlikely. In fact, the numerate aspects of the method (coding, data collation, regression analysis) could also be compromised by a tendency towards circular argument. If the analyst's framing plays into the formulation of hypotheses to be tested, and then feeds into coding and analysis, then the conclusions tend to appear more or less self-fulfilling, or appear to be nuanced only in degree of self-confirmation. So, for instance, when Lischka (2014) presented the hypothesis that 'different revenue incentives cause differences within the content of public versus commercial news outlets' (p. 550), and then set up a process of preparing a corpus, coding, regressive analysis for a set of selected news outlets in specifically the German domain in the context of the financial crisis, the general conclusion that 'Overall, results confirm a structural bias [...] caused by the character of the news outlets' (p. 561) seemed to be preordained by the investigative method. The more nuanced meeting of expectations and unexpected findings in some respects operated within the parameters of general confirmation, derived from a methodological pre-determination of terms. Further, given the limits of the analyst's choices, the conclusions appeared to be too ambitiously generalised: the hypothesis and confirmed conclusion seemed more all-embracing than the limitations of the method allows. Much the same could be said of most of the papers following this method cited above, and other similar papers: Cawley's (2012) demonstration that in Irish crisis-coverage 'framing contests [that] tends to lean towards conflict and binary opposites' (p. 603) were repeatedly deployed; De Bruycker and Walgrave's (2014) three expectations (p. 89) about how media works upon issue ownership in Belgian politics; Baden and

Springer's (2014) investigation of the 'limitations on plurality' in public interpretations of the crisis through online comments on news; Falasca's (2014) anticipation and confirmation of 'politics as a media strategy' framing and 'conflict framing' (p. 586) for Swedish political news during the crisis period; and so on.

I am not suggesting that the hypotheses offered and the conclusions reached in such research were not valid – they mostly are, I suspect, and certainly seem persuasive and instinctively plausible. The point here is that the routinized methodology does not do as much as is claimed. In fact, a close look at this routinized method suggests that media framings and Media Studies analyst's framings of media framings work in a symbiotic relationship; and that the Media Studies analyst's framings are as quietly/subliminally deployed as they claim the media framings to be. But the kind of research I have been considering thus far seems to have been practiced with little anxiety about its own ambivalences.

In the less routinized precincts of Media Studies apropos the financial crisis, the operations and structures of the media – and tendentiously of Media Studies as a practice – were more searchingly contemplated, with a sense of the crisis out there imploding into a crisis of media representation and into the methods for analysing such representation. Inevitably this involved reconsideration of foundational questions in Media Studies: about the role of media in relation to the public (the 'watchdog' metaphor cropped up often); on what the public is and how the news constitutes it; and on the relation between 'specialists' and 'laypersons' (in the financial crisis, in media representation of the crisis, in Media Studies).

Relevantly, Starkman's (2014) book-length study of why the media failed as a 'watchdog' in the lead up to the financial crisis of 2007–2008 presented a strong historicist argument. Phases of 'accountability' and 'access' reporting (primarily American and British) through the twentieth century and onwards were charted here, on the understanding that 'access reporting tells readers what powerful actors *say* while accountability reporting tells readers what they *do*' (p. 10). Starkman argues that, in relation to moves in the financial sector that led to the crisis, accountability reporting seemed to fade after 2003 to be replaced by access reporting. Consequently, financial and political elites who benefitted from the deregulations and risk-management strategies that led to the crisis were able to embed their ideology and worldview through mainstream media, and to mislead the public till crisis-point was reached. The conditions of the news industry, Starkman avers, explain the shift towards access reporting, with digitisation (which encourages disinvestment from conventional news production norms) and financialisation (restructuring for profit maximisation) as key factors. So, on the one hand:

'Nearly all the advantages in journalism rest with access. The stories are generally shorter and quicker to do. Further, the interests of access reporting and its subjects often run in harmony. Powerful leaders are, after all, the sources for much of access reporting's product. The harmonious relationship can lead to a synergy between reporter and source. Aided by access reporting, the source provides additional scoops. As one effective story follows another, access reporting is able to serve a news organisation's production needs, which tend to be voracious and unending. Access reporting thus wins support within the news hierarchy' (p. 141).

On the other hand: 'Accountability reporting requires time, space, expense, risk and stress. It makes few friends' (p. 141). The underlying concept of news media's relationship with the public (the 'watchdog' metaphor) here, with its normative horizon of ideal democratic and citizenship responsibility, has been subject to influential crisis narratives for several decades (particularly since Herman and Chomsky, 1988, and Blumler and Gurevitch, 1995) – a crisis in the mutually-sustained structuring of both the industry and the content of news media. In this longer view, Starkman's account of the 'news about the news' of the 2007–2008 financial crisis updated the situation – though with, as he notes (p. 106), more faith in the marginal media's occasional ability to hold power elites to account than Herman and Chomsky had (including in eventually breaking news about the 2007–2008 financial crisis, discussed in ch. 8). Starkman thus conjoined the crisis of the financial and political sectors with the crisis in the media sector, radiating across and cutting into each other. And he implicitly raised again those key questions for Media Studies analysts about what the media does in and to the public sphere, along with what it represents for and to the public.

With media coverage of the 2007–2008 financial crisis in view, discussion of these foundational questions of Media Studies have been revisited occasionally – typically either by drawing upon Lippmann's (1930 [1925]) and Dewey's (1927) formulations on the public in democratic contexts and the role that knowledge plays therein (the Lippmann-Dewey debate), or upon Habermas' (1962 [1989]) conception of the public sphere and deliberative democracy. Scholarly discussions of these questions after 2008 have mainly sought to fine-tune earlier formulations, particularly in view of the structural changes in the media industry described by Starkman, and others (see Winseck and Jin, 2012; Aalberg and Curran, 2012). Thus, for instance, Davis (2012) argued that the 2007–2008 crisis coverage shows that the media propagated 'discourses, narratives and myths about finance itself to *financial and associated stakeholder elites*' (p. 241). But, according to Davis, this has played a supportive rather than primary role in the crisis itself, because the media works at a cultural and ideological level rather than directly upon the economy – and works more effectively on the elites who make decisions rather than on the public at large. With reference to the same context, VenderVeen (2010) took a

somewhat contrary view of the media's relationship with the public, emphasising 'their educative role both in providing conceptual frameworks for understanding problems and in building capacities for acting to address them' (p. 172). For VanderVeen, coverage of the 2007–2008 financial crisis suggested some general proposals for underscoring the media's educative role.

An interesting drift in this context is found in academic mulling over the distinction between 'laypersons' and 'specialists'/'experts' made during the financial crisis, markedly in the media; inevitably, this potentially turns the gaze of Media Studies analysts also on themselves and their discipline. Roitman (2014) observed that the layperson/expert distinction that surfaced so extensively after 2007–2008 'relies on subject positions that are not tenable' (p. 5). However, in general, financial crisis discourses have tended to harden rather than blur the distinction. Some effort has even been made to establish objective differences between laypersons' and experts' apprehensions of the crisis, by using something like the 9-step method outlined above but with survey questionnaires (from a pool of respondents in Austria) rather than media texts (see Gangle *et al.*, 2012). Researchers have severally observed that precisely such a distinction often framed the financial crisis in news media, so as to legitimise the establishment view and its neoliberal ideology. With reference to two radio programmes in Ireland, for instance, Rafter (2014) found that the call on 'expertise' to comment upon and interpret developments during the financial crisis fell into several official and bureaucracy-friendly categories: 'someone of great learning with the authority to give opinions'; 'the star or celebrity pundits who are [...] favoured by programme-makers for their ability to engage in speculation and conjecture'; and the 'journalist expert' – in keeping with 'the movement from descriptive journalism where the reporter is an observer to interpretative reporting where the reporter operates as an analyst' (p. 601). In that obfuscation of boundaries between reporting and analysing, there is arguably a nod towards Media Studies analysts – a suggestion that Media Studies needs to contemplate its own understanding of expertise, its own specialist practices and norms.

That media practice (undertaking media representation, working in media industries) equips persons with expertise which is valued highly in academic Media Studies is widely accepted and institutionally recognised. The discipline naturally has a strong applied orientation, with pedagogy designed to facilitate future employment in media industries. But that circumstance opens unresolved questions for analytical research in Media Studies. Is it possible then that convergences may gradually develop between the media industry and Media Studies academic institutions, much as those described by Starkman between access reporters and their elite sources? May media representation and Media Studies analysis of that representation develop a mutually supportive framework – has such a framework perhaps developed already in routinized investigative methods?

Does Media Studies have a 'watchdog' role to play in relation to the public which is distinct from the media's 'watchdog' role? How salient are the two 'watchdog' roles in conceptualising the democratic public sphere? ... Ultimately, are journalistic expertise and academic expertise the same, or should there be clearly defined gradations of distinction?

Rather than a neat concluding statement, raising such questions seems the appropriate way to inconclusively draw these notes to an end.

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The Greek Crisis in the Media:
Stereotyping in the International Press

Media representations of the crisis in the Eurozone, as well as elite and neoliberal discourses, have often promoted national stereotypes and the idea that the crisis is largely due to the problematic national, cultural characteristics of certain countries, such as Greece and the other so-called PIIGS – Portugal, Italy, Ireland and Spain. Greeks in particular have been represented as essentially lazy, corrupt, irrational and excessively greedy or consumerist, destructive and dangerous not just to themselves but to the rest of Europe as well.

A critical, scholarly approach to exploring the issue of stereotypes such as these would be expected to draw from the rich literature in the fields of media or cultural studies and to explore them as ideological constructs which work to justify unequal power relations.

Research on stereotypes usually involves analysis of their discursive construction and essentialising, reductionist and naturalising operations. It includes investigating their embeddedness in historical, economic and political narratives, popular culture, and common sense. Stereotypes are also explored in terms of how they support racism, sexism and other ideological projects such as colonialism, neo-colonialism, ethno-nationalism, militarism, and neoliberalism.

Rather surprisingly, despite the title, *The Greek Crisis in the Media: Stereotyping in the International Press* is not contextualised within this body of work and in fact does not actually focus on media stereotypes.

Instead, it implicitly reiterates certain elite, neoliberal and mainstream media discourses which claim that the particular crisis in Greece is largely the result of the national cultural characteristics and shortcomings of Greeks, rather than deeply systemic, ideological, political and transnational in nature. Although the author claims that overgeneralisations are inaccurate, and that all Greeks should not be blamed for the actions of their politicians, the book implicitly offers support to an understanding of the crisis and Greece in terms of stereotypes. Ultimately, the understandings presented throughout the book seem to be mobilised in order to promote the highly contested IMF/ECB/EU programme and the neoliberal project it involves for Greece.

The main argument of the book, as the author states in the Preface, is that the crisis is 'principally a domestic problem' (p. xiv) due to a great number of 'pathogenies' in governance, politics and society. In keeping with this main argument, the author claims that negative media representations of Greece in the international press are also the fault of the country itself. Journalists simply exposed pathogenies or developed their reports with information from pathogenic sources. The book also includes normative proposals for the resolution of the crisis, as well as for its media coverage, to be adopted by Greek politicians, the EU, journalists, and Greek youth.

An overview of the roots of the crisis is presented and discussed in terms of pathogenies. The concept of pathogeny is never quite defined; however, it refers to a very wide range of problems in governance, politics and society more generally. Domestic pathogenies in governance involve maladministration and incompetence, government overspending, clientelism, bureaucracy, and support for oligarchies. They also include what the author has called an 'impunity culture' (p. 141), or the failure of weak governments to apply laws and bring perpetrators of illegal actions to justice. The perpetrators of such actions include oil smugglers, corrupt civil servants, media owners, demonstrators and protestors who block roads and occupy public buildings. The political sphere is also seen as exceptionally pathogenic and as completely lacking in 'virtue' (p. 141). Greek politicians are characterised as self-delusional (p. 144) and are discussed in terms of hypocrisy, (p. 137) and immorality (p. 141).

Other more widespread pathogenies discussed are corruption in the form of *fakelaki* (bribes) and *rousfeti* (political favours) as well as resistance to reform and change. The author also seems to imply that certain aspects of political action and protest, such as occupations, are unique to Greece – 'bizarre' and 'original' (p. 141).

These pathogenies are also to blame, according to the author, for the occasional, extremely negative coverage of the crisis in Greece by the press in Europe and the USA. From a sample of 15 leading newspapers in Britain, France, Germany, Italy and the USA, including conservative and liberal broadsheets and tabloids, the author identified four main themes covered during 2009–2012: the status of the Greek problem and its potential impact on the Eurozone and EU, its roots, potential remedies, and social dimensions of the crisis. He found that, although occasional overgeneralisations, inaccuracies and stereotypes did appear, the often very negative reports on Greece in the international press were not the result of bad journalism or due to particular motivations of journalists. Instead, they simply reflected the extreme pathogenies which were being covered. They were also shaped by information fed to them by the Greek government and politicians. The book concludes that 'foreign journalists have, as a whole, reported developments in the Hellenic Republic in a clear, comprehensive, and fair way' (p. 155), and thus, claims made by certain Greek government authorities and politicians as to the unfairness of international media reports are unfounded.

The normative proposals presented for a resolution of the crisis mainly focus on an improved manner of dealing with Greek pathogenies. For example, journalists should be 'careful and accurate' (p. 162) in reports on the possibility of a Greek default or exit from the Eurozone, and improve reports using their recently acquired knowledge of Greece and of the painful situation that Greek citizens are experiencing. Greek politicians should 'stop blaming others', (p. xiv) 'work hard' (*ibid.*) and modernise the economy, or implement reforms such as privatisations. The EU should push more actively for such institutional changes, rather than promote austerity as an alternative to the reforms which Greek politicians are unable to implement. Finally, Greek youth must postpone emigration in order to fight a democratic battle by becoming politically active as pro-European leaders through 'conferences, debates with ordinary citizens, media exposure and increased participation in civil society' (p. 166). This is necessary, in order to 'oust the status quo of old-guard politicians' (*ibid.*), protect the country's European orientation and bring about a democratic revolution.

Multiple sources are drawn from throughout the book – such as government and EU documents, materials from other international organisations, news articles, interviews conducted with journalists, policymakers and bankers as well as the author's own insights as a journalist and media commentator on behalf of the Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP). However, discussion of both the Greek context and how it has been represented is largely contextualised within elite political, institutional and hegemonic media narratives, rather than academic and scholarly work on the issues. The book seems to promote the viewpoints these narratives express in a taken for granted way, and often reaches conclusions based on speculation.

One of the most important problems in the media research presented is that the terms used to assess the international media are never defined. Thus, it is unclear what unfair or fair reporting means in this context, as well as the meaning of concepts such as quality, clarity, comprehensiveness, stereotype and distortion which are used throughout the book. It is also unclear how the selected media texts were analysed according to these terms. Although the author states that the qualitative analysis was based on the logic of framing, which provided insights into the themes journalists focused on in their coverage of Greece, it is unclear how exactly this method shaped analysis or assessment of the news reports. Framing as a method involves more than simply identifying broad themes in news coverage of the crisis. It includes textual analysis of elements such as language, narratives, images and context and provides insight not just on which themes are covered by the media, but also on how they are represented as well. Although an overview of themes in the international press may be a useful starting point for work on representations of the crisis, in and of itself, without further textual analysis it is quite limited. Overall, the discussion of the international press coverage is more descriptive than analytical, somewhat simplistic and overgeneralised.

The concept of domestic pathogenies is part of elite and neoliberal discourses which have a long history in the Greek public sphere and echo colonial stereotypes. A pathogeny is anything which does not promote or embody the order and predictability assumed to characterise an idealised, homogenised Europe or West, as well as civilisation itself. These discourses depoliticise and culturalise understandings of Greek society and the crisis.

For example, most of the pathogenies referred to in governance and politics are deeply political and systemic in nature. They directly or indirectly serve the interests and dominance of political and economic elites and their cronies. Yet here they seem to be largely discussed in terms of a cultural deficit of rationality, morality and virtue. Protest and occupation, as well as resistance to neoliberal reforms are also implied to be irrational, incomprehensible and illegitimate Greek pathogenies, even though during 2009–2012, these so called bizarre and original elements, actually swept across Europe as well as other places in the world.

It is also rather striking that the author implies the government should have intervened even more intensely against such forms of political action. During the period in question, the frequency and magnitude of the well-documented police violence against peaceful protestors was in fact intense.

The solutions to the problems in Greece are also discussed in depoliticised and cultural terms. The IMF/ECB/EU programme and supervision of Greece is uncritically presented as a taken for granted solution to the crisis, rather than a deeply political and ideological project which is highly contested both in Greece and internationally, even by mainstream economists and other experts. In fact the author states, rather than argues, that it is the incomplete or unsuccessful application of this programme, due to the domestic pathogenies – not its targets, measures and ultimate objectives – which have resulted in the harsh austerity measures and suffering of Greek citizens. The implication is that pathogenies, or cultural shortcomings, must be addressed in order for the crisis to be successfully resolved.

On the one hand, this must involve a moral, rational and virtuous approach to work and governance, on the part of Greek government and politicians. On the other hand, the author seems to be saying that other cultural changes must also take place so that neoliberal reform and change will be embraced rather than resisted by the Greek people.

The author also claims that positive change in Greece will only take place through the work of a younger and pro-EU generation which must take the place of the old guard politicians in order to protect the European orientation of the country and create a democratic revolution.

However, by mentioning that the battle for change will be fought through 'conferences, debates, the media and participation in civil society' (p. 166) the author implies that it will not involve political or ideological contestation, but instead,

professional and volunteer-based activities. In other words, it will involve activities defined by elites which it seems will fight against the pathogenies which currently work as obstacles to the neoliberal project and the IMF/ECB/EU programme. Neither are discussed in political terms. Instead, the impression given is that they are taken for granted as the only solution.

Overall, the impression given by the book to this reader is that its goal was to promote elite, neoliberal understandings of the crisis and its resolution, rather than to make a case for them, or to engage in critical scholarly work on the crisis in Greece and its representations in the media. In doing so, media stereotypes have implicitly been reinforced, rather than explored or challenged.

Having said that, this is still an interesting and useful book for anyone interested in how the crisis and its resolution have been constructed through elite and neoliberal discourses. It is also a useful resource for tracing the developments between the Greek government and the IMF/ECB/EU during 2009–2012. The great number of news articles compiled and referred to are also valuable as a basis for further exploration of how the crisis has been represented in the European and US press.

A critical reading of this book should also be of interest to those engaged in scholarship on Cypriot media and public spheres. It will provide food for thought on how national stereotypes with roots in colonial discourses are implicitly used to promote neoliberal understandings of the crisis and its resolution. It may also be useful as a reference point for thinking about how the Eurozone crisis in Cyprus has been discussed in Cypriot mediaspheres, as well as in mediaspheres across Europe and the region.

KRINI KAFIRIS

Is Europe Listening to Us?
Successes and Failures of EU Citizen Consultations

This book probes into the question that has captured policy-makers and citizens alike: how to bridge the gap between the European Union (EU) and those it is to represent? The more general debate on the democratic legitimacy of the European Union and its possible shortcomings – what has been coined as democratic deficit – is so lively that some have described it as 'crowded waters' (Kohler-Koch and Rittberger, 2007).

The editors of this volume have, however, found a niche in this debate. Authors have thus been asked to examine the steps and measures that have been undertaken at EU level to engage EU citizens into EU affairs. The question that is raised is therefore whether 'experiments' in citizen participation do in fact offer good opportunities for 'transnational political practices'. This then is linked to the very topical question of whether these new types of transnational forums could actually 'substantiate' European citizenship. In this vein the general objective of this book is to evaluate the 'legitimizing potential' of Deliberative Citizens Involvement Projects (DCIPs).

Against this background the book is divided into a contextual section and several empirical chapters then zoom in on some selected DCIPs such as transnational citizens' forums and the deliberative opinion poll EuroPolis. The third section takes a more bird's eye view by drawing lessons from the EU experiments and by adopting a comparative approach on 'deliberative designs across the globe'.

The authors are very renowned scholars in the field, both from within and outside the European Union. The fact that the book includes a foreword by Viviane Reding, at the time Vice-President of the Commission, reflects the fact that the audience of this book is to extend beyond academia. It is noteworthy that some authors were in fact involved in the implementation of DCIPs, which of course means that they have first-hand experience, but this is seen by the editors as possibly 'nurturing a legitimate element of suspicion' (p. 13).

So what is the balance sheet? Is Europe actually listening to its citizens?

Here the verdict seems to be more 'glass half empty than glass half full'. On the one hand the empirical case studies reflect that the newly introduced instruments have the potential to strengthen the civic dimension of EU citizenship. Those citizens that were in

fact involved in these endeavours not only expressed that they were satisfied with the way these instruments work, but also testified that they gained improved knowledge on the functioning of the EU in general.

On the other hand there seems to be a gap between claim and reality (p. 30). Contrary to what was proclaimed in the so-called 'reflection period' which followed the rejection of the Lisbon Treaty, there has been no paradigm shift in EU communication policy, which was to lead to the emergence of a European public sphere and a more deliberative democracy.

Moreover, authors identify several shortcomings when it comes to the design and implementation of DCIPs themselves. These include the limited inclusion of citizens of all walks of life into these new instruments, the limits of multi-lingual debates (which lead to the predominance of English, given that no translation is provided) and the fact that the impact of these initiatives on EU decision-making is unclear and unpredictable.

Is Europe Listening to Us? is an edited volume. Although edited volumes do offer the opportunity of bringing together several authors and viewpoints, they suffer from the danger that each chapter examines separate questions. In this case, however, authors do refer to each other's chapters and also reflect on each other's findings. This makes the book a coherent whole. This coherence could have been heightened even more by way of a concluding chapter where some of the main findings are examined and some of the fundamental questions revisited that were raised at the outset.

This is to some extent done in the introduction but we have no clear response to the question, for example, of whether some of the initiatives lead to a 'substantiation' of European citizenship. What is more the editors have not sketched a research agenda, which could be done rather easily given that there are several open questions.

This does not take away from the fact that this book is a comprehensive contribution to the debate that extends our focus beyond the EU's polity.

CHRISTINE NEUHOLD

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Capricious Borders:
Minority, Population and Counter-Conduct between Greece and Turkey

Olga Demetriou
Berghahn Books (New York /Oxford, 2013), xiii + 226 pp.
ISBN: 978-0-85745-898-8

Although the study of borders has always been central in disciplines such as Geography and International Relations, in the past few decades an analytical shift has taken place in social sciences aiming to move beyond dominant conceptualisations that focused on borders as predominantly geo-political entities with a central role in inter-state relations. In this new direction, borders have been re-theorised, for instance, as materialities (and materialisations) of state-building, nationalism and the production of ethnicity and 'otherness' but also as sites of resistance, contestation and affect. Demetriou's 'Capricious Borders' makes an important contribution to such discussions while it extends and interrogates them by shifting attention to the relations between borders and processes of 'minoritisation'. The focus here is on the Turkish-speakers of North-eastern Greece (Western Thrace), who live close to the border between Greece and Turkey and whose minoritisation is traced back to the Treaty of Lausanne (1923).

The book is an anthropological study based on long-term fieldwork in Gümülcine – as it is called by the Turkish speakers – and Komotini – as it is called in Greek –, one of the major cities in the Northeast of Greece. Demetriou conducted the main part of the research in the late 1990s through interviews, participant observation and meticulous archival research and she has followed up with subsequent visits to the area in the 2000s. She gives a very vivid image of what life 'in the margins of the state' involves through evoking accounts of places, buildings and individual stories, without ever neglecting to locate these in the broader picture of state-building, bureaucracy and politics in Greece. And even though anthropologists are not always passionate proponents of statistics and graphs, Demetriou demonstrates with the thorough analysis of her archive findings on historical patterns of land sales and marriage how such information can become an exciting and illuminating element of anthropological inquiry when it is skilfully integrated into the ethnographic narrative.

The central task of the book is to examine ways in which 'minority' is produced and conducted through its construction as a 'population' by state discourse and institutional policy-making. It is precisely this device of governmentality, which is highlighted by

Demetriou as an element that pushes us to think about state technologies (such as statistics, law and policing) also as technologies of biopolitics, that determine all aspects of individual life in the minority and become internalised and embodied – and therefore reproduced in the everyday. Minoritisation in this case is a process of subjectivisation that is enabled by the existence and the constant re-drawing of borders in the production of difference and 'otherness'. In this sense, the book not only looks at borders as material realities that produce and mediate particular spatio-temporal experiences but also as conceptual devices, therefore bringing together these two frameworks of analysis that have often been kept separate in border studies. 'Bordering' emerges as a central process here in the way exclusion and inclusion are imagined, narrated and enacted in state mechanisms of conducting the minority. But borders are not static; they have historically been drawn, re-drawn, lifted and re-consolidated, through processes of biopolitics that have often been shifting, inconsistent, arbitrary and contradictory. This is why borders deserve Demetriou's characterisation of 'capricious'.

The technologies of governmentality utilised to control and manage the 'population' materialise the exceptional status of the minority; a group of citizens who are an anomaly in the homogeneity of the national self as articulated in national and state imaginaries. Through rich data and detailed documentation, the book traces the biopolitical applications and manifestations of such mechanisms in various contexts, including land transfers, naming, the politics of genealogy, marriage and state care. Each of the main thematics is covered in an individual chapter, but there is a very good effort to also show how much their combined study reveals about the totalising effect of state conduct on the everyday life of the minority; to the extent that such life becomes 'normal'.

We learn for instance about how legal frameworks and policies have historically affected the land-sale rights of the minority; the statistics show very clearly that although transfer of land from the minority to Greeks has been facilitated, the opposite has been rendered impossible. Shifts in the physical landscape in terms of residence and land ownership are extremely important to consider in understanding emplacement and displacement in an area like Western Thrace where topographical arrangements have been based on ethnic and ethnicising logics. Questions of genealogy are raised in state discourses and policies to evaluate who belongs and who is excluded. The chapter on genealogy focuses on the case of the Pomaks, 'a minority within a minority' as they are often called, who are at different points treated indistinguishably as 'the minority' (together with the Turks and Roma) or as a separate group whose origin and therefore the eligibility to be included is debated and contested – not only by the Greek state but by others within the minority too. This very point highlights one of the main arguments of the book; that while the minority is often homogenised in official discourse and state practices, in reality internal differences emerge and are negotiated constantly. In addition

to assuming 'ethnic' divisions between Turks, Pomaks and Roma, Demetriou's participants also distinguish themselves from other members of their 'community' through a number of binaries, such as 'modern/traditional', 'religious/secular' and 'urban/rural'. However these same individuals often find out that the ways 'state care' is administered at national and local levels necessitate membership in the minority if one seeks to have access to state services and rights. Such contradictions are highlighted in particular in the chapter on 'The Political Life of Marriage' and in discussions of women and the female body as sites of power tightly linked to processes of 'minoritisation'.

The fascinating discussion on naming (and re-naming) relates to all the themes discussed above, since, as colonial and post-colonial theory has highlighted, the right to (re)name often rests with dominant powers and having a name changed can produce displacement for the dominated even though they do not need to move. According to Demetriou, Greece has a long history of nationalising toponymies and Western Thrace was not exempted from techniques through which foreign-sounding areas, city, village and street names were hellenicised. The hellenicisation project has not been considered by its agents always as a re-naming practice; a lot of the new names reflected a re-claiming of toponymies that according to the engineers of the project have always been Greek. Komotini therefore, the Greek name for Gümülcine, has been used to reclaim the Greekness of the city, by those arguing that 'Gümülcine' derives from the Greek word 'Kumutziná' and dismissing other etymological roots of the word in Turkish. But only places that are included in the national symbolic landscape and topography are considered worthy of (re)naming and instances of 'non-naming' are also described and analysed; for instance, a large number of streets in the *mahalles* (the Turkish areas/neighbourhoods) rarely figure in state toponymic projects and have either only a Turkish name or no name at all.

However, the people who are the focus of this research, the Gümülcineli, are not passive inhabitants of conducted physical and social landscapes; a large part of the book is dedicated to the ways they respond to, negotiate and appropriate 'the minority condition'. Some of them prefer to call themselves Turkish to draw distance from the religious content of 'Muslim' and against the insistence of the Greek state to define the minority in religious terms; they speak against the homogenisation of the minority as one community, as discussed before; and they navigate the city being able to switch positions in Greek and Turkish landscapes and materialities, a process that is inventively termed by Demetriou as 'spatial bilingualism'. Not only borders, but people are also capricious, argues the book.

This capriciousness is traced and described in all chapters and in contexts where the technologies of biopolitics in Western Thrace are questioned, negotiated and counter-conducted by the Gümülcineli. It is refreshing that the author chooses to use 'counter-

conduct' instead of 'resistance', a concept that has occasionally been over-stretched in some anthropological work to include very diverse types of agency and has raised issues of 'ethnographic romanticisation'. What is particularly insightful here is the way that counter-conduct as a form of agency is captured not only in those moments when people actively engage in counter-argument or in the types of embodied resistance that come with one's ability to navigate spaces that are designed to be strange to her, but also in those moments where the subversion of state technologies comes out of interactions and experiences in the everyday. This is very well demonstrated in the example of Meral who gets into a 'Greek' taxi to take her to her *mahalla*. She uses the Greek name of the street assuming that this will help the taxi driver, only to hear back that he does not know the street. When her little son who is with her asks her about the conversation, the driver explains to him in Turkish and he then asks Meral if the street is in *Yeni mahalla* (using the Turkish name). Counter-conduct therefore in this example emerges as inter-subjective, as a product of interactions between different agents; the individuals, the landscape and the materialities that define everyday life in Gümülcine.

The book includes a number of such ethnographic snapshots of everydayness, and given the vividness and insightfulness they offer to the account, a reader may be left to desire some more. Demetriou explains in the introduction that the main participants in her research were twenty young Gümülcineli, a number of whom appear in various examples of counter-conduct. The author admits that she is often questioned about how typical these participants are vis-à-vis the rest of the minority; however, she argues against the rationale of 'the typical' that reproduces ideas of minority homogeneity and which she painstakingly tries to deconstruct. This is an absolutely valid argument, although some more biographical information of the protagonists of this book would help the reader not to decide whether these individuals are typical or atypical of an essentialised condition but to further understand whether and how they see themselves as such. A little more detailed life histories could have also thrown further light on some themes raised in the book; for instance, about the minority's transnational connections with Turkey, migration within Greece, the effects of educational policies and the experiences of unemployment and participation in the institutional politics of the minority and Greece.

These however do not detract from a book that is well placed to become an essential reading for anyone interested in the study of borders, minority rights, Greek-Turkish relations and politics in South-eastern Europe more broadly. Western Thrace is a region that is constantly undergoing political, spatial and demographic transformations and Demetriou already highlights in the conclusion and postscript new sets of questions that may guide future research. The increased securitisation of the Greek-Turkish border as a European border to control migration has changed to some extent the ways in which the border is discursively constructed and materially managed and the impact of such changes

on the lives of the minority merit further investigation; not least through continuities in the use of technologies of biopolitics traditionally applied to the minority and now targeted towards migrants, as Demetriou suggests. And although austerity-ridden Greeks have now also become subjects of similar devices of governmentality, it would still be important to further investigate the impact of the crisis on minority rights, administration, political representation and everyday life.

The relevance of the book for Cyprus studies can be highlighted in a number of perspectives. First of all, turbulent events of conflict and war in Cyprus have had significant effects on Greek state-policy and the everyday life of the Western Thracian minority, who have been trapped in what is described as 'the reciprocity problem' between Greece and Turkey – the minority becomes the target of retaliation for the 'enemy's' misachievements. The book in this sense invites more attention to transnational elements of the Cypriot conflict that have not always been adequately acknowledged in historical and political accounts. Moreover, as a Cypriot and someone who has also conducted research in Cyprus, Demetriou draws regularly on Cyprus as a comparable ethnographic context. Some of the technologies of the state described here, such as naming and bordering in the production of difference and 'otherness' will resonate with similar observations and processes in Cyprus helping therefore to identify continuities and disjunctures that will offer a better understanding of the Cypriot context. But the comparative value does not stop there; ethnographic work in Cyprus has demonstrated that although state practices on both sides of the island can be totalising and often deeply divisive, Cypriots, very much like the Gümülcineli, often negotiate, subvert and appropriate them – they are capricious too.

EVROPI CHATZIPANAGIOTIDOU

The Cyprus Issue:
The Four Freedoms in a Member State under Siege

Skoutaris' book on application of the EU 'Internal Market acquis' within the territory of Cyprus has made a timely appearance on the stage of the ongoing debate on impact of the EU external policy on application of the EU *acquis* beyond the EU borders. The book must be lauded for its comprehensive legal assessment and well-structured and sound arguments. Any scholar interested in the 'Cyprus issue' will benefit from the highly interesting set of legal analysis and data presented here.

The book is well structured and logically construed. The study is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 describes the main challenges to the 'Cyprus issue' within legal and political dimensions. Chapter 1 also explains the research methodology applied in this book. In terms of the research approach, the author used methodology relevant to legal, political and historical research. The author followed a 'law in context' approach which means that the book starts with a positivist analysis of the relevant legal provisions of international and EU law as well as the Cypriot legal system. Further the book embarks upon a critique of the EU policy towards the 'Cyprus issue'. In particular the book assesses the EU's pragmatic approach towards functioning of freedoms of the EU Internal Market within territory of one island but two territories with different legal regimes. Furthermore, the book provides a rich historic overview of the 'Cyprus issue' from the birth of the Republic till its accession into the EU in 2004. In conclusion the author criticises the 'overly technical approach' of the EU towards crossing of EU goods at the Cyprus borders and emphasises that 'although the application of the acquis is suspended in the areas not under effective control of the Republic ... [partial application of the EU *acquis* within the territory of Cyprus] .... allowed a limited integration of northern Cyprus within the EU'.

Chapter 2 offers comprehensive analysis within historical, political and legal contexts of the suspension of the EU *acquis* in Northern Cyprus. The first part deals with the historical overview of the creation of the Republic of Cyprus from its birth in the early twentieth century until the Turkish military intervention in 1974 and accession of the Republic of Cyprus to the EU in May 2004. The chapter is accompanied with highly

interesting analysis of 'important political and legal debates from the birth of the Republic to its EU accession'. For example, the chapter deals with objectives and structure of the basic parameters of the UN Comprehensive Settlement Plan and the reasoning for rejection of this plan by Greek Cypriots. The second part of chapter 2 studies legal issues related to the Republic of Cyprus' membership in the EU including the unique case of suspension of the EU *acquis* north of the Green Line in Cyprus in 2004.

Chapter 3 concerns the application of the EU *acquis* in Cyprus after 2004. In particular the author offers a comprehensive legal analysis of the EU citizenship, fundamental rights and free movement of persons. The author argues that derogations from EU law envisaged in the Green Line Regulation allowed the citizens of the Cyprus Republic, who permanently reside in the northern part of the island, to enjoy as far as possible the rights attached to the EU citizenship that are not linked to the EU territory as such. Chapter 4 expands to the domain of free movement of EU goods in Cyprus. It focuses on a legal overview of the relevant EU *acquis* and case law of the Court of Justice of the EU. The author argues that the Green Line Regulation has managed 'to partially but effectively lift the isolation of an area where the ports of entry have been declared closed for over 30 years'. Chapter 5 makes the book work as a whole by drawing together all of the threads identified in the earlier analysis; they elaborate on a general framework of the Cyprus' EU membership for the future settlement plan on Cyprus. Undoubtedly, the study will be referred to for some years to come as a flexible theoretical framework that can take into account any future developments in this field.

Major findings bring the author to some interesting conclusions. For instance, on the one hand, he claims that the EU cannot replace the UN as the principal actor in finding the solution to the 'Cyprus issue'. It happens because of the specific institutional framework of the EU and reluctance of the Turkish Cypriots to accept any solution offered by the EU, Greece and the Republic of Cyprus. On the other hand, in the opinion of the author, the EU has managed to offer pragmatic solutions to the 'Cyprus issue'. For instance, the Green Line Regulation has provided the rules for the crossing line by EU citizens and third country nationals and allowed bilateral trade between the Turkish Cypriot community and the EU. In another finding the author argues that the issue of settlement of the conflict in Cyprus will be based on the agreed principles of bi-zonality, bi-communality and political equality in line with the European common values enshrined in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU).

The issues and problems raised by Nikos Skoutaris seem particularly relevant and provoking in time of the ongoing Ukrainian crisis. In his book the author touched on the delicate issue of application of the EU *acquis* in a third country with divided territory, one of which is not recognised by the international community. Analysis by Dr Skoutaris is extremely relevant to Ukraine. In particular, it concerns the application of the EU-

Ukraine Association Agreement which was signed on 27 June 2014 in the aftermath of the popular *Maidan* revolution in Ukraine that led to the annexation of Crimea by Russia and to bloody civil conflict in the East of Ukraine. Therefore, Dr Skoutaris' study of the issue on how does the EU legal order deal with the *de facto* division of Cyprus can be projected to the Ukrainian case of application of the association agreement with the EU in Crimea and the Eastern territories occupied by separatist militant troops. In particular the work by Dr Skoutaris raises the question of whether the principles of bi-zonality, bi-communality and political equality in line with the European common values can and must be applied with regard to the effective application of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement on the whole territory of Ukraine.

In conclusion, it therefore can be said that the book by Nikos Skoutaris, *The Cyprus Issue: The Four Freedoms in a Member State under Siege* is an invaluable source of information on the law of EU external and international relations which should be a starting point for any closer investigation in the field.

ROMAN PETROV

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