

**An Ethnography of  
Place Attachment Communication  
Varosha Narratives as Mnemonic Resistance**

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## ABSTRACT

Varosha, the derelict southern quarter of the coastal city Famagusta in Cyprus stayed unpeopled under the Turkish military captivity after involuntarily abandoned by its approximately 40,000 Greek Cypriot inhabitants during 1974 war. Seen as the political bargaining chip for the peace negotiations, the city has been fenced off to its abruptly displaced people except the recent openings to public visits of the beachfront in October 2020. The emerging culture created by the enforced displacement and prohibited home returning for decades had remained unexplored and this 3-year ethnographic study (2018-2021) problematized the neglected voice of the displaced *Varosiotas*, the people of Varosha.

Grounded in Walter Fisher's (1984, 1985, 1989) Narrative Paradigm theory of communication arguing human beings as natural *homo narrans*, storytellers and narrative as symbolic actions, meaningful 'words and deeds' for those who generate them, this present study focused on place attachment as a discursive practice claiming people-place bond through story telling. This ethnographic study of place attachment communication addressing the lack of exploration in the context of desired home returning pursued two research questions; how the involuntarily displaced people of Varosha narrate place attachment in the context of conflict and how these narratives function as a means of communication and a story telling performance.

To address the undeveloped area of contextualized narrative analysis alongside the content, I followed the people and their memory - 'postmemory' patterns of the place. Demanded by the features of the field (military, unpeopled, forbidden, etc.), I employed multi-sited ethnography covering *spectral* (barbed wire fences of the

deserted city and later on opened beachfront and streets), *digital* (social networking virtual place on Facebook) and *futural* (Varosha's future revival as an imagined place) sites of my fieldwork Varosha. Recruiting 45 displaced *Varosiotas* (35 pre-1974, 10 post-1974) for active interviews and participating their narrative performances, I collected two kinds of narratives; from paper and digital archives since 1974 and from the interviews conducted and verbatim transcribed afterwards. Through the thematic narrative iterative analysis, I discovered a narrative typology of place attachment: narrative of loss, narrative of threshold, narrative of transformation and narrative of future. The function of these place attachment narratives revealed as mnemonic resistance to oblivion and to oppression. This study concluded with theoretical, methodological and practical implications for further research in the studies of narrative, place attachment, peace communication, memory and contemporary ethnography.

**Keywords:** Narrative, place attachment, mnemonic resistance, media and memory, postmemory, peace communication, multi-sited ethnography, qualitative research.

## ÖZ

Kıbrıs'ta yaklaşık 40,000 Kıbrıslı Rum sakinin 1974 savaşıyla terk etmek zorunda kaldığı sahil kenti Mağusa'nın Maraş bölgesinin bir kısmı, Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri kontrolünde bir askerî bölge olarak savaş sonrası insansızlaştırıldı ve barış görüşmelerinde koz olarak kullanılmak üzere kapatıldı. Göçe zorlandığından beri evine dönmeyi bekleyen insanına, Ekim 2020'de halk ziyaretine açılan sahil şeridi dışında, yaklaşık yarım asırdır kapalı tutulan bölge, Kapalı Maraş olarak bilinmektedir. Bu üç yıllık (2018-2021) etnografik çalışma, zorla yerinden edilmenin ve on yıllardır süren eve dönüş yasağının insan tecrübesi olarak yarattığı kültürün daha önce araştırılmamış olmasını ve Maraşlıya kendini ifade ortamı sunulmamasını problem odağına almıştır.

Bu çalışma anlatıyı anlamlandırılmış sembolik söz ve eylemlerden oluşan bir iletişim aracı, insanı da doğal hikâye anlatıcısı, *homo narrans* olarak konumlayan Walter Fisher'in (1984, 1985, 1989) Anlatı Paradigması temelinde hikâye anlatıcılığıyla kurulan insan-yer arasındaki yer bağlılığını söylemsel bir pratik olarak ele almıştır. Daha önce eve dönüş isteği bağlamında araştırılmamış yer bağlılığı iletişimini etnografik olarak irdeleyerek alana katkı koymayı amaçlayan bu çalışmanın iki araştırma sorusu olmuştur: İstmeden yerinden edilen Maraşlılar yer bağlılıklarını anlaşmazlık ortamında nasıl anlatıyorlar? Bu anlatılarının bir iletişim aracı ve hikâye anlatıcılığı performansı olarak işlevi nedir?

Bu tez, bağlam dahil edilmeden yapılan içerik odaklı anlatı analizlerinin aksine, anlatı içeriklerini ve işlevselliği ortaya çıkarabilmek için bağlamları ile birlikte inceleyerek alana katkıda bulunmayı hedeflemiş ve yerinden edilmiş insanların yer hafızası ve 'hafıza-sonrası' örüntülerini takip ederek ilerletilmiştir.

Çalışma sahası Maraş'ın özelliklerinin (askerî, insansız, yasak, vb.) araştırma yöntemi olarak dayattığı çok-alanlı etnografyaya dahil edilen alanlar şunlardır: *spektral* (terk edilmiş şehrin dikenli tel boyu ve sonradan açılan sahil şeridiyle sokakları), *dijital* (sosyal ağın kurulduğu sanal mekân Facebook) ve *futural* (hayalî mekan olarak Maraş'ın canlandırılmış geleceği). 45 Maraşlı göçmen (35 kişi 1974 öncesi, 10 kişi 1974 sonrası doğmuş) ile yapılan aktif görüşmelerden ve katılımcı-gözlemci olarak bulunulan anlatı performanslarından toplanan veri, iki çeşit anlatı ortaya çıkarmıştır: İlki, 1974'ten beri oluşan basılı ve dijital arşivlerden elde edilenler; ikincisi, görüşmeler esnasında kayda alınan ve sonradan kelimesi kelimesine deşifre edilen anlatılar. İteratif yöntemle yapılan tematik anlatı analizi sonucunda ortaya çıkan yer bağlılığı anlatı tipolojileri şunlardır: kayıp anlatısı, araf anlatısı, dönüşüm anlatısı ve gelecek anlatısı. Yer bağlılığı anlatılarının işlevleri ise unutmaya ve baskıya karşı oluşan belleksel direniş olarak belirlenmiştir. Bu çalışma, bulgularından esinle anlatı, yer bağlılığı, barış iletişimi, bellek ve çağdaş etnografya alanlarında ileriye yönelik araştırmalar için teorik, metodolojik ve pratik önerilerde bulunularak sonlandırılmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Anlatı, yer bağlılığı, belleksel direniş, medya ve hafıza, hafıza-sonrası, barış iletişimi, çok-alanlı etnografya ve nitel araştırma.

*To my mother, the Sultan of all my muses*

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# Chapter 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Problem and Case

A displaced person, Emilia<sup>1</sup> asks for empathy:

*Imagine being in a city without children playing in the fields, without people walking in the streets, without the sound of the car's engine or the builder's hammer. Imagine being sentenced to absolute silence for 46 years, as if you were in quarantine for a disease that has no cure and silence has no end. This is my city, locked and isolated in an eternal quarantine. Close your eyes and listen. Nothing! No sound except the splash of the waves. This is my city. She lives in silence but her sounds are still alive in our ears, engraved forever in our brains just like the voice of our dead loved ones whose sound you will never forget. Can you feel me now the people of world in Covid-19 quarantine?*

It was the first weeks of the world pandemic, March 2020, when the displaced people of Varosha started narrating the resemblance of the world in quarantine to their half a century long fenced off derelict city in captivity by the Turkish military forces. The catastrophic landscape of the dark and desolate buildings of Varosha, the ‘ghostly’ quarter of the coastal city Famagusta in the northeastern region of Cyprus (see Figure 1.1) has been dramatically conflicting the sparkling lively waters of the sea and the golden silky sand at its sun-kissed shores for more than four decades. In late 1960s and early 1970s, this southern suburb of Famagusta was having its heydays with its Greek Cypriot population without Turkish Cypriot involvement in

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<sup>1</sup> Emilia Matri Christoforidou. With informed consent, the real names are used for the participants with published narrations to protect copyrights. Emilia is one of them. This study employs its confidentiality for the rest of participants and uses pseudo-names.

the walled city enclave<sup>2</sup>. It was the most pulsating culture and tourism center of the Eastern Mediterranean until the island was divided with 1974 war into two regions, north and south. The two main ethnic communities, Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots have experienced displacements and Greek Cypriots were relocated mainly in the south while Turkish Cypriots in the north. Varosha, however, after forcibly abandoned by its original Greek Cypriot inhabitants stayed unpeopled<sup>3</sup> mainly under the military control of the Turkish army and partially of the United Nations since then. Non-implemented United Nations Security Council Resolutions, Resolution 550 (1984), for example, was a call for the conferral of Varosha to UN control to prohibit any attempt to resettle it by anyone other than those original forced out people. The resolution in 1984 stated being “deeply concerned about recent threats for settlement of Varosha by people other than its inhabitants”.

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<sup>2</sup> The ancient rich and powerful capital city Salamis 7 km north of Famagusta was destroyed by natural (waves and earthquakes) and martial causes (Arab invasion in 684 A.D.). Its people found refuge in their new settlement, *Arsinoe / Ammochostos*, where today’s Famagusta stands. When the island became part of the Ottoman Empire in 1571, no Christian was allowed to live within the walls of the Medieval Famagusta and in Anna Marangou’s words, “a few that survived the slaughter took what little was left of their souls and moved to further south, where there were plenty of orchards and gardens, and founded the New Famagusta, or *Varoshia*” (Emphasis added, 2005: 56). 307 years later, the British Empire took over the administration of Cyprus from Ottomans in 1878. Achieving its independence from the British rule and establishing the Republic of Cyprus in 1960 ill advisedly dragged Cyprus into the internal conflicts in 1963 and the war in 1974 as the cause/effect of the national policy clash still dividing the island, today.

<sup>3</sup> The other unpeopled and various kinds of ‘inscrutable’ places across the world are explored in Alastair Bonnett’s (2014) book *Unruly places: Lost spaces, secret cities, and other inscrutable geographies*. Bonnett categorizes these places as Lost Spaces, Hidden Geographies, No Man’s Land, Dead Cities, Spaces of Exception, Enclaves and Breakaway Nations, Floating Islands, and Ephemeral Places. With its involuntarily displaced people who have sustained the attachment to the place and desire to return, Varosha reserves a unique category.

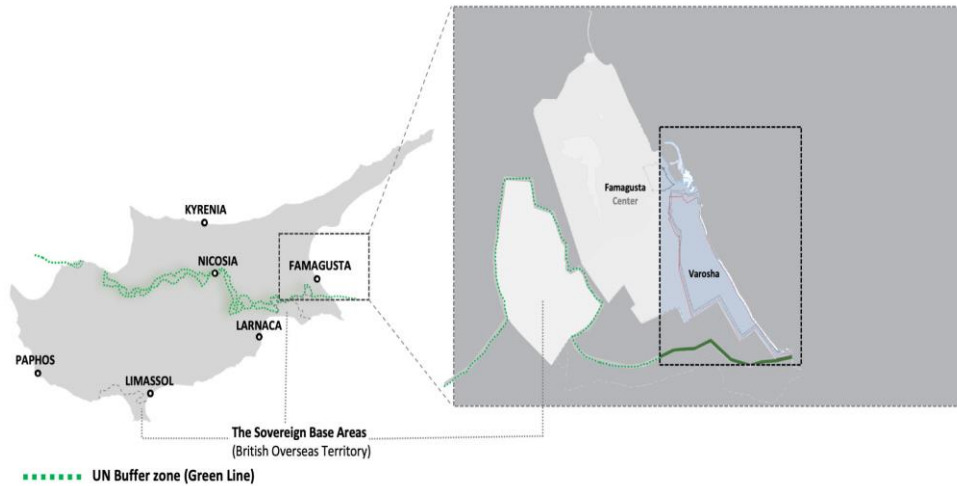


Figure 1.1: Cyprus map showing Varosha within Famagusta. Drawing: Ceren Boğaç

That threat is still recent and stronger with constant Turkey initiated opening plans that grown momentum especially after the Greek Cypriots’ rejection of the UN-sponsored referendum to reunify the island in 2004 and failed peacemaking efforts. Following the initial press entrance to the city on 29 August 2019 (Mutluyakali, 2019) leaving its people in shock of encountering legally allowed scenes from inside the fences for the first time since 1974, the Turkish and Turkish Cypriot officials took another step inside. They met on 15 February 2020 in Varosha’s Sandy Beach Hotel, which has been functional only for the Turkish military officials and their families. The roundtable discussion they had on the “potentially re-opening the fenced-off area...[was] universally condemned by Greek Cypriots...[and] criticized by many Turkish Cypriots who took part in a protest earlier in the day outside Varosha” (Andreou, 2020a, p. 1). Condemned and criticized as a non-participatory, unilateral meeting lack of an empathic vision.

Disregarding all, the Turkish and Turkish Cypriot officials took another step and opened an access to the beachfront of Varosha for ‘visitors’ on 8 October 2020 (Andreou, 2020b). What followed that opening was an organized ‘picnic’ by again Turkish and Turkish Cypriot officials on 15 November 2020 *in* Varosha namely to

celebrate 37<sup>th</sup> anniversary of unilateral declaration of ‘Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus’, 1983. Holding banners saying ‘No picnic over pain’, many demonstrators protested against Turkey’s decision of using Varosha for that occasion. Same slogan circulated extensively in the social media platforms (see Figure 1.2). The controversially reopened beachfront allowing walking and biking on the Demokratias street and Kennedy avenue (see Figure 1.3) as well as holding such a ‘picnic’ in Varosha “widely condemned for violating UN resolutions aimed at reuniting the war-torn island” (Smith, 2020) again. Before these current events, the last day seen by its people in the *living* city was 14 August 1974. Emilia describes how they all left in the morning thinking they would be back in the evening and she was then at the age of eighteen:

*Everybody left. Nearly everybody left, because there was a talk that they (Turkish army) were coming to get Famagusta. But we understand later that Famagusta was not in the original plan. But people were afraid. People were saying there were rapes, killings, executions, etc., everybody was afraid for their families and most of our neighbors left and on the 14<sup>th</sup>, my father woke up very early and said, ‘take a few things and we are leaving’. I got a bag and I started to pack. My mother came and said ‘stop stop we are leaving now, don’t take anything, we have to go, we have to leave! We are coming back in the evening... we’ll be away until the bombing stops’. We left. Everybody left...*



Figure 1.2: ‘No picnic over pain’ banner and poster. UniteCyprusNow social media circulation

Half a century later, Emilia requested me to accompany her back in the remnants of her city. She wanted us to walk in her memory lane together. She was showing me all the places of her pre-1974 life on 17 October 2020; her family house, the cafés she used to meet her then boyfriend – now her husband walking with us, the Ayia Triada Church they got married in, the school she went to, the clinic of her family doctor, the markets, the cinemas, the public gardens, the art galleries, the library, the theatre halls etc. She was claiming her memories of those places declaring thus her ownership against people’s ‘touristic’ visits in her town now walking and looking with no love connection, without their consent. She narrated in detail her aftermath thoughts and feelings of experiencing her presence in her city decades later under the demoralizing circumstances. She started with describing her shattering dream of home returning and the heart-wrenching feeling such disappointment created in her whole being, she reflected on her experience:



Figure 1.3: Beachfront access in Varosha – Democratias Street and Kennedy Avenue. Drawing: Ceren Boğaç

*I've always dreamed of the day I would return home. I would enter from Kato Deryneia on foot, having walked all the way from Larnaca, where I live now, fulfilling the vow I had made years ago. I would not be alone, there would be many of us, all tired but happy. We would back home, we would be back forever and fatigue would not count. For all those years that I had this dream, nothing prepared me for what reality had in store for me. Nothing prepared me for the incredible pain I felt, the pain that cannot subside, when after 46 years, I returned home and walked the streets I used to walk as a child.*

*My return was not preceded by that redemptive hike, nor did I feel happiness. My heart was only filled with bitterness and agony. I did not return home to stay forever, but returned as a visitor entering from just one checkpoint, with a pre-arranged short stay. My decision to visit my city under these circumstances was preceded by many sleepless nights and a lot of internal struggle. But I could not stay away. It was impossible to shut my heart and refuse to go. I felt the city calling me. I felt that if I didn't go, it was like giving it away to those who do not deserve it and I didn't want that to happen.*

*As I passed the checkpoint near my old school of Agios Ioannis, my legs and soul felt very heavy, I did not fly as I had imagined so many years; 8 am-5 pm visiting hours we were told. By what right does someone put a time limit on another person's life and memories? By what right does someone put a time limit on somebody's childhood, on the memories of our parents and grandparents and of all the previous generations that struggled to make Varosha the "Gem of the Mediterranean"?*

*The bitterness turned into anger and anger turned into sobbing. The pain was unbearable. It was like living a nightmare walking the streets that I loved more than anything in the world. The "gem" of my childhood, my*

*house, the houses of friends and acquaintances, were turned into ruins, all the buildings were stripped of everything, completely empty.*

*I was in my city but I felt like I was taking part in a disaster movie and we were the extras, not even the protagonists. And in this theater of the absurd, salt was rubbed in the bleeding wound of my soul, by the presence of groups of young settlers who took selfies and laughed, mocking us and our emotional outburst when we saw the ruins. Families walked the streets accompanied by young children with sandwiches and ice cream in hand as if they were going on a picnic. But worst of all, was the presence of well-dressed gentlemen with an obvious intent in mind, what pieces of the city they will grab when the spoils are shared.*

*My city, this city that I was deprived of, was turned into a circus for the crowds and a place to take a stroll, for people who have never had a love bond with it and will never have one. The only thing missing is the entrance ticket coming in. Maybe this will happen one day soon. Nothing seems peculiar to me anymore<sup>4</sup>.*

What followed her detailed narration of what it means to be present in her city under the circumstances she described in agony was her resisting urge to sharpen the sense of attachment to her place. Via her Facebook page with a post dated 19 October 2020, she invited every *Varosiotēs*<sup>5</sup> to claim memories and share them in their timelines: “*Let’s give everyone, not only those who hold it illegally but also the ignorant of our community, to understand what Varosha means to us*” she said. And she initiated a serial of posts including detailed pre-1974 addresses of those memories.

Another displaced person of that city, Vivian<sup>6</sup> responded to the latest occurrences with her deep sorrow and reinforced Emilia’s sense of ownership through memories founding the essence of the way of life Varosha had and should

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<sup>4</sup> After the beachfront opening of Varosha, peace journalist Sevgul Uludag from *Yeniduzen* Newspaper started a serial of Varosha narratives. Emilia is one of the Varosha people who shared their stories for publication in Turkish:  
<https://www.yeniduzen.com/benim-sehrim-onunla-hic-sevgi-bagi-olmayanlar-icin-bir-sirke-donusturuldu-16478yy.htm>

<sup>5</sup> A person from Varosha.

<sup>6</sup> Vivian Avraamidou Ploumbis. Upon informed consent, her real name is used due to her publications to protect copyrights.



revive. In her Facebook post dated 29 November 2020, she defined that *essence* of the city to be re-claimed:

*I'm sad. I am depressed to realize that after a treacherous coup, a brutal invasion, a cold bloodshed and the illegal occupation of my homeland, I am now left to claim the tiles of my home on my own, leaving all others unclaimed; my school, the stadium, the tennis courts, the library, even the city streets that I used to pass by every day on my bike. I am depressed; because I feel that this is how the essence is lost. Focusing only in claiming my personal property is like giving away the affinity I had for things that never belonged to me; particular things, often without financial value, but which evoke valuable memories of my youth, are intertwined with yours, and thus compose the essence: "Life in our city". I will never stop claiming passionately these memories. That is why today I am sending this message, not to any committee, but to the undisputed owners of this building (See Figure 1.4). To the family of doctor Vassos. I am asking them with all my might and with all due respect, for the exclusive ownership of a strong memory: Walking around the waiting room in doctor's office, observing from every angle that chubby baby in the painting on the entrance wall. The sweet baby with the bright eyes, with the mouth wide open, who first conveyed to me the calm and the confidence that my new doctor, the tall smiling and kind doctor, knows how to heal me well. I claim the sweet memory of that Gerber baby who had become for me the seal of my good doctor. No, I will not dwell only on the applications for claiming our roof tiles. I am mostly worried, lest the losses do not include our special memories, those that became one with the people of our city. I hasten to claim the loss of use of our common life.<sup>7</sup>*



Figure 1.4: Dr Vassos' clinic on the Democracies Street, 2020. Photo: Courtesy of Alexis Chatzisotiriou.

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<sup>7</sup> The Turkish version published in *Yeniduzen* newspaper: <https://www.yeniduzen.com/mal-kaybi-icin-basvuru-16651yy.htm?fbclid=IwAR2E5zS61v2ELyO6DQmDDw3iNITysSEalJJAkb1QW58qrsx>  
Fd\_1f1RNDk0

That essence of life in that city of pre-1974 back-grounding the depth of disappointment felt with the latest moves intrigued my curiosity years before this recent narrative boom claiming ownership through the lived life experiences, thus claiming life to be lived in the future. Observing the abandoned city beyond the barbed wire without its people for years implanted eventually raising questions in my mind. They were approximately 40,000 when they were forced to abandon their place, where are they now? Where have they been? Have they ever settled again? Have they ever felt home? It has been more than four decades, do they still desire of home returning? Do they still feel belong? Are they still attached to their city or have grown new attachments in their resettlements? Do they still feel together as a community even if they were deprived of their place? Could a life story be possible with a missing setting? Has life continued somewhere else for them? Or frozen? Trapped by the barbed wire? Or pierced now by the opening gate within visiting hours? What kind of life they left behind to feel attached still after so long if they do so? What does it mean to be displaced? What can make such place attachment possible despite the forceful separation of people from their places when that separation lasts so long? How do these people narrate the lived experience of involuntary displacement? What do they tell to their children about the place they come from? What do they tell to themselves, to each other, to others? Why do they tell? What do they intent to communicate with their narration about their place attachment? How does such narration function in the construction of life lived, life to be lived and in between? Nowhere to find answers to these initial questions in the context of Varosha and that is the problem this study entails to purport.

## 1.2 Purpose and Research Questions

I commenced approaching the displaced *Varosiotas* in early days of 2018 and the first reaction I received directed the preliminary questions I had in my mind towards this study's purpose, research questions, importance, methodology and even the limitations. "*Where have you been?*" asked Alexandra, with a criticizing but thankful tone of voice, "*no one wanted to know how I have been since then! Since the day I left my home thinking I would be back hours later but never did, never. I never stopped waiting for the day of return*". Her response to my approach and insights I gained from my initial research (Akdeniz, 2019) implied the undeveloped understanding of enforced displacement in the context of constant demand for home returning against conflict and contest over the place. Their place attachment communication under these circumstances revealed unexplored. Therefore, the purpose of this 3-year ethnographic case study is to identify and describe the thematic typology of place attachment narratives of the displaced when desire for home returning is still alive. It also aims to understand how place attachment communication of the displaced functions contextually against decades long enforced separation of place-people. Intersecting the studies of narrative, memory, place and peace, the research questions this study pursues are as follow:

1. How do the displaced people of Varosha narrate their place attachment in the context of involuntary displacement and decades long deterred home returning?
2. How does place attachment narrative of the displaced people of Varosha function as a means of communication and a story telling performance?

The process and product of the narrative place attachment communication this study both creates and analyzes (narratives of place attachment from both paper and

digital archives created since 1974 and interview narratives created during this study and verbatim transcribed afterwards) aim to demonstrate how “communication is integral to place making” (Hutchins and Stormer, 2013, p, 26) and how it creates attachment to it. Exploring then content of the narrative place attachment communication in the context of the place in military captivity – that is Varosha, this study aims to shed light on the overlooked areas of narrative communication in relation to place attachment. It also hopes to contribute to the city’s better tomorrow as in the words of its poet Kyriakos Charalambides: *“The city was asleep in her dream / precious and alone, / dissipating every associated evil / felt that tomorrow would be better.”*

### **1.3 Importance of the Study**

The case of Varosha resonates with the other involuntarily displaced people of the world in constant conflict and natural causes shifting human geographies. The culture created by the experience of enforced internal displacement in Cyprus is island-wide<sup>8</sup>. However, unlike the relocations in the other places of Cyprus, Varosha resumes its unique status of being the unpeopled military zone and bargaining chip of the peace negotiations. Resisting to mental displacement after the enforced physical one in 1974 war of Cyprus, the displaced people of Varosha have been producing narratives of their attachment and wish to return back in their home city. What they have been communicating with these narratives is critical in constructing the city’s future revival. Its unique and local status of being a military zone and bargaining

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<sup>8</sup> See samples from the extensive literature on the refugee hood in Cyprus such as Loizos, 1981 for the displacements of the villagers Argaki; Zetter, 1985 for the ways in which Greek Cypriots were resettled after their displacement; Zetter, 1999 for the ‘myth of return’; Dikomitis, 2012 for the relationship between politicized narrative and 2003 check-points opening experience of Greek and Turkish Cypriot refugees; Christou, 2006 for the uses of the slogan ‘Dhen Xechno / I do not forget’ and memory; Yakinthou, 2008 for the changing communal narratives on the missing people; Kliot and Mansfeld, 1994 for a comparative approach to north-south resettlements, Bogac (2009) for place attachment in a foreign settlement, etc.

chip in political agenda impacts both the content and the context of their narratives reflecting how their hope has been tortured many times by political failures of both sides, Turkish and Greek Cypriots. Yet, they resist narrating their memories of the past and dreams of the future.

Place attachment narratives in the context of Varosha do not communicate reclaiming its past and implying its potential future of the city only. Having been contested in peace negotiations for Cyprus for decades, it plays a catalyst role for not-yet-coming conflict resolutions for the whole island with its unique case of being the only unpopulated place; a city under military captivity after relocation in the rest of Cyprus since 1974. It is seen as ‘the beacon for solution’ (Demetriades, 2021) while it has been decaying without its people or any other people except the military. Creating a sustainable peace environment in Cyprus very much depends on reviving Varosha in a participatory empathic manner. Having an in-depth understanding of the displaced peoples’ narratives could inform the revival process accordingly. Hence, raising their neglected voice with an aim to shed light on what place attachment narratives communicate and what for to inform the desired reviving processes of that city, this study aims to contribute to peace making efforts in Cyprus.

Building on Walter Fisher’s (1984, 1985, 1989) narrative theory of communication that argues human beings are fundamentally narrators or storytellers, *homo narrans* in his terms, this study addresses the gap in the place attachment studies: The processes of forming attachment to a place (Cross, 2015; Scannell and Gifford, 2010) and disruptions to place attachment (Fried, 1963, 2000; Brown and Perkins, 1992) are largely explored, however, what place attachment narrative communicates and how it functions in the context of enforced displacement and

decades long prohibited home returning are left undeveloped. The studies in the literature of place attachment as discursive practice (Low, 1992; Tuan 1991, Di Masso et al., 2014; Richard and Stedman, 2015; Bailey et al., 2016) do not fully inform the processes of sustainable place attachment grounding the desire for resettlement back in that place of enforced displacement. In Rodaway's (1994) words,

Communication establishes an active relationship to the world, transforming abstract spaces into meaningful places and perhaps—through the social dimension of touching—giving us roots in a place. Simple contact is geographically a simple confirmation that the world still exists and that we are 'with our feet on the ground' (Emphasis added, p. 45).

How about the uprooted people of Varosha? With no simple geographical contact to their place, how do they manage to sustain the feeling of attachment? How does place attachment communication establish their relationship to their place forbidden to them by military forces? Do they feel their 'feet on the ground'?

Raising these questions, this 3-year ethnographic case study grounded in the narrative theory and research on place attachment communication, focuses not only on the narrative content but also on in-depth understanding of how these narratives of displaced people function as a process of resistance in the context of conflict. Developing Harter et al.'s (2006) critical performative approach to narrative research, I discover that displaced people of Varosha perform their resisting place attachment through engaging in narratives in various paper, digital and embodied forms from publishing newspaper articles, Facebook posts to walks in and protests for their city. Focusing on performative aspects of storytelling then, I situate their narrative events as a functional narrative performance, as a form of mnemonic resistance sustaining and communicating place attachment. Drawing from the thematic analysis of those archived forms of narrative, participant observations at

various sites, in-depth active interviews with 45 displaced people of Varosha, 35 pre, 10 post-1974 generation and follow-up interviews for clarifications and expansions, I identify and develop a thematic typology of place-attachment narratives: narrative of loss, narrative of threshold, narrative of transformation and narrative of future.

Beside the content of the typology, the findings reveal the functionality of that narrative place attachment typology as a form of mnemonic resistance against potential oblivion and oppressive political power practices towards displaced people's sense of belonging and ownership. Hence, illustrating the processes of mnemonic narrative resistance to oblivion and oppression, this study offers insights on the processes of sustaining place attachment to a contested place and its future. It also reveals how the performed mnemonic resistance of the displaced people of Varosha with their active, protest and future-oriented manners function differently from the narratives of remembering of the other Greek Cypriot refugees. The dynamism of Varosha people's mnemonic narratives contains resistance sometimes against the Turkish military captivity, sometimes against the inefficacy of the international community and sometimes against their own political governance. Feeling their right and intention to return unrepresented at the political and the communal level, they have recently been in the process of establishing a political party out of the new 'Famagusta for Cyprus' initiative (January, 2021) as a new form of resistance and future building.

Building on Bryant and Knights' (2019) argumentation of how present is experienced with orientations towards the future; how present involves the plantation of the *seed of the future*, this study explores *The Famagusta Eco-city Project (FEP)* (Markides, Boğaç and Kelly, 2019) as such a seed with its 'teleoaffective structure'

envisioning Varosha's future revival with an empathic, participatory approach<sup>9</sup>. With its in-depth portrayal of the cultural and geographical fabric of the life lived in Varosha in the past and with its detailed elaboration of narrative processes of resisting place attachment, the findings of this study reveal perceptions for this project aiming to draw the city's future into present while acknowledging its past.

#### **1.4 Research Design**

Given my focus on in-depth understanding of place attachment narratives confronting constant conflict with deferred home returning, I employ narrative-ethnographic methodology drawing on my preliminary experience of multi-sited ethnography (Marcus, 1995) with another abandoned but open place in northern part of Cyprus (Akdeniz, 2019). I approached Varosha with its challenging features as a field to do fieldwork – forbidden, fenced, military, unpeopled, constantly active in the political agenda – with an intention to explore the culture created by enforced displacement of 1974 war. Following its displaced people took me to multi-sites serendipitously (Müller, 2021; Jung, 2014; Zırh, 2017) including the barbed fences of the derelict city and later on to the opened beachfront and streets (spectral ethnography), virtual place they created as a community on a Facebook page (social media ethnography) and the imagined place (ethnography of the future). Hence, the features of the field dictated multi-sited ethnography to explore the place attachment communication of the culture of enforced displacement and deferred home returning.

With the philosophical assumptions of qualitative research embracing subjective realities and lessening the distance between the researcher and the researched, I have been an active participant observer of communal activities in the

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<sup>9</sup> See detailed elaboration of FEP, the vision and mission this future-oriented project pursues in Section 3.2.2.3. Ethnography of the Future and Section 4.1.4. Narrative of Future.



multi-sites of the fieldwork in/of Varosha as part of the data collection process. I have identified and approached the participants for the interviews with the snowballing technique, one introducing the other. Initiating the research officially after the ethics committee approval in March 2018, this 3-year-ethnographic case study with its posterior research design had to proceed in two stages inductively. The access allowance to the fenced-off city after 46 years of forbidden status imprisoning any attempt for trespassing has created a narrative boom of place attachment. Although I had completed the fieldwork process and started analysis and writing, that is the first stage, I had to go back to the field to continue my participant observations and arrange follow-up interviews to gain insights about this new experience; the second stage. In both stages I continued archival research both in paper and digital forms for thematic narrative analysis. The change in the field and the lived experience necessitated change in the scope and argumentation of that study too<sup>10</sup>.

## 1.5 Limitations

During the interview, Lucas, a displaced person of Varosha raised my attention to another way of being from that city, Famagusta, referring to a case of preferred, *intentional place de-attachment* thinking with a Greek saying, *ο θάνατος σου η ζωή μου, your death is my life*. He explained:

*... sometimes I talk quite strongly about fellow Famagustians that includes my uncle who is a hotelier too... He was given a piece of land with zero interest loan by the government after 1974 on one of the nicest parts of Cyprus near Ayia Napa and he rebuilt his hotel 3 times bigger than the one he had in Famagusta. He typifies a lot of the successful people from Famagusta that even they are better off after the war. He passed away and when I talked to the children and grandchildren who now are running the business, the Famagusta issue has no significance to them whatsoever. In fact, it's a hindrance. I mean if there is a solution, they are little bit concerned about what would that do to their business in Ayia Napa. So even*

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<sup>10</sup> See the detailed description of research methodology this study employs in Chapter 3: Methodological Framework.

*some Famagustians themselves do not want the solution. Obviously mass majority of Limassolians, Larnacans, or Pafians of post-1974...*

That kind of *intentional place de-attachment* is beyond the scope of this study. However, a further, follow-up research in combination with the findings of this study could offer expanded insights on the processes of place attachment communication through narratives and imply new understandings for revival projects of the city's future. Furthermore, while some of the participants expressed feeling of proud in being able to transfer place attachment via narration to their children with no personal experience of Varosha, some avoided such narrations in order not to transfer the pain of longing for a forbidden home in the name of place attachment. Penelope, who is one of them, raises a question for a further research at the intersection of narrative communication, place attachment and memory / postmemory studies:

*I may put emotional weight on them, which they may not be able to carry, and why should they? It's such an abnormal schizophrenic situation. All these emotional pieces, I come and go... they can only see Famagusta through my eyes and through a lot of pain. And why? Why would I do this to my children?*

## Chapter 2

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 2.1 Narrative Communication Theory

If we wish to understand the deepest and most universal of human experiences, if we wish our work to be faithful to the lived experiences of people, if we wish for a union between poetics and science, or if we wish to use our privileges and skills to empower the people we study, then we should value the narrative (Richardson, 1990, p. 133-134).

Theorizing narrative is to recognize how humans think and communicate. As in Richardson's (1990) terms, "narrative is both a mode of reasoning and a mode of representation. People can 'apprehend' the world narratively and people can 'tell' about the world narratively" (p. 118). The process of narrative communication sheds light on the process of making sense of the lived experience then and Walter R. Fisher's (1984, 1985, 1989) Narrative Paradigm Theory is foundational in the course of exploring such communicative processes. Fisher (1984) bases his theory of human communication on a notion of persons as *homo narrans* / story-tellers and he describes narration as "symbolic actions—words and/or deeds—that have sequence and meaning for those who live, create, or interpret them"<sup>11</sup> (p. 2). Elaborating further on the idea of human beings as storytellers, Fisher (1989) argues, "all forms of human communication can be seen fundamentally as stories, as interpretations of aspects of the world occurring in time and shaped by history, culture, and character"

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<sup>11</sup> Roland Barthes (1966) states that narratives start with the history of human kind and are present at all times, in all places. He lists countless forms and vehicles of narrative in variety of genres and media such as oral, written, still and moving pictures, gestures in myth, comedy, tragedy, movies, news, conversations, etc. (p. 237). The narratives, the symbolic actions in Fisherian sense this study embraces are in basically two kinds; one is archival (all forms from written to visual, paper to digital), the other is present (gained through participant observations – embodied, and interview conversations – transcribed).

(p. 57). Stories constitute and communicate human life by ordering the lived experience in two functional ways: first to justify decisions or actions already made or performed and the second to determine future decisions or actions (Fisher, 1984, p. 362). Therefore, the meaning making process is not only retrospective; it is prospective envisioning and actualizing the future as well.

Narrative, for Bruner (1991) “operates as an instrument of mind in the construction of reality,” (p. 6) and that instrument is a means to communicate that reality for Fisher (1984, 1985, 1989). Harter et al. (2006) and Willer et al. (2020) approach the construction and communication of narratives as critical performances / events. They indicate the stories as texts and story telling as communicative performances. In his review on narrative studies, Bamberg (2016) lays the narrative expansion from narrative as text to narrative as life practices, communicative actions in Habermas’ (1987) sense, anchoring Fisher’s (1984) sense-making and action-taking processes of narration. In order for narrative studies to contribute to the theories and practical applications of narrative research in the broader field of human communication, narrative scholars should transcend the content of the stories and explore how they function as communicative narrative performances:

Why this story here-and-now? —That is, they try to figure out how and why some topic or theme, typically from the there-and- then of the story-time, is made relevant for the here-and-now of the communicative storytelling event in which the story is embedded. It is here that it becomes evident that shifts into storytelling mode are not random or accidental happenings; rather, interlocutors do assume that storytellings are intentional acts, acts that are relevant for what communicative business at hand is supposed to be accomplished. (Bamberg, 2016, p. 7-8)

Referring to this performative turn in narrative theorizing, Hartel et al. (2006) defines narratives as embedded in human struggles either resisting or accepting the ‘intrusions of disruptions and chaos’ and they argue that “we live stories in and through our being - embodied performances - and within and through tensions

constituted by our past memories and anticipations of the future” (p. 6). As the theoretical advancement of Nelson and Lindemann’s (2001) ‘counter-narrative’ implies as an act of narrative repair - a resisting story against the oppressing one, the narrative scholars are urged to investigate the contexts that intensify narrative construction and communication. Hochman and Spector-Mersel (2020) criticize the growing body of narrative studies literature for focusing on the content of narrative resistance countering against the oppressive narratives and overlooking the process of resisting “namely, how counter-narratives, indeed, counter” (p. 1, see also Cordell and Ronai, 1999; Jones, 2004; Saguy and Ward, 2011). Hence, the question of how resistance is embodied through narrative construction and communication (Myrsiades, 1993) is not fully explored. Inspired from Willer et al.’s (2020) narrative ethnography and developing from the narrative communication theory, this study addresses this gap by exploring both the content and the context of the narratives of enforced displacement and place attachment constructed and communicated by the displaced people of Varsoha. It builds on Harter et al.’s (2006) critical performative approach to narrative research in relation to Nelson and Lindemann’s (2001) concept of counter-narrative. Considering, therefore, the place attachment narratives of the displaced people of Varosha as performative communicative events, this study focuses on the content and the context of the mnemonic narrative resistance.

It acknowledges the co-presence of countering narratives (resisting and oppressing) and avoids the two misleading assumptions surfacing through the counter narrative discussions highlighted by Bamberg and Wipff (2020) in *Reconsidering Counter-narratives*:

(1) ‘counter’ and ‘master’ were two clearly definable and opposed territories

(2) ‘master’ typically as coinciding with ‘collective’ and ‘culturally-shared’, in contrast to ‘counter’ as voiced by few – typically in the form of *personal* (and oppressed) narratives of experience. (p. 72)

The countering narratives emerging in co-presence in the context of Varosha evolve within the context of the constant conflict prohibiting home returning of the displaced people of Varosha since 1974 and how they sustain their place attachment with mnemonic narratives of remembering meanwhile. The recent opening of the city to ‘visitors’ out of one-sided, non-participatory, non-empathic political power practices created a kind of countering narrative boom to sustain belonging and ownership through the *experienced* knowledge of the city and *resisting* hope for a return in peace. This study focuses on the place attachment narratives being constructed and communicated to claim such sense of ownership of the past and right for the future. The narrative exploration covers the processes of displaced people’s mnemonic resistance to both oblivion and oppression as an act of sustaining their place attachment. However, it suggests a further comparative study to the construction processes of the co-existing and countering oppressive political narrative, which is beyond the scope of this present study<sup>12</sup>.

## 2.2 Place Attachment Theory

Addressing the understudied processes of narrative resistance in the literature of narrative communication with its exploration of place attachment narratives – both the content (typology) and the context (function), this study brings forth another area of limited exploration, that is in the literature of place attachment. Before

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<sup>12</sup> See Hasan Yıkıcı’s (2020) analysis on the narrative image construction (words, visuals, and deeds) of the oppressive power practices for Varosha:

<https://www.yeniduzen.com/kapali-maras-toplu-kotuluk-ayini-16470yy.htm?fbclid=IwAR0pu3UmYMCxh9I8AwKeXzsWcugLprZ2oCS7kXiD66bkV8aBlKqMoWhHKo>

contextualizing this gap in the place attachment studies, what makes a place *a place of attachment* for people should be defined. The phenomenological geographers with their humanistic approach are recognized as the leading figures in developing place studies. For example, Tuan (1975) defines place as “a center of meaning constructed by experience” (p. 152), and Relph (1976) focuses on its role in constructing human identity claiming, “to be human is to have and to know your place” (p. 1). While *knowing* a place suggests a reference to Tuanian experience-oriented meaning making processes in/of the place, *having* it or *not having* it becomes the raising question of this study. It focuses not only on the lived experiences in place but also on being abruptly displaced from it and ways of sustaining place attachment despite the political power practices prohibiting it; thus despite constantly deferring dream of home returning.

Milligan (1998) raises the issue of the unclear distinction between place and place attachment in the place studies. Referring to various approaches from different disciplines, he states that geographers see places as meaningful spaces to differentiate between space and place while designers and planners focus on the physical forms of the place for the constitution of ‘sense of place’. Sociologists refer to ‘sense of community’ of a place and it is the environmental psychologists that focus on place as well as place attachment without clarifying the distinction between them. He attempts to do so by defining place attachment in relation to place and space:

Place attachment refers to an emotional bonding to a site that decreases the perceived substitutability of other sites for the one in question. For an attachment to form to a site, it must have been previously a place, even if only for a very short time prior to the attachment: first, a site becomes known (space + place), then, to the extent that a known site becomes an object to which an individual is emotionally bonded, as opposed to one that is simply known about, the site becomes one to which a place attachment has been formed (place + place attachment) (Milligan, 1998, p. 6).

Space then exists but is ‘not-yet-known’ physical environment from an individual or group perspective while place is a known and meaning given space through *interactional processes* such as being viewed, discussed or read about. From an interactionist perspective, Milligan (1998) argues, a place is known through human interactions about it but for it to be a site of place attachment the knowing people should also develop an emotional link to that place lowering “the degree substitutability” (p. 7).

The interactionist perspective is appropriated by the studies of place attachment as discursive practice too suggesting the functionality of narration; the role of storytelling of/in the place. In her analysis of 40 yearlong place attachment literature, Lewicka (2011) defines the development of place attachment theory starting from the humanist geographers differentiating between ‘abstract space’ and ‘meaningful place’, continuing with initial definitions of place attachment and the eventual publication of Altman and Low’s (1992) seminal book *Place Attachment*. Referring also to Fried’s (1963) work *Grieving for a lost home: Psychological costs of relocation* and Fullilove’s (1996) *Psychiatric implications of displacement* where the negative psychological effects of forced relocation were described<sup>13</sup>, Lewicka (2011) asks how much progress has been made since then. Scannell and Gifford’s (2010) tripartite organizing framework outlines the processes of place attachment as *affect* (emotions for the place), *cognition* (memories of the place), and *behavior* (proximity to the place). However, the question of what happens to place attachment after enforced displacement is left unanswered. Their reference to Fried’s (1963) and Fullilove’s (1996) works explains the grief, sadness and longing for the lost place to conclude, “attachment is primarily based in affect” (Scannell and Gifford, 2010, p.

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<sup>13</sup> For the health effects of long-term displacement and trauma in Cyprus, see Loizos (2008) and Agathangelou and Killian (2002).



3). However, what happens to the place attachment to the place of displacement in the context of longing for home returning is unrevealed.

Sarbin (1983) defines 'querencia' as people preferring to stay near to specific places, seeking out the place they were born or a place giving sense of security and comfort. Lewicka's (2011) analysis of place attachment literature covers how people lose the place of birth, comfort and security in Sarbian sense when forced for displacement and she further explains, they lose "their social contacts or the familiar view from the window, but they must rearrange their entire set of daily routines and adaptations, and shift to entirely new habits" (p. 226). Referring to human geographer and phenomenologist, Seamon's (1980) formation of 'body-ballet', the automatized daily physical activities in a place, Lewicka (2011) also defines how these performances produce the feeling of 'existential insidedness', "belonging within the rhythm of life *in place*" (emphasis added, p. 226). However, the post-displacement processes after the loss of 'querencia', 'place-ballet', 'existential insidedness' in the place of 'topophilia' (Tuan, 1990) are framed only in the discussions "leading to formation of new bonds", reestablishing attachments in the new settlements. Brown and Perkin's (1992) a three-stage model of disruption: pre-disruption, disruption and post-disruption, for example, describe these stages of disruption in one's attachment to a place due to *voluntary relocations* and focus on the processes of attachment to new resettlements. In case of *involuntary displacements*, however, ways of sustaining place attachment to the place of demand for home returning remains unexplored.

Bailey et al.'s (2016) work too focuses on understanding post-displacement processes of establishing attachment with the relocated places. Nonetheless, exploring ways of sustaining attachment to place of displacement is left untouched

again. What their study brings forth nonetheless is the *narrative approach* in understanding “the ways in which people talk about and represent their past residential histories, life-place trajectories to understand how these might inform understanding of the type of relationship they have with their current residence place” (p. 201). While the emphasis in Bailey et al.’s (2016) study is on the attachment to relocation and reveals narration-inspired insights (life-place trajectories) for place change proposal, it still sheds light on the explorations of this study with its narrative approach to attachment to the place of displacement. In the same vein with Milligan’s (1998) interactionist perspective for defining the process of space becoming a place and then a *place of attachment* with the emotional link bonding place and person, Cross (2015) addresses the functions of narrative too. She lists narrative as one of the “interactional processes - continuous series of actions and interactions - through which people create meaning and affective bonds with places” (p. 501). She explains how narrative - family stories, political accounts, place naming, etc. becomes people’s linkage to the place.

Other scholars contributing in the place studies literature have also demonstrated the role of interactive communicative narrative practices in the formation of attachment. Tuan (1991) for example in *Language and the making of place: A narrative-descriptive approach* expresses how language becomes the force that attaches people to places. Dixon and Durrheim (2000) refer to the sense of self in relation to the sense of *self in place* and explain that “it is through language that places themselves are imaginatively constituted in ways that carry implications for ‘who we are’ (or ‘who we can claim to be’)” (p. 32). Bosso (1996, 2000) outlines the story-telling practices of the Western Apache culture to emphasize the role of narration as a foundation of sense of belonging in place; Dominy (2001) investigates

the interactive processes of *Calling the station home* in New Zealand. Recalling Walter Fisher's (1984) argument of human beings as *homo narrans* telling stories to found a meaningful 'life-world' in Habermas' (1987) term, the narrative process of place attachment is the process of making meaning of the life in that place, and thus of the place too.

When people are forced to abandon their place, the literature of place attachment studies continuously identifies the "upsetting nature of place change" (Devine-Wright and Howes, 2010, p. 271). However, how people re-construct meaningful life while dreaming of returning to the place of enforced displacement is searched only from the perspective of seeking insights to understand establishing attachments to the new settlements. The case of displaced people's desire to move back in the place they were forced to abandon decades ago has not been in the scope of place attachment studies. Beside the works of Low (1992) and Milligan (1998), Di Masso et al.'s (2014) *Place attachment as discursive practice* inspires the discursive, interactionist, communicative, narrative approach of this study to deepen the understandings of post-displacement processes in the context of resisting place attachment. Di Masso et al. (2014) argue, "the main contribution of the discursive approach is to shift the analytic and conceptual focus onto a new object of inquiry: the everyday linguistic practices through which place meanings and associated person-place relations are created, reproduced, and contested" (p. 82, see also Cross, 2015) interactively. The focus on the interactivity in/of place, according to Masso and Dixon (2014), opens up "new ways of looking at the nature and functions of place attachment" (p. 81).

Acknowledging Sarbin's (1983) proposal of narrative principle 'emplotment' – narrating stories of/in place for people to locate themselves with a sense of coherent

self, this study hopes to deepen the understanding of how the displaced people of Varosha *emplot* the processes of resisting place attachment against differing factors to claim life back in the place of enforced displacement in/of the future. This is the gap overlooked in the literature of place attachment, even in the studies focusing on discursive dimensions of person-place bonds. Developing from Milligan's (1998) discussion of 'interactional past' and 'interactional potential', the interwoven components of a place, this study illustrates an ethnographic understanding of a place's future imagined by its displaced people bridging their memories as a form of resisting attachment.

## Chapter 3

### METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 3.1 Philosophical Assumptions

In conducting this ethnographic case research, I pursue some philosophical assumptions (Creswell, 2007, Crotty 1998): My ontological stance embraces the multiplicity, thus the partiality of truth. That is to say, no single study can grasp the ‘entire phenomenon’ as Strathern (2005) states in *Partial Connections*, “... the world [is] naturally composed of entities - a multiplicity of individuals or classes or relationships - whose characteristics are in turn regarded as only ever *partially* described by analytic schema... Other perspectives remain” (emphasis added, 2005, p. xiv). Clifford (1986), in *Partial Truths* also refers to such partiality and describes the ethnographic truths as “inherently *partial* - committed and incomplete” (emphasis original, p. 7). This partiality, he suggests, “can be of representational tact” (p. 7) once accepted.

In the same vein, who the ethnographer is inevitably asserts the case of the study, Zirh (2020) claims; therefore the ethnographer should be transparent of his/her identity as well as of the serendipitous, inductive, reflexive process of the research. He suggests the ethnographers to avoid the positivist binary of subjectivity-objectivity and to situate themselves as the “strong objectivist, *sağlam objektivist*<sup>14</sup>” (Harding, 1986, 1991; Haraway, 1988; Naples, 2015) by being conscious of the

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<sup>14</sup> The webinar is in Turkish; I have translated Besim Can Zirh’s statements into English. See the webinar on YouTube: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s9tO\\_SGFw5I&t=4233s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s9tO_SGFw5I&t=4233s)

partiality and the situatedness of the single case they explore, the subjectivity of the participants they observe and interview and the inevitable impact of whom they are on the unfolding research. Being transparent of the methodological process is also a prerequisite for a ‘strong’ ethnography, Zırh (2020) declares. My Turkish Cypriot identity as an ethnographer ‘at home’<sup>15</sup> (Cyprus in on-going conflict) approaching the Greek Cypriots (the ‘other’ community ‘at home’) indicates the axiological view of this study: peace, a resolution for the on-going conflict.

Acknowledging the multiple perspectives of truth and partiality of one ‘committed and incomplete’ ethnographic study as an attempt to grasp an in-depth understanding of its phenomenon, throughout my fieldwork, I have epistemologically attempted to lessen the distance between the participants being researched and myself as the researcher. Being active during the interviews, I have created dialogue-based (Atay, 2016) communicative environments in which the values shaping narratives are openly discussed in the context of Cyprus, of Varosha. This epistemological approach enriches not only the data collection and analysis process, but also the data themselves. Employing the language of qualitative ethnographic research, while voicing the people of Varosha, I also use my personal voice to situate myself in the research reflexively in parallel to the inductive logic of the research design. That is to say, the research design emerges throughout the research process both theoretically and methodologically while reflecting on my experiences in the field and revising the research questions accordingly. Such constant process of the question review reflecting my fieldwork experiences, I declare the research questions of this study as part of the findings too. In other words, the findings are not only answering the questions but also improving them. Within the social constructivist

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<sup>15</sup> For further discussion of ‘ethnographer at home’/ ‘native anthropologist’ see Narayan, 1993.

paradigm, I, as an ethnographer, intent to uncover the narrative processes of displaced peoples' resisting place attachment to the oppressive political power practices counteracting an empathic participant process of Varosha's revival and prohibiting home returning in *peace* of the island since 1974. The processes of past and future-oriented narrative resistance of the present time of Varosha may imply ways of enshrining the on-going processes of peace building in Cyprus as well as bringing new understandings forth for the studies of narrative communication and place attachment.

## **3.2 Ethnography**

Hammersley (2015) states that ethnography has evolved to be defined as the combination of “first-hand investigation and description of cultures... and the theoretical interpretation of the data this produced” (p. 1) To cover the double meaning of ethnography, he adds that ethnography refers both to the practice and the product. In *The interpretation of cultures*, Geertz (1973) grounds what ethnography is; he says human is “an animal suspended in webs of significance [s]he himself/[herself] has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning” (p. 5). As the participating ethnographer in that ‘web of meaning’ spun by/of the involuntarily displaced people of Varosha, I have attempted to gain and share an in-depth understanding of how and why they communicate the attachment they feel for the place they were displaced from by the 1974 war.

### **3.2.1 Ethnography of Narrative Communication**

In *The Ethnography of Communication*, Elizabeth Keating (2001) reviews the historical and theoretical foundations of communication ethnography, which builds on Dell Hymes and John Gumperz (1964) innovative program with the proposal of

“combining ethnography, the description and analysis of culture, with linguistics, the description and analysis of language... to elucidate important relationships between language and culture” (p. 285). The eventual broadening of this approach embraces the nature of the communicated meaning in socio-political contexts; shared beliefs and values of a community through ‘the language in use’ (Keating, 2001, p, 294. For a discourse-centered approach to culture, see Urban, 1991; Sherzer, 1987). The narrative as the focus of this study as a means of communication in the process of such meaning making in Fisherian sense is a gathering of communicative / performative events which reveal the shared values of the community of my case – abruptly displaced people of Varosha. Having approached them for an ethnographic understanding of the culture created by the lived experience of enforced displacement and communal longing for home returning, this study’s analysis of their place attachment narratives as both content and context is an illustration of the *ethnography of narrative communication*.

Defining such exploration as examining narratives in full social context, Gubrium and Holstein (2008), in *Narrative Ethnography* suggests “intense observation of the multifaceted fields of narrative practice” (p. 250). To gain a sense of how multilayered narrative conditions culminate in the storying process of Varosha, this study ethnographically explores the narrative practices of displaced people created through the *multi-sites*: spectral – the remnants of the life they were forced to abandon in 1974 war, digital – the Facebook page where they created a virtual place to gather as a community, and future – their attempt to construct life ahead with their present ‘words and deeds’; narratives. As a transformative act evolving raw natural space into a cultural place (Carbaugh, 1996), communication is an ‘emplaced action’ (Carbaugh, 2010; Carbaugh and Cerulli, 2013) in/of these



multi-sites of Varosha context and it reveals the processes of resisting bond between people-place after their decades long enforced separation.

### **3.2.2 Multi-sited Ethnography**

Confronting my study's case, the place deprived of its people long ago demanded a way of approaching fieldwork outside the conventions of traditional ethnography. My exploration of how to study the culture created by the experience of enforced displacement de-territorializing its people led me share Marcus' (1995) critical concern of ethnographic place-making to make knowledge. A fenced off city, Varosha, in captivity of military forces declared as forbidden zone for decades for human resettlement demanded epistemological reconfiguration of the archetypal Malinowskian tradition of doing ethnography. Because of the abrupt separation of the people from their place, I questioned the 'locality' (Appadurai, 1995) as a lived experience of the field. Appadurai (1996) argues how *ethno* in ethnography taking on a slippery, non-localized quality in the cases of de-territorialized people and he urges innovative ways of redrawing the frame of the field to enable multi-sited embracement. Marcus (1995) defines such mapping terrain along with "strategies of quite literally following connections, associations, and putative relationships ... at the very heart of designing multi-sited ethnographic research" (p. 97). In the same vein with Marcus (1995, 1999, 2012) and Appadurai (1995, 1996) and inspired from the practitioners of multi-sited ethnography methodologically re- theorizing field from a geographical space to be entered to a 'conceptual space' to be constantly constructed (Amit, 2003; Coleman and Hellermann, 2012; Falzon, 2016; Gupta and Ferguson, 1997; Horst, 2009; Jungnickel, 2014; Rajan, 2012; Strathern, 2005), this study exemplifies the ethnographer's consequent movements from site to site claimed by the field under focus.

Following the displaced people of Varosha, I have identified the virtual place, the Facebook page they created to gather as a community and the in-depth archival search and interviewing revealed the imagined future site *under-construction*. During my attempt to construct the place of my fieldwork, the circumstances defined my method “rather than the method defining the circumstances” (Amit, 2003: 11). That is to say, multi-sited ethnography has been an evolved demand of the place-person bond I intended to study and I pursued Marcus’ (2012) warning: “multi-sited ethnography does not mean mere extensions of them into added-on sites but more a theoretical rethinking of fieldwork itself” (p. 21). My initial explorations of the spectral place surrounded by the military barbed wire conceptually headed me to commute (Jungnickel, 2014; Klausen, 2012) from one site to another at ‘multi-dimensional’ zone as I argued in my preliminary multi-sited ethnographic study (Akdeniz, 2019). My ethnographic movements have been amongst the physical, digital and imaginary in the order demanded by the unfolding happenings permitted by the principal asset of such multi-sited ethnography; its malleability. To paraphrase Marcus (1995) and Amid (2003), the efficacy of this form of fieldwork is its scope allowing the ethnographer to respond and adjust flexibly to the circumstances as they arise; the ethnographer in multi-sited ethnography is a ‘circumstantial activist’ (Marcus, 1995, p. 13) practicing his/her spatial imagination. Therefore the research design is *posteriori* (Marcus, 1999; p. 117; Candea, 2007, p. 172) being reshaped along.

### **3.2.2.1 Spectral Ethnography**

*By the barbed wire*; that had been the only path I could take to Varosha to have a glimpse of the derelict city inside. This military border of ‘forbidden zone’ has been guarded either by the soldiers holding guns or by the signs signifying them

since 1974 (see Figure 3.1). Without being able to access in the city before the latest opening for public visiting in October 2020 at certain times and streets, I had kept my walks around the city as much as the fence barrier allowed. Walked as close as to smell the salty rustiness of the wire and the emptiness of crumbling buildings felt impulsive for touch, or at least be present within. In place, everything was in my arm’s reach but in time I could not measure. Justin Armstrong (2010) in his inspiring and encouraging article *On the possibility of spectral ethnography*, elaborates on the possibility of ethnography excavating the lives-once-lived from the space of abandonment. He suggests, “engaging in a kind of ethnography of absence, an anthropology of people and places and things that have been removed, deleted, and abandoned to the flows of time and space[;...] a mode of ethnographic inquiry that performs an archaeology of the emptied present and of the vacant spaces of culture” (p. 243). Being vacuumed by the emptiness of the place with all the imprints of



Figure 3.1: The barbed wire with the ‘forbidden zone’ sign. Photo: CyprusMail

human life, my engagement with the ethnography of absence, *spectral ethnography* had already been awakened by my imagination (Rapport and Harris, 2015). Although

I had no personal memories with the place pre-1974, the remnants were triggering my imagination to see the life-once-lived there. Simmel states (1958) such abandoned places strike us as life settings sinking from life (p. 381). Referring to human mind that imagines continuity, Hancock and Garner (2014) define how mind creatively transfigures such settings into a coherent whole for “a reaffirmation of culture and a recontextualization of these dusty and broken objects into a larger vision of life full of vitality” (p. 79) against absence. In *An anthropology of absence*, Bille et al. (2010) refer to ‘phantom pains’ as a phenomenon of “sensuous experience of something which is materially absent” (p. 3) and spectral ethnography is an exploration of such experiences that this study attempts to trace.

Facing only one dimension over the military border, I found myself reversing the decay in my mind using the visible prompts in the environment. The remnants of a playground at the beach with the carousel half buried in the sea for example, made me imagine the activities it centered (see Figure 3.2 together with its pre-1974 scenery). Sound was first I could image, the loud choir and cacophony of happiness orchestrated with the sound of splashing waves. As Armstrong (2010) states “within the practice of spectral ethnography it is important to allow these spaces and their associated material cultures to speak for themselves through the lens of the ethnographer’s positionality” (p. 245). The military border imposed my physical positioning and I could only look from the angle of an outsider. The process of this ethnographic imagination generated by the remnants during my spectral explorations by the barbed wire continued until I took the research into the next stage when I started searching for the people of the place and listening to their narratives of belonging. It was then I was shown a photo of the carousel and I laughed; I imagined it was only for children, but it was not (see Figure 3.3).

By the time the city was opened to public visiting months after my spectral explorations as part of my initial ethnographic practice, I have had many interviews



Figure 3.2: A remnant of the carousel at the Glossa Beach in front of King George Hotel (left). The carousel in its living state pre-1974 (right). Photo left: Nafia Akdeniz, 2020. Photo right: Facebook page circulation.



Figure 3.3: The carousel at the Glossa Beach in front of King George Hotel, pre-1974. Photo: Courtesy of Violenta.

narrating the life-once-lived in those remnants. Hence, my experience of being present within this spectral place has already moved to another stage. I was not listening to the remnants talking for themselves anymore, but the people narrating the

stories of them both during the interviews we had before the opening and during the walks we took together into their city after the opening. In my multi-dimensional ethnographic ‘positioning’ in Armstrong’s (2010) term, the people of the place took me to their virtual gatherings at their social networking site: Facebook, the second site in the multi-sited ethnographic scope of this study.

### **3.2.2.2 Social Media Ethnography**

The ethnography of social media, which provide a platform for “digitally enabled narration in online contexts for interaction” (Page, 2012, p. 330; see also Jungnickel, 2014; Baker, 2013; Postill and Pink, 2012; Miller, 2011; Thurlow and Mroczek, 2011), has been of growing interest in the broader field of computer-mediated communication studies (Androutsopoulos, 2006; Herring, 2007). Page (2012) in *The narrative dimensions of social media storytelling* strengthens the call in multi-dimensional narrative analysis (content and context) for greater attention to fragmentary stories, ‘small stories’ in Georgakopoulou (2013) terms, occurring in the interactional contexts. The interactional affordances of social networking sites constantly advance, Page (2012) argues and this development interconnects the conversational interactions “across physical and virtual locations” (p. 345). Aiming for multi-dimensional narrative analysis – typology and function of place attachment narratives, this study follows “hybrid research techniques, like face-to-face and online interviews” (Mare, 2017, p. 650) at multi-sites identified during the eventual research design.

The social networking site created by the participants, *Varosiotas*, is one of this study’s multi-sited focuses on the fragmentary, interacting ‘small stories’. Having progressed with the place attachment narrations constructed by the displaced people of Varosha during the face-to-face interviews with online follow-ups, this study

demonstrates a modified understanding of constructed field-site as a ‘network of interlinked encounters’ (Horst, 2009, p. 129). Such encounters, both online and offline revealed how this multiplied network creates forms of continuity for the people involved as an attempt to reinforce their sense of community. As the ethnographer of the social networking site they created to connect, I followed that continuity of networking amongst the sites evolving into a way of making the place. Hence, despite its state of being ‘geographically scattered’ (Craith and Hill, 2015, p. 46) after enforced displacement and reclaimed by nature, the place of that study is not a ‘geographically discontinuous field’ in Hage’s (2005) terms; the virtual place have been their gathering force.

Named as *Αμμόχωστος η πόλη μας, Famagusta our city*<sup>16</sup>, the Facebook page in this study’s scope is created on March 30, 2011. It is a public page with approximately 20,500 members as of January 8, 2021. The posted description of this page includes an explanation of their vision and mission: This Greek Cypriot initiative comprising mainly the displaced people of Varosha emphasizes how eventually the page has woven the social fabric of the city abandoned more than four decades ago and communicating via this social networking has reinforced the desire for home returning. With an aim to raise public awareness on the issue of Famagusta and Cyprus problem with a future oriented unifying vision, the cooperation with Turkish Cypriot ‘Famagusta Initiative’<sup>17</sup> is explained with their common goal to revive the city for the former residents’ home-returning. The impact of civil society on forming the peace culture is also highlighted in the page’s description. The role of this group and its cooperation with the Turkish Cypriot ‘Famagusta Initiative’ is

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<sup>16</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/groups/205964922756784/>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/groups/magusainsiyatifi/>  
<https://www.facebook.com/BicommunalFamagustaInitiative/>

outlined as a model of peaceful coexistence of the two communities in a spirit of mutual understanding and reconciliation away from the dividing mentalities of the past. With the expanding network and the bi-communal movements achieved so far, the administrators of the Facebook page continue to describe how they managed to restore trust with the Turkish Cypriot compatriots and disenthralled the illusions that separated them. They also declare how this bi-communal vision impacts the way they dream of future. They state they are ready to contribute effectively to the revival of their city and reunification of their homeland, Cyprus.

I have become a member of this group and I shared the photographs I took during the Good Friday ritual in the church of Ayios Girogos Exorinos (see Appendix A), the first participant observation of this study. My post initiated the interaction with these displaced people of Varosha on that online platform too. Then, I posted an official announcement on 17 May 2018 about my research with the consent form (see Appendix B) to notify the group members about my presence there and the purpose of my research. Receiving supporting comments on my post, I started arranging face-to-face interviews with the ones expressing their interest in being a participant. Progressing my participant observations online, I also identified some conversations that I valued for further elaborations and expansions on the relevant issues first through inbox correspondences and then face-to-face interviews if/when needed and agreed. Through inbox correspondences, I practiced follow-up interviews for clarifications and/or further extensions on the interview statements as well. I have also be-friended my research participants on the Facebook to ease the technicalities of interaction i.e. tagging, sharing, etc. Being friends increases the relevancy of algorithmic appearance on my news feed too. Eventually, I have built a genuine friendship with the majority of my research participants and some



volunteered to introduce me to new participants, to arrange face-to-face interviews, and even to drive me to places for further participant observations. They also assisted me with the Facebook ‘see translation’ feature; after identifying the data relevant to the scope of my research through translation, I asked for their confirmations and editions if need be.

I avoided interfering with the flow of their online interactions except during the critical happenings such as the first press entrance to Varosha in August 2019 since 1974. Disclosing what has been closed for half a century through press cameras created an unprecedented shock despite their previous exposure to ‘illegal’ drone shootings showing scenes from inside. This event had an impact on their perception of what was left decades ago in the sense that it was the first time others officially and openly looking at their once-lived life remnants without their consent. This was an act of intentional *disrespect* and *humiliation*, the words used in their Facebook posts alongside the publications of the press. “*Without us, the houses are naked*”, they indicated and felt *ashamed*, referring to their feelings and the feelings of their houses they personified. Having inherited their memories through their narration along my 3-year participation in their lives, I had similar feelings too and responded. Those photographs and video recordings<sup>18</sup> taken from inside of the fenced off Varosha have sparked an empathic story in me narrating resistance to such trespassing on ones own memories without their consent. After posting my story (see Appendix C) on *Famagusta our city*, the Facebook page, their comments approved my initial feeling that I have eventually grown an ‘empathic attachment’ to their place (Boğaç, 2020). One comment saying “*I was always thinking that sometimes memories seem to be transplanted from one mind into another. Now I am sure*”.

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<sup>18</sup> <https://knews.kathimerini.com.cy/en/news/reporters-set-foot-in-cypriot-ghost-town>  
<http://www.newsincyprus.com/news/198330/reporters-first-visit-to-varosha-videos>

Another one commented, “*you have looked through our souls, managed to capture all the different shades of pain... what a beautiful piece... such a precious way to share pain*”! The participant telling me the story of the ice-cream man during our interview also commented;

*I remember the evening that we arranged our meeting at the "House for Cooperation" very clearly - I remember how our interview turned into a 2-hour marathon session during which I poured out my heart/memories of growing up in Famagusta - I recall sharing the "Loukata, Loukata, (Look at that), cherry cherry" story, so whether the source was me, or someone else, I am so glad that it found itself a place in this beautiful narrative.*

These reactions upon my narrative have given me implications for further research beyond the scope of this study. One is at the intersection of post-memory, narrative and place attachment studies; the possibility of growing empathic place attachment for a place with no personal or parental memories but inherited ones through story telling. The other one is to do with confidential research in the era of social media when the participants share the interview content with their open names as Facebook posts. This unexpected experience made me feel the need to re-think the concept of confidentiality for the future hybrid researches to study the interactions where virtual and physical contexts intersect.

### **3.2.2.3 Ethnography of the Future**

“What was a mere marker on the horizon can be transformed, by imaginative narration, into a vivid presence,” argues Tuan (1991, p. 689) to suggest how narratives imagining the future function in constructing it in the present. Beside Tuanian focus on narratives in building the future, in *The anthropology of the future*, Rebecca Bryant and Daniel M. Knight (2019) explore how the groundwork for the future is prepared in the present, how orientations towards the future is a way to study the present. They argue

... in every action and interaction the future is present. The future is

encountered in novelty and repetition, but also in aspiration and inertia. In every muttering of hope expressed, in the formation of each new relationship, in every glance out the window toward passers-by, in each knock at the door, in all the scribbled notes on the calendar, in hitting the brake to let children cross at every red light, in the choice to stay in and read a good book rather than party the night away, a seed of the future is planted. (Emphasis added, p. 198)

To define the function of the planted seed of the future in the present, they refer to ‘teleologies of action’ as imagining the future and planning accordingly with hope and how they may also collapse creating disappointments. Referring the philosopher Theodore R. Schatzki, they describe ‘teleoaffective structure’ of activities rooted in the present with the future orientations in the ‘vernacular timespace’ with epochal thinking; Time of Crisis, Time of War, Time of Peace, Time of Hope, etc. What guides the orientation for the future is this ‘teleoaffective structure’ providing “a set of endorsed, acceptable ends for which people can aim” (Bryant and Knight, 2019, p. 195). That is to say, such structure “presents people with projects, recommended paths, and futures to aspire to, *drawing the future into the present* and giving it a vibrant essence as something that not only should be sought after, but is also ultimately achievable” (Emphasis added, Bryant and Knight, 2019, p. 196).

Starting with the press entrance to the fenced off Varosha in August 2019, continuing with the roundtable meeting in there in February 2020, the opening for public visit in October 2020 and finally the ‘picnic’ in November 2020 have created a ‘vernacular timespace’, Time of Crisis: Not only the displaced people of Varosha hoping for home returning at any moment since the first day they had to abandon their city in August 1974, but also the people designing its future revival for so long feel this crisis of the future. Because these latest incidents declaring the potential revival of the city do not have a participatory nature in the process of decision-

making<sup>19</sup>, the displaced people of Varosha tremendously increased their narratives of place attachment to resist for rightfulness in constructing their future, the future of the city. They intensified the descriptions of their life-once-lived there and right to live again in the future. Together with their preceding narratives of place attachment I have themed as Narrative of Loss, Narrative of Threshold and Narrative of Transformation, this study ethnographically investigates their Narrative of Future as well; their future related *words and deeds* in Fisherin sense, *future orientation in the present* as Bryant and Knight (2019) term. The designers of the city's future-architects, urban designers, engineers, ecologist, etc., put their visions forth for empathic participatory revival and *The Famagusta Eco-city Project* is the particular one this study explores as a 'teleaffective structure', as a present empathic narrative of the future, as a narrative 'drawing the future into the present'. Both the displaced people of Varosha and the designers of that project themselves state their standpoints on how this project shapes the future potentially with its unifying vision of Famagusta-to-be as elaborated in detail in section 4.1.4. '*Narrative of Future*'.

Practicing ethnography of the future through narratives as one of its multi-sites, this study strengthens Tuan's (1991) argument on the functionality of narration in transforming the future into the present as well as Bryant and Knight's (2019) suggestion of studying everyday ways of being that encompass the orientations of the future. Building on these theorizations of future-oriented present, this study develops the understanding of multi-sited ethnographies with a new dimensional site, rather than geographical one; it conceptually adds a new 'future' site to George E. Marcus's 'spatial canvas' (1995, p. 98) to study the present. In the context of involuntarily displaced people imagining life back in their place in the impending future shaping

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<sup>19</sup>[https://cyprus-mail.com/2020/02/12/decisions-expected-in-the-coming-days-on-opening-varosha/?fbclid=IwAR1rkP8cOMZBDMPIIsIYS0Tb8eXhR9yEoY4PHvpyCTgkJ8XwTxTTiT\\_14E0](https://cyprus-mail.com/2020/02/12/decisions-expected-in-the-coming-days-on-opening-varosha/?fbclid=IwAR1rkP8cOMZBDMPIIsIYS0Tb8eXhR9yEoY4PHvpyCTgkJ8XwTxTTiT_14E0)

the way they live in the present, this study also situates the ethnographer ‘on hold’ for the ‘future’ site when/if becomes ‘present’ (Akdeniz, 2019). It may change any time in the way ‘*no one could imagine in the wildest dreams*’ as stated by one of the participants of this research referring to the latest openings to the closed city of decades.

### **3.3 Qualitative Research**

#### **3.3.1 Eight ‘Big-tent’ Criteria**

To form how to create a credible, ethical and significant study, Sarah J. Tracy (2013) builds on Lincoln and Guba’s (1985) question of how can an inquirer persuades his or her audiences that the research findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to and suggests eight ‘big-tent’ criteria for high-quality qualitative research (p. 231):

1. Worth Topic
2. Rich Rigor
3. Sincerity
4. Credibility
5. Resonance
6. Significant Contribution
7. Ethical
8. Meaningful Coherence

She defines *Worthy Topic*, the first item in her criteria with a quality of revealing an aspect of life that challenges and changes what is overlooked or oppressed in a ‘counterintuitive’ manner. My approach to (displaced) people - (contested) place bond in general in the context of conflict and of Varosha in particular as the case of my study is ‘counterintuitive’ as it aims to uncover the overlooked processes of narrative resistance of place attachment countering the power practices of the politics to claim right to live in home town under the military

captivity to be revived. *Rigor* as the second marker for qualitative quality, Tracy (2013) defines, indicates to “care and effort taken to ensure that the research is carried out in an appropriate manner” (p. 231). The appropriately rigorous practices of fieldwork refer to data collecting and analyzing procedures, which are elaborated in detail in sections 3.3.2 and 3.3.3.

Tracy (2013) lists *Sincerity* as the third item in her eight ‘big-tent’ criteria for quality and emphasizes two sincere practices: self-reflexivity and transparency. This study employs reflexive approach informing all stages of the research from its initial design to eventual stages of the fieldwork, analysis and writing. In Tracy’s (2003) words, “self- reflexive researchers consider how their bodies and intentions impact the types of data, relationships, and trust available to them” (p. 234). Beside the methodological enrichment during the active interviewing (see 3.3.2.1.) and participant observation (see section 3.3.2.2.) stages, my identity as a Turkish Cypriot researcher has created dialogue-based confrontational environments with the Greek Cypriot people of Varosha and exemplified ways of initiating such reflexive and transparent dialogues between the communities of conflict. In my field notes and side notes to my transcriptions of the interviews, I further reflected on my feelings as potential follow up studies with new scopes both theoretically and methodologically.

Reflexivity and transparency do not only enrich the data and data collection processes, but they increase the credibility/trustworthiness (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) of the research as well. To achieve qualitative *credibility*, the fourth feature in the criteria of quality, Tracy (2013) encourages some fieldwork and post-fieldwork practices (p. 235). Geertzian (1973) ‘thick description’ of the people and the processes in the cultural group being ethnographically studied is one of them suggesting a study of the iceberg under the water too, not only its top tip. I tend to

ensure the thickness of the descriptions in this study through ‘multi-vocality’, by including multiple voices of the participants and of mine. ‘Crystallization’ developed by Ellingson (2008) is another aspect confirming credibility; it is a methodological framework “bringing together not just different genres and forms of data and analysis... but also different genres and forms of sense making within interpretive methodology” (p. xxii). The multi-sited ethnographic scope and structure of this study is an attempt to crystalize the lived experience of enforced displacement and narrative resistance of place attachment to facilitate seeing and making sense of the multi-faceted crystals. Those crystals reflect, in Richardson’s (2000) words “externalities and refract within themselves, creating different colors, patterns, and arrays, casting off in different directions” (p. 934).

To enrich credibility, since the very beginning of this inquiry, I have always ensured ‘member reflection’ as phrased by Tracy (2013, p. 237). In other words, I have been collaborating with the participants about the processes of data collection, translation and interpretation. As the research unfolded, I kept updating some ethics related methodological procedures together with the participants. For example, as I progressed in the interviewing stage, I have started having some cases with publications and exhibitions in which the confidential approach of this research would clash with the copyright issues. After the opening of the fenced of Varosha to public visits on 8 October 2020, I have observed a narrative flourishing in newspapers and digital platforms telling the stories of Varosha by its displaced people with an experience of pre-1974 life in the city. Among those published stories, there are some of my participants’ I collected during the confidential interviews, but published with their real names afterwards. To resolve this raising conflict of confidentiality and copyright, although I had received the participants’

informed consent within a confidentiality framework (see Appendix D for interviews, E for visuals, F for Facebook content), I felt the need to re-collaborate with publishing participants. I received their informed consent to use their real names (see Appendix G) rather than the pseudonyms to protect their copyrights in the text of my study. Another example of collaboration is through my participant observations of the Facebook page created by the people of Varosha. I have been following the digital content in Greek through the ‘see translation’ feature of Facebook and when I decided the post was worth further elaboration, I have collaborated with the writer of that content to improve my interpretation. When necessary, they have edited or re-written the Facebook translations in English for my use of reference.

The fifth item of qualitative quality is *resonance* of the text that “meaningfully reverberates and impacts an audience” (Tracy, 2013, p. 239) in two ways: ‘transferability’ and ‘naturalistic generalization’. To paraphrase Tracy (2013), when the findings of a research communicate something meaningful in the readers’ own world, relates to something significant, then it resonates through transferability. That is to say, the findings of this study do not necessarily resonate only with the displaced people of Varosha. Rather it aims to bring insights to the people with or without experiences of imposed geographical shifts or anything imposed that causes struggling through their sense of belonging. The processes of narrative resistance to countering narratives of oppression can be transferred to various contexts of conflict. Resisting by remembering, mnemonic resistance, exemplified in this study is a concern of innumerable studies including place, memory, culture, heritagization, etc. Tracy (2013) explains how the qualitative researchers assist the readers’ feeling viscerally as if they have been there through ‘thick descriptions’ and ‘aesthetic



merit'<sup>20</sup>. The process of 'naturalistic generalization' is then activated and the readers can "appreciate a study's findings and then intuitively apply them to their own situations" (p. 239).

Significant research serves to "bring clarity to confusion, make visible what is hidden or inappropriately ignored, and generate a sense of insight and deepened understanding" (Tracy, 1995, p. 209 quoted in Tracy, 2013, p. 240). With its attempt to strengthen the understanding of how contested place - displaced people bond functions through narratives of resistance, this study's attempted *significant contributions*, the sixth marker of the qualitative quality, are not only theoretical and methodological in the frameworks of narrative and place attachment studies (see Introduction – Importance of study), but practical too revealing implications for policy makers, place makers, peace makers in practice. Raising the neglected voices of the displaced people of Varosha, this thesis has created dialogue-based communication environments between the communities in conflict. It supports and strengthens the civil society endeavors, the Bi-communal Famagusta Initiative, in particular with its constant call for "common vision for the sustainable revival of the wider Famagusta region<sup>21</sup>" (Word from Cyprus, 2020). This study explores *The*

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<sup>20</sup> Tracy (2013) defines a text with 'aesthetic merit' as interactive, descriptive, evocative and capable of emotionally affecting the reader. She asks: "Have you ever read something so moving that you laughed out loud, cried, felt sick to your stomach, or felt inspired to change the world? If so, then the text has aesthetic merit. It engaged your feeling and interpretive response. It was not boring." (p. 240)

<sup>21</sup> In the Famagusta Dialogues Report, Dr Michalis Michael (2020) refers to the increasing mentions of 'Greater Famagusta Area' and his zooming out description of that 'hypothetical' area helps locating Varosha and its perception within the whole setting:

Greater Famagusta Area, hypothetically, encompasses, in northern Cyprus, the Old Town of Famagusta, the expanding suburban sprawl in the 'lived-in' modern town of north Famagusta 'outside the walls', from the Port of Famagusta, the 'open part of Varosha', to Engomi (Tuzla) and Styloi (Mutluyaka), and the large fenced-off city of Varosha, (and potentially the whole Iskele [Trikomo] District of Famagusta in the North that covers western Mesaoria Plain and the Karpaz [Karpasia] peninsula); and, in the southern Republic of Cyprus, the remainder post-1974 Famagusta District of the agricultural, light industrial and tourist municipalities of Paralimni-Protaras, Deryneia, Sotira, and Agia Napa, as well as the exiled, refugee and diasporic Greek Cypriot Famagusta Municipality. (p. 6, Endnote)

These areas are beyond the scope of both the Famagusta Dialogues Report and this study. However, with

*Famagusta Eco-city Project* as a means to this end, which is contextualized theoretically in 3.2.2.3 *'Ethnography of the Future'* and from the displaced people's perception of the future in Section 4.1.4 *'Narrative of Future'*.

The methodological significance of this study emerges with its collaborative, creative, contemporary and eventual research design. For Tracy (2013), a methodologically significant research “provides insight in terms of our craft skills associated with collecting, managing, and analyzing data, and, given the rich texture of the qualitative landscape, this is an area ripe for expansion” (p. 242). Ethnographically studying the culture created by the experience of enforced displacement has eventually meant doing a scattered fieldwork following the scattered people of the deserted, military, fenced off place where any access had been forbidden until recently. With the unprecedented opening for the public visit to Varosha by the political authorities, the people of Varosha could enter the city decades later and I had to leave the deskwork and initiate the second stage of the fieldwork to be the participant observer of this new experience as well. These demanding but unique features of the place implied how to approach to it and to its people. In order to disclose the ‘rich texture of this qualitative landscape’, I ethnographically merged the multi-sites of the field as spectral, digital/social media and future (see section 3.2.2. *'Multi-sited Ethnography'*) suggesting ways of approaching such fields. Another methodologically new understanding implying further exploration is my observation of how the venue/place of the interview impacts on the interview content especially when interviewing merges with participant observation at the places of experience as the object of inquiry. That is to

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the inclusion and analysis of Famagusta Eco-city Project, this study aims to entail a futurist revival vision of unified Famagusta as the beacon for the unified Cyprus. This is also the vision inspiring by the latest Greek Cypriot Famagustians initiative entitled *Famagusta for Cyprus* (see Conclusion).

say, when interviewing a displaced person of Varohsa in Varosha while performing a ritual related to Varosha.

The seventh marker of qualitative quality according to Tracy (2013) is *ethical* research practice requiring a consideration of both procedural and situational ethics. As an institutional procedure, this study is officially initiated upon the approval of Eastern Mediterranean University Ethics Committee (Issue: ETK00-2018-0083) with a focus on universally ethical actions such as doing no harm, avoiding deception, getting informed consent ensuring privacy and confidentiality. However, the progress of inquiry has raised considerations for situational ethics too in the specific case of my study. As Tracy (2013) argues, ethical research should consider “procedural rules and regulations, as well as of situational preferences and participants’ needs. Ethical researchers vigilantly consider the impact of their practices *throughout* the inquiry” (emphasis original, p. 245, see also Gerrard, 2020). As I exemplified for the *credibility* of my research, I have always been ‘ethically mindful’ in Heggen and Guillemin (2012) terms, “negotiating ethical issues with the participants” (p. 467). Some of them having publications and exhibitions especially after the opening of the city for public visits raised an ethical conflict between confidentiality and copyright issues and I had to renew the informed consent forms accordingly. Interestingly to my surprise, after having the confidential interviews (before the recent newspaper publications) I have observed some of the participants posting how they feel about the interview they had with me on their personal Facebook accounts with real names and on the community Facebook page where Varosha people gather. Such voluntary acts have revealed a necessity to question how the notion of confidentiality methodologically and ethically functions in the era of social media where the private and public space is merged and blurred as the digital content creators may choose to

post the content of a confidential research publicly.

Having the community Facebook page as one of the multi-sites of this research and signed informed consents about collecting data from the digital content created by the participants' posts too, I had to do further research on *social media ethics* in the digital context to figure out how to deal with the raising confidentiality chaos of my study. Collaborating with the participants and reviewing the ethics literature on digital fields / internet ethnography (Gerrard, 2020; Roberts, 2015; Kozinets et al, 2014; Markham, 2012; Tilley and Woodthorpe, 2011, Sveningsson 2004), I felt more comfortable with the idea of using pseudonyms except for the cases with publications with copyright issues even when the participants openly post from their personal Facebook accounts. Digital accounts could be deactivated but not this thesis once published, I thought, as the researcher I am responsible for protecting the participants from harm. Disguising their identities with confidentiality is the ethical code of a researcher practice. Yet, in the digital context, using pseudonyms may not be enough to resolve the sensitive confidentiality issue especially in the context of Varosha. There had been trespasses to the military zone through the barbed wire barriers prohibiting people's entrance inside the town and now, after the opening, people attempt to trespass the rope barriers prohibiting their entrance inside the houses. Any direct quote from the digital content may be "locatable through search engines..." (Roberts, 2015, p. 319) and the participants can easily be identified. Markham (2012) states that while the capacities of Internet have expanded the potential understandings of social research, these capacities have also revealed 'significant weaknesses' in traditional qualitative research. She argues for;

...innovative methods for protecting privacy in research of Internet-mediated social contexts. Traditional methods for protecting privacy by hiding or anonymizing data no longer suffice in situations where social researchers need to design studies, manage data, and build research reports

in increasingly public, achievable, searchable, and traceable spaces. More and more, data mining technologies are used to link participants to the information they produce and consume... In such research environments, there are few means of adequately disguising details about the ... persons being studied. (P. 336)

‘Creative fabrication of data analysis and representation’ is the innovative method Markham (2012) suggests in the ambiguously shifting public-private digital contexts in spite of her awareness on how “fabrication is considered a form of research misconduct, often conflated with its sister term ‘falsification’” (p. 336). She states that her choice of term is deliberate in order to highlight the constructive aspects of interpretation and the researcher’s meaning making process of data. She clarifies;

Fabrication is a term often glossed as the opposite of truth telling; the quintessential form of unethical research conduct. But when we remove the political baggage, fabrication represents the activity of combining, molding, and/or arranging elements into a whole for a particular purpose. Whether one is building ships, shaping metal for arrowheads, weaving a narrative, creating a documentary, or arranging data to make a particular point, the fabrication process is not value-laden in itself. It is only when fabrication is combined with deliberate ill intention, deception, self-serving motives, or political gain that it earns its contemporary pejorative connotations. In anthropological or post-positivist research arenas, fabrication is actually an apt description for a process of interpretation. (Emphasis added, p. 338)

As a method of protecting the participants’ privacy and confidentiality against data mining software or any digital act with an intention to trace back the real identities behind the pseudonyms, I have ‘fabricated’ the digital content created on the Facebook page in Markham’s sense only when the posts are written originally in English. The posts on their Facebook page are written usually in Greek and the English translations I used in my texts are products of my collaboration with the participants via private correspondences and not published on any digital platform to be traced back.

The final characteristic of qualitative inquiry in Tracy’s (2013) criteria is

*meaningful coherence*. This research hopes to have accomplished its purpose and answered its eventual research questions with findings and implications for further studies. Contextualizing itself in the literature of both narrative communication and place attachment studies, it hopes to have shed light on the understudied areas of these studies. As in Tracy's (2013) words, a meaningfully coherent research "attentively interconnect[s] literature reviewed with research foci, methods, and findings" (p. 245) in order to show, not to tell its the significant contributions.

### **3.3.2 Data Collection**

Aiming for in-depth understanding of how the experience of enforced displacement and resisting place attachment are narratively constructed and communicated, I employed narrative ethnographic methods within the philosophical and theoretical frameworks of qualitative research. That is to say, in order to gain ethnographic insights on the 'contingencies of narrative practice' (Gubrium and Holstein, 2012, p. 34), I have expanded the methodological scope of this research to incorporate two kinds of narrative environments. One is through *participant observations* at multi-sites. The other is through *active interviews* (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995) where participants are productive sources of narrative knowledge and the interviewer is active too in that process of knowledge production (Polkinghorne, 1988). In these environments, I have focused on the narrative *whats* revealing the thematic typology of narrative construction and communication of place attachment (see section 4.1. *Typology of Place Attachment Narratives*) and the narrative *hows* to explore how these narratives function (see section 4.2 *Function of Place Attachment Narratives*) as interactive means of communicating these themes. I have enhanced the data collection process by setting the interview accounts as environments for 'communicative reciprocity and collaboration' (Gubrium and

Holstein, 2012, Mishler, 1985). The narrative-ethnographic approach integrating the fieldwork data collection methods allowed in-depth understanding through *embodied* (participant observation) and *storied* (active interviews) ways of knowing the meaning making processes of place attachment via narrative resistance.

### **3.3.2.1 Active Interviews**

For this study, I recruited participants with *lived* (pre- 1974 generation) or *inherited* (post-1974 generation) experience of involuntary displacement from Varosha. During my initial participant observations in the eventual multi-sited fieldwork, online and offline, I started meeting the displaced people of Varosha and their children. Having introduced myself as a researcher, Turkish and English speaking Cypriot, I approached further to arrange interviews with the ones appreciating the study and willing to participate. Employing snowballing technique (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Atkinson and Flint, 2001), which participants suggest other people who would like to participate; I have interviewed 45 people of Varosha, 35 from pre-1974 generation and 10 from post-1974. I had semi-structured sets of questions for both pre- and post- generation interviewees (see Appendix H and I) and situating myself as an active interviewer allowed interactive narrative in the interview environments.

In other words, not seeing interviewees as passive ‘treasuries of information awaiting excavation’ or ‘vessels of answers’ in a traditional question and answer interview practice, I have followed an approach that recognizes the process of assembling coherent meaning in the interactional narration of experience. This approach situates the interviewer as an actively working ‘narrative partner’ co-producing narrative in conversation with the active interviewee. In reference to Mishler’s (1986) arguments elaborated in *Research interviewing: Context and*

*narrative*, Gubrium and Holstein (2012) state that such an interview narrative is a joint construction where questions and answers develop through the interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee. Acknowledging interview accounts as active accomplishments in contrast to traditional question-answer model of the interviewing is to fulfil;

...the tasks of the active interview that extend far beyond asking a list of questions. It involves encouraging subjective relevancies, prompting interpretive possibilities, facilitating narrative linkages, suggesting alternative perspectives, and appreciating diverse horizons of meaning. (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995, p. 78)

Being an active interviewer had an impact on how the narratives progress in relation to my identity as a Turkish Cypriot researcher (see the conversation with Vivian on the ‘whirling dervish’ for an illustration in section 4.1.3. *Narrative of Transformation*). As Holstein and Gubrium (1995) state “even the mere identity of the researcher primed respondent’s stories, positioning respondents in relation to how they might respond” (p. 41). Along with my identity actively present during the interviews, I also have observed that the venue/place of the interview has an impact on how the narrative in conversation progresses ethnographically. Taking this impact into consideration during the data collection stage activates the place as an active ‘character’ too in the narrative of the interview. The features of the place function as prompts for the directions of the narrative flow enriching data on place, displacement and place attachment.

To illustrate, I refer to how Vasso’s place she was abruptly displaced from accumulates into the sea. Upon her preference, we had the interview at the balcony of the Palm Beach Hotel in Famagusta facing the beachfront of Varosha. Having the view of the endless sea in front and the derelict seaside buildings behind the barbed wire dividing even the seawater on the left, we embodied the place of this inquiry.



Vasso was describing her pre-1974 life centered in the sea of Varosha while sitting with me decades later at the balcony seeing the same sea. With my awareness of the impact of the active interview venue on the interview content, I was not only interviewing her about her life then, I was also doing participant observation of how she has been experiencing the city after 2003 checkpoint openings allowing her to come to Famagusta. Telling her how I used to come and sit at the same balcony or walk by the barbed wire and daydream of the life in the city before 1974, she was telling me about her daydreams at the same place. I asked;

*Nafia: Can you tell me about your daydreaming a little if they are to do with life back in there or life in the future? What crosses your mind every time you sit here? Is it always the same thing? Or it depends?*

*Vasso: I always see myself in my childhood playing in the sand, that's why I feel relaxed... it was not like this [referring to the current situation of the beach as an extension of the hotel]; it was a lovely beach full of fish boats and people with children...*

*Nafia: At what age do you see yourself?*

*Vasso: a teenager... As I was very near the beach, I learned how to swim at a very early age. So I was a good swimmer. I see my life then swimming backwards and forwards until where the land ends in the sea. [She refers to the little island in the sea] And water is very deep there... it was full of shells then, not now...I know I am getting old. I know I have health problems, I have compromised with death, I know I will not go to my house but...*

*Nafia: the sea is there...*

*Vasso: the sea is there...*

*Being there* facing the sea, enabled her to advance her present narrative of her life then around the sea as the setting and enabled me to improve empathic understanding of *placed* daydreaming. That is to say, having met Vasso and heard of her lived experiences *there*, what I do from then on is not to daydream but to be a participant observer of her resisting place attachment through remembering of life by the sea then, and her present experience of being by the same sea. As illustrated with the excerpt from the interviews – Vasso's for active place and Vivian's for active

identities, the data I collected through active interviewing achieve, in Holstein and Gubrium (1995)'s words,

... two key aims: to gather information about what the research project is about and to explicate how knowledge concerning that topic is narratively constructed. Findings, then, come in two intertwined forms: data about the subject matter of the research and data about how that subject matter is organized in respondents' narrative experiences. (p. 56)

These two intertwined forms of data collecting in this study eventually evolved through analysis (see detailed elaboration of data analysis in section 3.3.3.) into the thematic typologies of place attachment narratives and the process of them unfolding and functioning.

### **3.3.2.2 Participant Observation**

The qualitative researchers with humanistic approach have developed participant observation as a scholarly disciplined research method. By 'being there', the participating observer collects descriptive data about the distinctive features of culture formed by a community as records of human way of living. Danny Jorgenson (2015) explains that participant observation is;

...a unique method for investigating human existence whereby the researcher more or less actively participates with people in commonplace situations and everyday life settings while observing and otherwise collecting information. By participating in human life, the researcher acquires direct access to not only the physically observable environment but also its primary reality as humanly meaningful experiences, thoughts, feelings, and activities. Through participation, in other words, it is possible to observe and gather many forms of data that often are inaccessible from the standpoint of a nonparticipating external observer. Participant observation consequently is one of the premier methods for conducting investigations of the realities of human existence in their totality as they exhibit external, physical characteristics and internal, subjective, and personal features as well as intersubjectively and socially meaningful properties. (p. 1-2)

Qualitative researchers employing this data collection method, therefore, acknowledge that human realities are produced and internalized by human beings within social interactions. Exploring the narrations of displacement and place

attachment, I participated the people of Varosha to observe how they make meaning through social interaction of the ‘lived experience’ of being deprived from hometown and of yearning for home returning despite decades long separation.

The ethnographic data I was collecting from the sites of my multi-sited fieldwork were formed basically in two kinds. One was at the interview venues where the active interviews progressed into participant observations too when the interviewees preferred to meet at places of their frequent presence in Famagusta. For example, daydreaming together with Vasso at her usual place, the balcony of Palm Beach Hotel, looking at the same horizon of the same sea that was the same view of pre-1974 has enabled me to collect data not only from the experience of being there with her but from the narration about that experience as well. Another one was having a coffee together with Georgios at his usual place, the coffee table he sets by the wire in front of pre-1974 coffee shop (see Figure 3.4, left) facing his house (see Figure 3.4, right), looking together at his collapsing roof with wild flowers blossoming over it out of dust gathered in his absence. This interview too has grown into participant observation as I was participating Georgios in his usual coffee table set drinking coffee and imagining backwards and forwards. Such experiences *emplaced* me with the participants not only next to them at the time and place of the active interviews but also at the time and place of the interview narrative’s subject matter in the same way they regularly practice: watching themselves in Varosha then from the time and place of Varosha now behind the fenced border.



Figure 3.4: Georgios' house (right) and the coffee table by the barbed wire fencing the remnants of the coffee shop in front of his house (left). Photos: Nafia Akdeniz.

Another example of active interviews situating me as a participant observer too was while I was walking with Alexandra by the barbed wire in the way her consistent coming and looking at her house through the fence and having mental walks in the house since 2003 checkpoint openings. Together with her, I was experiencing a walk at the imposed path by the military fence blocking the way her home but she hosted me inside through her detailed description mentally, which fuses data emerging from active interviews and participant observation. We stopped to talk,

*Nafia: We are in front of your house now...*

*Alexandra: Many times I come here, I can't go inside but I feel inside... I hope that one day I will come to stay... This second room was my brother's bedroom after the living room. The third one was my parents' room. I have plans to close first this room because I need a lot of money to repair the whole house. I plan to stay inside and then repair it in a year [gradually]. My feelings are sometimes down in darkness, sometimes up with hope. I don't know. I am confused. I hear voices from my childhood years. I see all the time the life in my neighborhood. I see my neighbors. This was my church father's house. Over there we had the church. This was the school and I am always living here in my mind. I have never left...*

*Nafia: I know you still carry the key to your house. Show me the entrance please.*

*Alexandra: The front room had balcony... There was a big garden in front of the house but this palm tree was not there, it has grown after the war (see Figure 3.5). This is the Ayios Zoni Church. From the other side, you can see it clearly. The church door and my house door were facing each other. When they and we opened the doors, we could become one house. It was very near. You see that building? We stayed in there for safety for 2-3 days when the planes came in 1974...*

Not all interviews were conducted at the places of participants' regular presence in Famagusta and not all participant observations included officially arranged interviews. The second kind of ethnographic data I was collecting was at various places I participated in Famagusta and elsewhere in Cyprus to observe the people of Varosha gathering for certain reasons to perform place attachment as a displaced community or in their current homes with 'mnemonic' (Zerubavel, 1996, 2003) objects from Varosha. The first participant observation I had was at the religious event, Good Friday, at Agios Giorgios Exorinos Church<sup>22</sup> at the time I was trying to orient myself in their gathering places to build trust between the community



Figure 3.5: Alexandra's house within the fenced off Varosha with the palm tree grown after the war. Photo: Courtesy of Alexandra.

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<sup>22</sup> This church is in the northern side of the divide. It had continued to serve the Greek Cypriots, not only Famagustians until 1956 in the colonial times of Cyprus. After 57 years, the church has been opened to religious services of Greek Cypriots again in 2013.

I was approaching to as an ethnographer. That was on 10 April 2018 and I remember vividly how I was sensually enthralled by the ‘smell of Famagusta’ as its people named it during the later conversation we exchanged. I immersed myself in a rosy cool atmosphere rising from the washed floor of the church fused with the smell of moist soil and stone, joining with the smell of various white flowers used by women of Varosha to decorate the symbolic bed of Jesus, Epitaph, *Επιτάφιος*. I distinguished the smell of orange flower, I remember, I field-noted why not jasmine as the symbolic flower of Cyprus but orange flowers. They explained to me later during the interviews how orange is the symbol of Famagusta and is celebrated with the Orange Festival as one of the intangible cultural heritage they protect as a memory using orange as a mnemonic object (see section 4.2.1 ‘*Resistance to oblivion*’).

When all the surrounding flowery smells combined with the smell of fresh traditional pastry, *Φλαούνα*, *pilavuna*, cheese filled bread of Cyprus, I felt mesmerized. There was a deep sensational feeling enchanting me in the smell generated by the gathered people of Varosha inside the church; it felt familiar, it felt intimate, it even felt home. Encouraged with these feelings of welcoming atmosphere, I stepped into their annual community photograph of gathering in front of the epitaph (see Figure 3.6). Placing myself in that frame, I felt accepted as a researcher to proceed with the later stages of my research. The ‘smell of Famagusta’ I gathered from my first participant observation becomes one of their persistent reference points of remembering Varosha, Famagusta<sup>23</sup>. They describe it as an olfactory memory they keep reviving in their post-1974 ways of performing their place attachment and during my ethnographic participation in their embodied performances, I was sensually present too to gain perception of their placed sensual

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<sup>23</sup> They have the tendency to call their place Varosha when they refer to their homes and Famagusta when they refer to their city of their homes.

experiences as suggested by Sara Delamont (2004) in *Ethnography and Participant Observation* and Sara Pink (2009) in *Doing Sensory Ethnography*.

### 3.3.3 Data Analysis

#### 3.3.3.1 Iterative Analysis

The process of iterative analysis involves constant reflection upon active interests, current literature and ongoing happenings to ground the meaning-making process of the emergent data. As Tracy (2013) explains, iteration is “a reflexive process in which the researcher visits and revisits the data, connects them to emerging insights, and progressively refines his/her focus and understandings” (p. 184, see also Strivastava and Hopwood, 2009). This constant revisiting and refining



Figure 3.6: Good Friday gathering at Agios Giorgios Exorinos Church, April 2018.

process includes reflexive cycles of coding as *first level codes* being descriptive (description of *what*) and *second-level codes* being analytic (analysis of *why/how*) (Saldaña, 2015; Tracy, 2013). I have transformed the 45-recorded interviews (shortest approx. 60 minutes, longest approx. 150 minutes) into text documentation through verbatim transcription myself. This process helped me internalize my participants’ voices and I was expanding my field-notes using the transcriptions as

prompts for further comments. After completing the transcription stage, I started the manual coding cycle of the data I compiled using the field notes I took during the participant observations of the multi-sites of my ethnographic fieldwork (online and offline) and the interview transcriptions. During the first cycle of coding the data, I have created a manual notepad (see Appendix J) for initial themes leading to categories. This stage is termed as ‘open coding’ by Esterberg (2002) describing it as reading the transcriptions line by line and making a note of whatever themes/categories jumps out. As the codes emerged, I was consulting with my supervisor who was also reading the transcriptions word by word and approaching the data as the inter-coder as well as the supervisor. The second-level coding, what Esterberg (2002) terms ‘focused coding’ is narrowing down all the notes of the first cycle in a process of constant revision, refining and update until the research officially ends.

Varosha is an organic living case as a never fading item on the political agenda which constantly sparks a potential re-experiencing what it means to be displaced from and longing for it for its people. Employing ‘constant comparative method’ (Charmaz, 2006), I kept comparing the emerging data to the codes and amend accordingly either to fit the new data into the categories of emerging discussion of narrative resistance processes of sustaining place attachment. Or I have created new ones in order to reflect the latest experiences of the displaced people of Varosha, Famagusta (see section 4.2.2. *Resistance to oppression*). In case of identifying a code with a weak spot in need of a further elaboration to inform an emerging discussion of a theory in the data, I returned to the field to strategically gather more data as a practice of ‘theoretical sampling’ (Corbin and Strauss, 1990). At the time I thought the data I collected have reached ‘theoretical saturation’ (Glaser and Strauss, 1967;



Strauss and Corbin, 1990); with no new data emerging, my categories well developed and relating well (Tracy, 2013), a new circumstance has raised in my field and I had to initiate a new stage of data-collection in my field-work.

The abrupt opening of the city for public visiting after decades (Andreou, 8<sup>th</sup> October, 2020b) created a new experience for these displaced people finally seeing their city and I had to start a new cycle of follow-up interviews and observations. Visiting the city together with them upon their invitation to share their experience of being present *in* the city after half a century has given me a chance to embody what was done before mentally during my 3-year ethnographic research. That led to new data especially informed by the spectral ethnography perspective combined with the interviews, which has implications for the memory studies as well as the studies of narrative communication and ‘empathic place attachment’.

### **3.3.3.2 Discursive-Narrative Analysis**

As a means of making sense of the world, narrative is, in De Fina and Johnstone’s (2015) words, “socially and epistemologically constructive: through telling, we make ourselves and our experiential world” (p. 161). Because narration is a communicative process (Fisher, 1984) of both constructing and interpreting lived experiences, narrative analysis examines “participant roles in constructing accounts and in negotiating perspectives and meanings. Both these orientations to narrative – as *text* and as *process* – can inform reflexive analyses of various stages of doing ethnography” (emphasis added, Cortazzi, 2001, p. 384). In this study, in the context of Varosha, I ethnographically approached place attachment narratives of the displaced people as *texts* to establish a typology and as *processes* to reveal how this typology functions. To explore how narration potentially creates shared sense of place (Johnstone, 1990) and place attachment in the context of conflict forbidding

displaced people's return home for so long, I employed 'thematic narrative analysis' (Reissman, 2008) of the *texts* – archived in paper and digital forms and produced during the interviews as sound recordings, then verbatim transcriptions. Building on Harter et al.'s (2006) critical performative approach to narrative research, I expanded my analysis to uncover how such themes function to sustain place attachment to a place of abrupt separation. Reissman's (2008) 'thematic narrative analysis' also suggests this expansion of analysis from textual to functional to reveal how meaning emerges in the narration/storytelling context of communication (Bamberg, 2020).

## **Chapter 4**

### **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

The research questions guiding the present study focused on understanding what place attachment narratives of the displaced people of Varosha communicate and how these narratives function in the context of political conflict prohibiting home-returning since the enforced displacement in 1974 war of Cyprus. Having analyzed the data I collected via 45 active interviews and numerous participant observations with my constant-comparative methodology during this 3-year multi-sited ethnography (2018-2021), I discovered a thematic typology: Narrative of Loss, Narrative of Threshold, Narrative of Transformation and Narrative of Future. These narratives work to resist to the possible oblivion and de-attachment of the place they were forced to abandon more than four decades ago and to the oppressive political narratives of conflict deferring home returning for that long.

#### **4.1 Typology of Place Attachment Narratives**

##### **4.1.1 Narrative of Loss**

Place attachment studies have explored place loss from the perspective of understanding the processes of attachment to new settlements in the context of voluntary relocation (Brown and Perkin, 1992) or involuntary but still focusing on the processes of growing new bonds to new places (Lewicka, 2011). Despite the reference to grief of loss and difficulty in reconstructing meaningful life afterwards (Devine-Wright and Howes, 2010; Fried, 1963; Fullilove, 1996), the process of resisting place attachment in case of abrupt displacement is left untouched in the

literature. Scannell and Gifford's (2010) tripartite framework outlining the processes of place attachment as affect, cognition, and behavior is portrayed only for the place *owned*, but in the context of lost place and sustained sense of ownership, the process of reinforcing attachment to the same place was not covered. Purporting to fulfill this gap in the place attachment literature, the present study has revealed the loss of place as the loss of and longing for its essence.

*"I am asked to re-claim ownership and the loss of my property use for many years"*, says Vivian (birth 1958, lives abroad) in sorrow and anger referring to the latest beachfront openings in the city declaring unilateral plans of its revival. I paraphrase her; how about my *loss of essence* I gained at the places in my city of not my personal property but property of public, community, togetherness, vibration, flow, way of living, being. She claims her loss of a public place, a medical clinic while its memory sustains with her firmly (see Introduction); she claims her sense of ownership to such public places of her memory, which is *the* loss to be claimed she argues, the 'affinity' she has for places, not her property, but her way of living in the city. *"I hasten to claim the loss of use of our common life to the committee<sup>24</sup>"* she concludes. Adonis' (birth 1967, lives in Nicosia) description of loss strengthens Vivian's portrayal; he describes the loss of place as the loss of first memories of being alive on earth,

*it is not the building, it does not matter, I don't care if the walls are crumbling down... it is the place I walked the first time, it is the place where my mother was breastfeeding me, it is the place that my mother had dreams of her family in that place, I don't care about the house as a building or as a value of the property... I don't care. I just want my place, you know.*

Stephanos' (birth 1955, lives in Paralimni) similar perception of loss focuses on the geographical features;

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<sup>24</sup> Immovable Property Commission, Cyprus.

*I was born and grew up there... on this lovely golden sand of Famagusta, my first steps were on the sand, not on any other kind of concrete floor or something... my first swimming was in this lovely beach of Famagusta.*

Emilia (birth 1956, lives in Larnaca) intensifies the impact of these geographical affordances in terms of water sports as part of daily living and being;

*everybody knew how to swim fairly well. We had swimming races and bets, who could swim up to Camila. When you ask about my relationship to the sea, I will tell you one thing. I believe that it is not blood that I have inside my veins; it is salt water. This is what I say always.*

Penelope's (birth 1965, lives in Nicosia) emphasis is on the loss of forming friendships and the art related interaction the city life provided to her family;

*... a lot of networking with people of art, music, literature and so I remember things... The first most important things, friendships were formed there, the first time of everything probably... And the sky, we come to Famagusta now to be under the Famagustian sky, we can't go our homes...*

Being abruptly separated from the feeling of content, that essence of the way of living, the seed of the soul, is described with a word from Greek Cypriot dialect Maroulla (birth 1959, lives in Nicosia) uses; *επουκουπίστηκε, upside down*, she says;

*... and then a big hole... it is a big hole, it is a big black void in your soul. Whatever you do, it is there. You know, it is your roots missing... the vibration of the city, of life we felt even when we were indoors is missing.*

The setting of Androulla's (birth 1959, lives in Nicosia) dreams is still Famagusta. We were having the interview in her house in Nicosia and she said, "*I never dream in this house or any house I passed since 1974. Only I have been in our home in Famagusta in my dreams*", there she starts crying: The loss is the setting of dreams, which is to be claimed. "*I don't hear my own smile from my soul*" says Alexandra (birth 1962, lives in Limassol) deepening the sense of loss, that smile she wants to return. Helen (birth 1959, lives in Limassol) describes herself as a stranger, a foreigner in Cyprus after being involuntarily displaced. We had our interview in Famagusta;

*I felt like a stranger, not like a Cypriot in Cyprus, like a foreigner Cyprus. This was my feeling. I never felt that Limassol is my town... my town is this one, even if I don't live here. I always live provisional... I have never settled down thinking I will be back in my town. I have an apartment in Limassol, but I don't care if I leave it and come here tomorrow to rent a house and live. I am not attached to Limassol but to Famagusta... I had a very beautiful life in this phantom city, we were blessed in paradise... it was very modern city; ... we had the Suez Canal system for water before all the others. We had a big yard, and we had orange trees, lemon trees. It was a city of citrus... People were very open-minded as well, progressive... I remember a bar in the sea, the Calipso club... you could go in the bar, sitting and the sea was underneath, I used to go to cafés, Edelweiss café... the other one was Boccacio, I started going to cafes, yes, age 15...*

The loss of *paradise*; that was the culmination of essential elements the people of Famagusta emphasized in their description of pre-1974 life they long to regain. While Penelope refers to Famagustian sky, Ellada (birth 1954, lives in Limassol) implies they re-claim *the air* of Famagusta they breathed then and they breathe now when they come since 2003;

*... when I enter Famagusta, the air is different. It's fresher... You may laugh but yes, we all feel the same thing, and it's not only me. But we breathe differently... our hearts expand... It's a different climate. Famagusta is something else, I don't know what. I cannot describe it. You feel it, you feel it inside you, and you breathe it. May be it's our love, may be because we are so far away from it, I don't know. When I go there every time I am so happy but when I have to leave and come back to Limassol, I get angry, I get sad. Because my house is only 5 minutes walking from the Glossa Beach, and then I have to drive to Limassol? Is this fair? I see my empty city looted and in ruins, and I have to leave it again and again every time I go to see, it's not fair.*

The heavenly description of the city they were forced to abandon always start with a perception of 'not the property', but what the city afforded them to live in those public and private places. The kind of personal and social life the city created is wanted to be re-gained. And they ask for a relief from the heavy weight of carrying the memories of the past; they want them to be the stories of their present lives. Lucas (birth 1958, lives in Nicosia) gathers;

*It's not the property, it's what it carries, the memories... it's belonging, obviously I have a land that belongs to me, that I would like to get back*

*again and hopefully give to my children, but it is what that property symbolizes rather than what its material costs...It was a construction of family savings. It's the emotional attachment. All I have is memories right now and I just want a relief. I no longer want them to be the story from the past; I want them to be the story of the present. I want my kids to share what I had. I want my kids to wake up and walk 3 paces and jump into this beautiful turquoise colored water and enjoy what I had that I took for granted. That's the thing that I resent the most, the fact that I had never realized that I lived in paradise... I want to go and enjoy all the things that I took for granted. Mainly it's the water, it's the sea, and it's the walking on the beach, it's the air, it's the feeling of freedom.*

The place loss is, as portrayed by the displaced people of Varosha, a loss of personal and cultural practices afforded by the geographical features – the sea, the sky and everything that happens within - the geographically inspired cultural features. The loss is the loss of “orienting landmarks that support wayfinding, and the social-spatial routines that make-up the fabric of day-to-day life” as acknowledged in the preceding studies of place loss as well (Scannell et al., 2016, see also Cooper Marcus, 1992; Greene et al., 2011). For the people of Varosha, the personally and culturally significant places of the fabric of life they lived pre-1974 are valued not as properties of material cost but as capsules of memory of that life-once-lived; the capsules feeling much heavier to carry every day at the stretching threshold between past and future.

#### **4.1.2 Narrative of Threshold**

Referring to Kermode's (2000) ‘moment of novelty’ between *tick and tock*, Bryant and Knight (2019) state the “momentary pause as we cross the *threshold* is where we congregate the perception of the present, memory of the past, prospects of the future and all the affects that comprise life” (emphasis added, p. 196). In case of Varosha, the ‘momentary pause’, I metaphorically interpret, has been lasting half a century between *tick and tock*, between *potentiality and actuality* of the city's revival for its people's home returning. This stretching in sense of time pushing into the

future has created a pending ‘moment of novelty’, ‘vernacular timespace’, *Time of Threshold*, where/when hope of regaining the ‘paradise lost’, returning home becomes a state of constantly *ticking* futural momentum. That is, Bryant and Knight (2019) define;

a way of pressing into the future that attempts to pull certain potentialities into actuality... [H]ope emerges in the gap between the potential and the actual, between matter and its not-yet form. Hope is about something that doesn’t presently exist but potentially could; hope is based on more than a possibility and less than a probability. In that sense, hope is a way of virtually pushing potentiality into actuality... we see hope as a swell of emotion, an affect of positivity, appearing to push the crowds toward a better future... hope as a futural orientation bridges the gap between potentiality and actuality. Hope emerges from what Bloch calls the Unbecome, tendencies or latencies that are as-yet-unrealized potentials. (p. 134-136)

The process of this ‘unbecoming’, the expected ‘tock’, the ‘not-yet form’ of retuning for the displaced people of Varosha has continued too long creating the dilemma of whether to let go or hold on, whether to heal the wound of the abrupt and enforced separation of people-place, or keep it open. That open wound preserves the push of the desired potential home return into actuality. Cassandra (birth 1953, lives in Nicosia) defines schizophrenic-like chaos the wound creates at the present time;

*On the one hand, I feel, and I think it is a common feeling among a lot of us, is that we need to let go and move forward. Because I think it has kept us back somehow; all these expectations that there will be something happening in the future. Because if there were nothing ever happening in the future, a lot of us would have made probably different choices along the way over the 40 years that we have passed. On the other hand I feel that we have to keep it alive otherwise it’s like abandoning. I don’t think we should be abandoning it. It’s like schizophrenic... So this is why I am telling I really don’t know what is best for me if I take it from a selfish point of view. I am not talking about what is best for the whole of the people. Even for me, is it better to say ‘ok, this is it, it’s the end, I don’t care anymore, I will move forward and I will let it go. They can keep it or whatever. Or do I say, I have to keep this wound open... if all of us give up, then is that a good idea? Is not it abandoning again? I really don’t know.*

Cassandra’s definition of the dilemma emerging at the threshold of the awaiting desired future and her struggle to make meaning of all the anticipations



shaping the present life parallel to Lucas' account of how his family in London, after being displaced from Famagusta, kept postponing a re-start in life;

*...there were endless opportunities being presented on a plate to my mother, and she was saying 'what is the point, we are going back to Famagusta'. There is always the classic line; what is the point? We had the opportunity to open a hotel in the central London... these were the opportunities because they knew that my mother was running a successful hotel apartment business in Famagusta... and because she was so influential and so connected, she could get the loan tomorrow. She turned them down, all of them because saying 'What's to point, we are going back to Famagusta next week'.*

That not-yet-coming 'next week' for the last half century has created what Bryant (2016) terms the Freudian 'uncanny present', "a moment caught between past and future" (p. 20). To stay at such threshold – *uncanny, unbecoming, and unhealed* – evolves into a sign signifying place attachment of the displaced in the context of Varosha. Elaborating on the institutions of memory in Cyprus, wounds, Bryant (2012) argues, "open the door to communication with the other who is responsible for one's pain, to persuading them of the wrong being done" (p. 341). Cassandra communicates her wound not only to narrate the wrong being done with enforced displacement and prohibited return, but also the attachment still sustained with its 'teleoaffects'— the future orientations in the present looking back to move forward, as described by Lucas too.

Stalo (birth 1953, lives in Nicosia) intensifies, "*our lives go on with our minds back in Famagusta*", recalling the mythical Sankofa bird<sup>25</sup>, "*I will go back to Famagusta yesterday*" she adds with her sense of waiting at the present threshold of the past and the future. Penelope states her inability to step out of the threshold to build new memories when she comes to Famagusta as a visitor;

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<sup>25</sup> An African symbol to represent the idea of taking the good from the past for positive progress in the future.

*I cannot build new memories as a visitor, this keeps me from having a relationship, being able to go there and enjoy the beach. I can't enjoy the beach, I swim and I cry... because the life of my memories have been smashed, have been stolen, something very bad happened, so I cannot take it from there and move on. If I could, if the Cyprus Problem were solved for example, I would have not be looking at my memories in pain longing for them and then I will be able to build new memories... in the new Cyprus... It's not healthy, I don't believe you should be looking for past in whatever you do. You treasure things inside you, you have them and you move on. With Varosha, I cannot do this.*

New Cyprus as a setting for new memories, for Penelope refers to the ideal future to come when she would no longer be a visitor to her hometown but a dwelling resident. Maro (birth 1975, lives in Limassol), for example, has invested in that future with her present personal life decisions. She says;

*I had to get married to a Famagustian. I wanted my kids to be from Famagusta. I did not want to fight against a father saying 'no, our kids are from Limassol'... I wanted to build a family to have common targets... a wish to live in Famagusta. It was very important for me. I have met my husband in a Famagusta related event.*

While Maro has been constructing her life to enable her return to Famagusta with her own inherited Famagustianness that is already being transferred to her children officially with birth certificates stating the place of origin as Famagusta<sup>26</sup> (see Appendix K), Athena (birth 1961, lives in Nicosia) terms the present life with all these future-oriented decisions as “*temporary arrangements*”, a way of “*resisting to adjustment*” into post-displacement life. Yiola (birth 1962, lives in Larnaca) has illustrated what it means to live in the *Time of Threshold* with her mother's pots;

*My mother died in 2014 and she loved flowers, trees, she adored them and she was always planting in pots... Every time I asked her 'why don't you plant in the ground mum?' she said 'when I go back home in Famagusta, I will take them with me and plant to root into ground there'...*

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<sup>26</sup> On the Facebook page the displaced people of Varosha has created (see section 3.2.2.2. Social Media Ethnography), they encourage each other to register their children as origins of Famagusta despite different places of birth in order to keep having registered citizens of the emptied city since 1974.

Not being able to grow new roots in resettlements has a recurrent theme in displaced people's narratives as a refusal to grow new attachments while sustaining the bond they feel firmly to the place they were forced to leave behind. What shows Helen ahead and makes her feel hopeful about a way out of the *Time of Threshold* is the blossoming flower out of the remnants of her city;

*It's very strange. I remember on the veranda of one of the hotels, there was some plants, bougainvillea I think, and they were red and I said oh they are blossoming in this desert, so there is hope... my place is not dead.*

#### **4.1.3 Narrative of Transformation**

What determines rationality/reasoning for people as narrative beings are, according to Fisher (1984) "inherent awareness of *narrative probability/coherence*, what constitutes a coherent story, and their constant habit of testing *narrative fidelity*, whether stories they experience *ring true* with the stories they know to be true in their lives" (emphasis original, p. 7). Within the principles of narrative rationality, coherence and fidelity, narratives should also disclose "creative possibilities of thought and action" Kirkwood (1992, p. 30) argues suggesting critical narrative thinking as a new principle to question what *rings true*. Expanding on Fisher's narrative principle of fidelity, he suggests narrative rhetoric should also "acquaint people with new and unsuspected possibilities of being and acting in the world" (Kirkwood, 1992, p. 31). Helen's amazement in realization of living flowers in the 'desert' without human maintenance and feeling hopeful about being able to find a way out the *Time of Threshold* suggests such creativity in seeing 'unsuspected possibilities' in the context of conflict.

Her amazement with the 'desert flower' parallels her realization of Turkish Cypriots and the proceeding transformation in her perception. "*Oh shit! They are nice and they are beautiful*" are the words she used during our interview while she

was explaining how her vision of Turkish Cypriots has transformed into a positive image eventually as she has kept meeting them after being formally and informally educated into a negative one. Helen's change in her perception of people is reflected in her perception of the future of her place expanding to include the walled city where Turkish Cypriots were enclaved pre-1974. Vasiliki (birth 1989, lives in Nicosia) describes how she has started developing her Famagustian identity through bi-communal activities as a person from post-1974 generation. She describes how as a family they first started visiting Famagusta after 2003 checkpoint openings without much involvement into the Turkish and Turkish Cypriot dwellings of the city, areas apart from the fenced off Varosha;

*For the first of years what we did as the whole family was we rented a mini bus, went to spend the day on the Glossa Beach in Famagusta as an exertion. And you would see actually the evolution within the years (since 2003)... we first took everything with us, sandwiches, water bottles, anything we would want to eat, drink, so we would not get involved with anybody or spent any money... bit by bit we started having a coffee at Petek (a patisserie in the walled Famagusta), and then may be take some sweets for my dad, and now we are like 'ok, let's go and have lunch'... Now we explore every part of Famagusta. I am a huge fan of the bi-communal events; I would always go to events related to Famagusta in both sides. I was there at the first theater in Salamina. I was there in the second one. I am convinced that for me as a person these are the big parts of really developing my Famagustian identity.*

Describing the transformation in her perception and experience of belonging in the place she inherited from her family, Vasiliki explains the path she took to initiate that transformation;

*Once I was abroad I felt there were two ways: you can either go very Greek nationalist narrative, or you can take the opportunity that you are in a more neutral territory, actually start reflecting on it, talking to other people about it and listening to what they have to say which was the most interesting part. Not just because I was in France, talking to French people, I would also talk to Turkish people. I got to meet Turkish Cypriots later though, not in my bachelor. And you get to listen to their side of the story and if you are sober enough to be able to put yourself in their shoes, that's how you develop empathy for others that develop your own identity in return.*

Dimitra (birth 1961, lives in Nicosia) supports the transformative impact of the bi-communal gatherings on how ‘the other’ is empathically perceived which in effect has implications for the future perception of the place and attachment to it. She shares her experience of feeling empathy at a bi-communal gathering;

*Shortly after the checkpoints opened, we were seated around tables, talking to people in smaller groups as Greek Cypriots, and Turkish Cypriots to share experiences. We cried and they cried and on that table, we were crying because we were kept from our lands and our experiences, and I realized at that point that the reason they cried is that they felt enclaved. So, I felt like I can go anywhere in the world, but not to the place I long for the most! In their case, they felt ‘I can’t go anywhere in the world, and I feel like a bird in the cage’. So, somehow you start feeling for the other person as well... you realize there is another side of the story.*

Focusing on the pain caused by different ways of experiencing places for both communities, Dimitra expresses her demand for transformation in the way her government deals with her community’s desire to reclaim their place in Famagusta. Criticizing the annual ‘anti-occupation event’ organized by the Municipality of Famagusta in the southern part, Dimitra on the Facebook page I have been a participant observer states how this event looks like a *memorial than a protest*. Upon my further exploration through our inbox correspondence, she translates and shares the letter she wrote after the press entrance in Varosha on 29 August 2019 and roundtable meeting on 15 February 2020 to the Mayor of Famagusta, she has officially demanded a transformative change in the way the ‘anti-occupation’ event is organized. In her words from the letter, she states;

*I feel that attending an event where I am called to sit and listen to greetings and speeches, the need to applaud anyone and in the end to conclude with songs and emotions is not something that my body can really stand! I feel that it offends my dignity. From what I hear from our fellow citizens, many others feel the same way. If the purpose of the Municipality this year is to make this event feel like we are strongly claiming our town, then it must be said to the world explicitly. Something has to change and the people who are invited to attend must be aware of it. It is not enough to ask the people to be present and to bring their children if they are not convinced of the purpose of the event. Since our experience tells us that the character of this*

*event so far fails to attract crowds of people, it is important to change something about it.*

In her letter, she continues to demand for transformation in the way this municipal event against the military captivity of her city for decades is actualized with her specific suggestions. She requests the removal of the music, greetings, applause, chairs and the insertion of a standing crowd having one strong voice to express their frustration, anger and fighting spirit to regain the 'paradise lost'. In response to my further questioning of her idea of transformative change, what offends her dignity and how she differentiates between a memorial and a protest in the context of Varohsa, she replies;

*We were faced with threats of the town being opened and inhabited. All that the municipality could do was to organize an activity of remembrance of the town with nostalgic music; same as every other year. That felt like it was way too little against the big threat. It felt like they could not give Famagustians a way to express their concern, anger and strong will to claim their land back. It felt like we were asked to stay quiet and just listen to a couple of speeches and songs and then go home. This is what felt like disrespectful to our feelings. What I would like to have seen then is something that would mobilize more people of Famagusta. I imagined something that would take on the form of a big demonstration, instead of something that felt like a memorial service, you know, the kind that we do for our dead people once a year!*

Her idea of return is not dead, her place is not dead and she insists in transforming the memorial for the dead to protest for regaining a life back in Famagusta.

The future revival of the city in Dimitra's narrative is an emphasis on the need for transformation in the governmental practices in addition to her empathic awareness created by the bi-communal public gatherings. Vivian deepens the need of such change with an awareness of the 'other', how the lack of it rooted the conflict in Cyprus and eventual enforced displacement. She portrays her idea with a whirling dervish metaphor in one of her stories about Varosha; *Στην οδό Δημοκρατίας, At*

*Democratias Street*, that is open to public visits today. In our post-interview Facebook inbox correspondence in October 2019, I initiated a further elaboration of how she makes meaning of a whirling dervish and she responded;

*In reality, whirling was something I enjoyed doing when I was a kid. I loved getting dizzy, letting out of me all the world around, staying only just by myself. By whirling, I was practically losing touch with the world outside myself. Nobody taught me doing this whirling. I was not copying anyone I saw doing it. And I was already a grown-up person when I saw the dervishes for the first time, recognizing in this Turkish dance the action I loved doing so much. And then I realized I grew up sharing a country with people for whom I never cared learning anything about their culture, their religion, and their beliefs. In this short story of mine, the ‘whirling dervish’ becomes a metaphor. In this story where I blend my happy memories when running up the Democratias Street to meet my grandpa as a child together with those tragic memories, which I have from what happened in 1963-4 and 1974, I give to this my culture’s ignorance of your culture the blame to what followed...*

Her openness encouraged me to ask for further expansions;

*I blame ourselves for being so ignorant about your culture, paying no respect to the fact that we are sharing the same country. This is what the ‘At Democratias Street’ story is all about. The young girl dances the dervish dance for the wrong reason. She is thinking only of herself. She is trying to fall into ecstasy, to lose consciousness, ignoring the people around her, as we did with you, Turkish Cypriots. For the dervish, the wish is to be whirling in harmony with all things in nature, and this is identified with the existence and grandeur of the Creator... We missed this idea. So, the little girl in the story thinks about all the disaster that followed and she is blaming it on HER (emphasis original) dervish dance; the fact that she was dancing just to please herself, ignoring the world around her.*

What primarily ignites the transformation process revealed in the narratives of the displaced people of Varosha is the check points opening in 2003 when people started confronting others’ narratives of agony caused by the war; displacement and longing for homes abandoned. Bryant (2012) in *Partitions of memory: wounds and witnessing in Cyprus* terms this initial process of change as ‘narrative fissure’ explaining how “the opening brought people face to face with real others with a different narrative of suffering that seemed to fracture, compete with, or even to deny their own” (p. 341). Confrontation with other residents of Famagusta meant

cartographic expansion of that city with a new perception of the areas outside the fenced Varosha, the walled city, in particular, which Greek Cypriots were not allowed to access since 1960s internal conflicts.

Vivian, for example, condemns the political and educational structure of her country on how a part of her city has always been forbidden to her—the walled city before 1974 and Varosha after it. The self- and communal-criticism, she argues, leads to what Zerubavel (2003) defines as ‘emplotment process’ in *Historical continuity in time maps*, and I discover the process of *re-emplotment* in the narratives: transformation in the way the stories are told to make new historical meanings. For Vasiliki, for instance, a Famagustian from post-1974 generation, the merging of inherited parental memories of Varosha and experienced personal memories of the walled city is the way she processes the *re-emplotment*. She constructs her Famagustian identity by breaking her mental barriers one by one as she expands her perception of the city cartographically as a whole;

*Frankly, although I come from the region of Varosha, the Famagusta that I know, and I've experienced and I have memories from is within the walled city. I feel so proud. I had friends coming last summer from Strasbourg and I would take them for a walk in Famagusta and I was like 'Ok, this is the Lion, this is the Othello Tower...' Like I was so proud that I could actually give them a tour in that city. It felt honored, not in a possessive way but with my Famagustian identity...Four years ago I had friends visiting from Brussels and I wanted to take them to see Famagusta but I took them up to Derynea, and took them to the viewpoint, I was too afraid to drive myself into Famagusta, I don't know, not comfortable doing it, last time I got to do it. Another barrier broken. It felt so good! It's so liberating, really. Just sitting there and talking is so liberating. It feels like we are doing something...*

That something she implies is a step out of Time of Threshold and a way of experiencing the potential future in the present. The ‘whole Famagusta’ perception she gains as she gains memories of the place where life continued off the fences in



Famagusta is the unifying vision of the future pursued by *The Famagusta Eco-city Project*.

#### 4.1.4 Narrative of Future

The analysis of the narratives in this present study discloses two overlapping ways of visioning the future in the context of Varosha. One is more of an *imagined* one as a mental practice at the threshold between the past and the future. I discovered a sense of ‘broken future’ in the narratives of such mental practices. The other one is with a stronger tendency to step out of that being in-between and transforming what is being imagined into a *designed* project of the future as a ‘teleoaffective structure’ (see section 3.3.1.2.3. Ethnography of the Future). *The Famagusta Eco-city Project* (FEP), for example, has emerged to solidify this tendency out of the state of limbo uncovered through the displaced people’s Narrative of Threshold. This project was launched in 2014 with approximately 100 participants as a five-day design studio including architects, stakeholders and experts from both communities, Turkish and Greek Cypriots “to draft a range of design proposals for turning the ghost town of Varosha and the wider Famagusta area into a model reunited ecocity, fit for the 21st century” (Christou, 2014). During the interview I had with the two of the leading figures of FEP, Emily (birth 1949, lives abroad) and Vasia (birth 1979, lives abroad)<sup>27</sup> - a mother and a daughter from Varosha, Emily describes what it means to live in the Time of Threshold with so many lost opportunities in so many years torturing the hope for lost home to be gained again: “*it’s like my little bones are being hit by time against the rocks and then you feel the cracks, you feel the water*

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<sup>27</sup> Emily Markides and Vasia Markides. Upon informed consent, the real names are given as the project and its supplementary materials compiled in the book are subject to copyright. The book, *The Famagusta Eco city: A new Path for Peace in Cyprus*, edited by Emily Markides, Ceren Boğaç, and Roger Kelly, is an open-access source via <https://www.ecocityproject.org/the-book> describing the project from numerous perspectives.

*seeping through into your sailing boat*". FEP is a loud call from this boat for the 'collective survival'. In her chapter from the book of FEP: *A story-telling experiment*, Vasia<sup>28</sup> asks;

*What if Famagusta were to be revived as Europe's model eco-city? What if we were to right the wrongs of the past by leapfrogging into a future of responsible care for the people and the land, a future of energy independence, local resilience and self-sufficiency for the sake of our collective survival? (Markides, V, 2019, p. 42)*

As she suggests leapfrogging out of the threshold into the future, she emphasizes the importance of 'preserving the old while embracing the new'; "The *memory and essence* of this town and its people is exactly what we want to preserve" (Emphasis added, Markides, V., 2019, p. 47) with FEP, she says. She refers to the awareness of people involved in the project on how a new initiative can be considered as a threatening step to the people of Varosha waiting to return 'how things used to be' in the Paradise Lost (in addition to the Narrative of Loss described in section 4.1.1, see section 4.2. *Function of Place Attachment Narratives: Mnemonic Resistance* for in-depth elaboration of how 'things used to be' portrayed by the people of Varosha as a form of resisting place attachment). Emily refers to the concept of 'gestalt' to describe what is lost as a place but stayed as the scenery of her soul that is the founding vision to construct the future: that *essence* of 'how things used to be' (see also Vivian's reference to this essence as the communal 'property' to be re-claimed in the Introduction). As a displaced person of Varosha aiming to contribute to the revival of her city to return, she says, "*gestalt means the main stroke of my inner painting that is Famagusta. Everything else that I do fills the scenery... you have to find what is the gestalt of a course of action, what is the scenery of the soul, what is the essence of being*". What the project proposes is to bridge that gestalt

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<sup>28</sup> She is also the director of the documentary *Waking Famagusta* currently in the production stage: <https://www.ecocityproject.org/documentary-1>

of the city from the past to its future revival and to improve from there.

Vasia attempts to make meaning of the remnants of both her mother's memories she inherited and of her city's she has been observing since 2003 checkpoint openings to perceive and apply the gestalt, the essence of Famagusta as the grounding foundation of its revival<sup>29</sup>;

*After 45 years of being away and reliving those memories like a broken record, a limited truth remains. The remnants are mere impressions of citrus and jasmine in the air, afternoon tea with friends, games of hide and seek in the reeds on the beach, open air cinema nights. These impressions all have something in common though: they are all symptoms of a closely-knit community with cultural, intellectual and creative vibrancy. They also involve the experience of being outdoors, living in nature, and enjoying the seascape on a daily basis. It is no surprise then that these impressions of memories painted a perfect picture Famagusta in my mind. (Markides V, 2019, p. 37)*

During the interview when I was listening to her and her mother Emily, she repeats the aim of FEP to revive what the displaced people of Varosha long to return “to green, to space, to openness, to the smell, to all the things that my mother described existed in Varosha before” unifying with the rest of Famagusta where life continued after 1974 war, life of Turkish Cypriots as well as of the Turkish immigrants<sup>30</sup>. Hence, Vasia adds, for eco-polis to be born, it has to be created with the participation of the two divided communities as an architectural, unifying act of peace (Markides, V., 2019, p. 46). Gama-Fernandez (2019) shares Vasia's assertion in his chapter *Place-specific design*;

*An ecocity must act as a hub within a region, like the center of a spider web whose strings spread wide. When Varosha is finally returned, it must be seamlessly re-woven into the fabric of Famagusta, the city that has continued to live during the last four decades while a section of it fell into*

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<sup>29</sup> She defines the origins and the grounding essence of the *Famagusta Eco-city project* in her TED talk as well: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dhz9Qnf3JUA>

<sup>30</sup> While the coastal quarter of Varosha was fenced off and declared as a forbidden, military zone in 1974, the Kato Varosha area was assigned to Turkish Cypriots displaced from the southern Cyprus and immigrants from Turkey (Boğaç, 2019). As a futurist revival project, the ‘whole Famagusta’ vision the FEP covers this area as well as the walled city, the oldest district, located 7 km south of Salamis and Enkomi, the ancient cities.

*decay because of abandonment. Varosha, cannot be vitalized into an ecocity all by itself. The entire city of Famagusta and its surrounding suburbs must follow suit in its transformation into an environmentally sustainable, peaceful, and energy efficient region. If that were not our goal, we would only be creating yet another divided city in Cyprus... Without a grassroots base of support and belief in the project we are recommending from those supporters, nothing can be achieved. (p. 161)*

The participation and the support of the grassroots base as key element for the actualization of the project is reinforced by Haffar (2019) in his chapter *Urban planning and conflict transformation as pathways to sustainable development*. He explains how a design of the future is informed by the inputs and how the inputs given by the residents of the region is crucial, both by the former and the current residents. He refers to “the importance of *personal narratives* from those that have the greatest stake in a planned future” (emphasis added, Haffar, 2019, p. 120) to explain the participatory nature of the project both at conceptual and applied level. With its launch in 2014, this futurist revival project has started practicing the future in the present as a merge of approaches from conflict transformation and urban planning with the stakeholders from both communities working together to achieve a common template of the future. Haffar (2019) states, its participatory planning is the basis of the design framework while pursuing conflict transformation and eventual peace provides the fundamentals of ‘how to get there’. The project aims to “balance historical preservation in the medieval city of Famagusta, to respect the right of return for inhabitants of Varosha and its environs, along with the need for economic regeneration in the larger Famagusta area” (p. 122). For Boğaç (2019), this project narrates the future with ‘a new empathic language’ constructed through the dialogue between the two communities. She indicates how the FEP “demonstrated to all Cypriots the importance of public participation in conflict resolution processes on the

island. It also made clear that developing ‘empathy’ is the key to understanding each other’s pain and in working to build a better future together” (Boğaç, 2019, p. 32).

Defining the infrastructure of peace through the revival of Varosha, all the participants of FEP emphasize the vital significance of participation, dialogue, empathy as well as how crucial it is to preserve the old while embracing the new. The personal narratives this study elicited through the interviews with the displaced people of Varosha unearth the intense tendency to preserve the old as a pre-requisite to embrace the new. Referring to the wound opened with the abrupt and enforced displacement 46 years ago, Adonis says;

*in order for the people to close that wound, close that period of their life, the circle needs to be closed. It can close only if we return to what we left. You cannot return to something new and expect to be okay with it. You need to first return there and then... it’s like the father and mother of the missing person, they know the person is dead, they know that their son is dead and buried and probably just bones and pieces of bones remain but they still want to see the bones. And they need to have the burial, they need to mourn, and then they get over it. Until that happens, they will never be over it. So, if we want to help the people get over it, and get on with their lives and build something new together with fellow Turkish Cypriots... we need to let it happen as it stopped... I need to return back to my house as it was, my neighborhood as it was, see the ruins... maybe my door is hanging with one screw, I need to be the one unscrewing that screw and let it fell down, you know. I don’t want you to pull it down because it’s dangerous; I need to do that to close the gap, to close the wound, to write the end of the story. Do you understand the feeling?*

In Adonis’ narrative, the confrontation with the remnants as a pre-requisite of revival can initiate the mourning process for the old as in the case of the missing people. Only then embracing the new can be possible. The new without such confrontation would create the feeling of ‘uncanny’, he implies. Bryant (2011) in her book *The past in pieces: Belonging in the new Cyprus*, explains, “the uncanny disturbs us because it is made up of *undigested fragments of the past*... so the most common response to the uncanny, Freud says, is revulsion, a rejection of it, and a retreat into what is now familiar” (Emphases added, p. 55-56). This sheds light on

Adonis' need to 'unscrew the last screw' himself as a way of 'digesting' the past, healing the wound and dragging the city's desired future to the present then. It also underlines the importance of FEP founders' awareness on how new is a threat unless it preserves the old, the gestalt, the essence. Tasos (birth 1955, lives abroad) strengthens the need of such knowledge while designing the city's future;

*Whatever they are going to do, I think we Famagustians don't want to knock down some characteristic elements, some places which are very important for us as a community. If you knock down the whole city and apply eco-city plan, or whatever plan you call it, we won't accept it. We want to know the mayor office is where it used to be; we want to know that Hatjihambi cinema is at its place. The headquarter of Anorthosis (the football team of Famagusta) has to stay there... We don't want the stadium outside the city; we want it where it is. You can adjust and fix things to remind us the old Famagusta, the old Varosha, we want to have the character of Varosha back. Eco-city, new elements we have to put, okey, but don't change the whole thing. We don't want it.*

Loizos (birth 1952, lives in Larnaca) agrees;

*You can't say anybody 'you are going to live in this city that I designed for you'. Because that person is somebody who lived there already. He has his habits, he has his neighborhood, the way he goes to the beach, to the cinema, and to the municipality market... They are there already. You cannot change that. Let it develop upon what is already there.*

Sharing the vision of FEP, Dimitra puts front how Famagusta can be the leading peace paradigm for the rest of Cyprus with its revival pursuing mutual benefits for both communities. She states openly; *"I have to gain; you have to gain, so there are reasons for us to be friends than the enemies. And Famagusta has this seed"*. What FEP embraces as a 'whole Famagusta' is already a planted seed as a cartographic expansion in the post-2003 walled city experiences of the displaced people of Varosha. It does not only excite the post-1974 generation Famagustians like in the case of Vasiliki defining her transformed Famagustian identity through her experiences in the walls (see section 4.1.3. Narrative of Transformation). Being present in the medieval city enables Solomos too (birth 1965, lives in Paralimni), for

example, to see its integration with the revival of Varosha. He describes his fascination with his finally allowed experience in the walls and the idea of its integration with Varosha where he feels attached and longs to return;

*The medieval town... It fascinates me, it has so much history. When I was a teenager, we could not go in, yes, correct, it was blocked for us. So it is a good opportunity now to do it. And I have done it several times. I walked in the walls, I went inside the big mosque, in small valleys, narrow streets, the squire, things I could not do then as a teenagers. I extended my readings about the history of Famagusta. It surely can integrate together with the new city, yes, of course.*

Among the personal narratives of the displaced people, beside the ones with a strong tendency to foresee the city's future revival and its former citizens return, some have stopped dreaming, believing in no future, having a broken, damaged vision of it. Georgios and I had the interview by the barbed wire while looking at the remnants of his house. Tears in his eyes, he says;

*... I've stopped dreaming about this. I had a dream, always to come to see, to rebuild... Since I saw these ruins behind the barbed wire, my dreams just... dead... too late to repair. Too late technically, psychologically, economically, and agedly...I am old (birth 1956) When are they going to give it to me, if they are going to give to me? When am I going to rebuild it? And when am I going to have a chance to live in the new house... The damage is done to me. For the new generation it is going to be a business... If it costs so much, maybe they will not even worry about it, they will sell it... My son is in Limassol, the other is in Nicosia, and they work for the government.... They are going to leave their houses and their works and they are going to come to build this? No! They are going to ask how much you want to sell. And they are going to split the money. That's it. That's why I said there is no future. No future!*

Georgios' exhaustion with dreaming of never coming future can also be read between Dimitra's lines demanding improvement on the political front in order for them to 'get there', to get to the future;

*There is not much light at the end of the tunnel, I am afraid. I mean all these attempts, which start with inspiration and with such hope, somehow are blocked. They all stumble upon politicians. Unless there is something to be done on the political front, there is not much that these initiatives can achieve, I think. And a lot of people get disappointed and they start losing interest. Either loses interest, or you become like "there she is again with*

*this Famagusta thing”, you know you become like this person who keeps repeating but not getting anywhere.*

Since its start in 2014, what FEP aims to achieve as a process of constructing the future is to use an empathic narrative to communicate its vision of reviving Varosha in a way to reenact the whole Famagusta for sustainable development and conflict resolution in the region. As a participatory process including bi-communal experts and stakeholders, the project acknowledges the exhaustion of disappointments and political blockages. Although overlapping at some areas of the Narrative of Threshold, as a step taken out of that time in the limbo by creating an environment of dialogue between the divided communities for expertise and experience exchange, this project itself is a demand for an improvement at the political level too. With its new empathic language communicating the infrastructure of reviving the city and building peace, it's a form of *narrative resistance* to the conflict infusing political practices.

#### **4.2 Function of Place Attachment Narratives: *Mnemonic Resistance***

Positioning, Bamberg and Wipff (2020) argue, is the condensed way of defining the discursive functions of narrative, narrating a story as an act of communication (p. 76). The content and context of the narratives analyzed in this present study unearth the narrative positioning of the displaced people of Varosha as *mnemonic resistance*: Despite decades long forced displacement, their place attachment narratives as performative communicative events (Hartel et al., 2006; Nelson and Lindemann's, 2001) resist to two overlapping forces. One is mnemonic resistance to oblivion; their place memories – postmemories resisting in the Time of Displacement since August 1974. The other is mnemonic resistance to oppression; their resurfaced and intensified mnemonic emplacement, place memories to counter the oppressive narratives in the Time of Crisis emerged with the openings of the city



to visitors upon unilateral decisions initiated with the press entrance in August 2019 and peaked with the ‘picnic’ organized in Varosha on 15 November 2020 (see Introduction).

#### **4.2.1 Resistance to Oblivion**

Building on Zerubavel’s (1996) description of the ‘mnemonic others’, other people and objects acting to help us remember the past, verifying the experiences occurred, functioning as reminders of a personal and a collective life-once-lived in certain time and place, I develop Ryan’s (2011) argument of *mnemonic resistance*: the narrative performances of Varosha people to portray the essence/gestalt of their city, of the lost place to sustain their attachment and desire to return is a communicative practice of mnemonic resistance to oblivion. This study reveals that their narrative act of remembering and recuperation of memories –postmemories is an exhibit of place attachment resisting in the Time of Displacement for almost fifty years. Remembering through the place attachment narration takes numerous forms of activating the memory with tangible and intangible mnemonic devices/things. Mental and physical emplacement become their way of being present in their city; in time and place. What grounds such act of remembering for place attachment is to claim the past, pre-1974 life, Georgios says. Upon my question asking him the reason why he comes and makes coffees by the barbed wire in front of his house for his childhood friends accompanying him, for the passer-byes, and for me at the time of our interview, he explains;

*I am trying to bring my old memories back... this is where I learned how to talk and how to walk... I am trying to see if I can find anything left from that time, maybe a photograph... I am here to bring back the memories of my mother, my father, my uncle, and see all the neighbors here alive... I am not trying to build new memories... I am trying to prove that I was not born 18 years old. My life did not begin in 1974; I had a long life here before 1974... All the things I have are from age 18 and up... [after displacement] when I went to Ormedia (a village close to Famagusta), when I went to*

*Canada, when I started working, when I got married to have a family, etc. but not from my life in Varosha, all lost... I come to re-claim my past.*

Georgios resists the void of ‘brutal mnemonic decapitation’ (Zeruvabel, 2003, p. 93) caused by the lost mnemonic remnants of his life after his involuntary displacement. His struggle to bring the memories back by being present at the place as much as the barbed barriers allow echoes the impulses of many other displaced people of Varosha in need to reach at those mnemonic devices, reminders, remnants. The place of the stories they tell and they were told about as in the case of Nicoletta, (birth 1974, lives in Larnaca) who was “*brought up as a child not with stories of fairy tales or dragons, but with the stories of her city... how life was, funny stories, sad stories*”, has been the absence, the void they have resisted against by remembering. Referring to the lack of tangible memories, Yiannis<sup>31</sup> (birth 1960, lives in Nicosia) states,

*... that is one of the strongest traumatic things; suddenly everything is cut, the images, the photographs.... I love to live in a place full of objects... Not precious objects per se, old objects but the ones really encapsulate, they have a story to tell. Maybe this comes from the sense of displacement, this shock of great loss, loss of everything that we had to do again from scratch.*

Surrounded by the objects in the places he has been living after the displacement and interpreting his way of life in reference to his sense of great loss, Yiannis seems to define his objects, the memories they encapsulate and the stories they tell as the ‘psychic anchor’; as the remainders of things lost. In his article *The memory of objects* (Toumazis, 2013), he defines how the objects are treasured and preserved with ‘religious care’ in the context of displacement in Cyprus. Marcus (1992) in *Environmental memories* asserts that “memories serve to anchor us in time and space; they are one means by which we make sense of the *continual becoming*

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<sup>31</sup> Yiannis Toumazis. Upon informed consent, his real name used to protect his copyrights for the publications.

that is the essence of life (Emphasis added, p. 110). Paralleling Georgios, Cassandra too defines how she felt having “*no past as if [her] family appeared out of nothing in 1974 with no home, no photographs, nothing*”. She insists her need to emplace her memories for the ‘continual becoming’ by introducing those settings of memories to the new generation: “*We should walk with them to share our life, our memories of the past... to share that ‘this was the swing my sister got her eyebrow cut off because it came and hit her. This is the place that my other sister fell off the tree’*”. While Cassandra’s urge to emplace her memories by narrating them to the new generation, Aris (birth 1967, lives in Larnaca) who left his home at the age of 7 trespasses the fence and emplaces himself at home, at the place of his childhood. He first describes how he had the idea of trespassing the border and how he afterwards arranged it with someone he met newly in the northern side willing to cooperate;

*I have always had the need of doing that... When they opened the checkpoints in 2003, I was at the Glossa beach and I realized where my house was, I could bring the memories back, because when I was a child there, I was very near to the beach. So my playground area was the Glossa Beach... every afternoon I was basically there, swimming with my friends from the neighborhood... I remember on our veranda we used to sit, in the afternoon, at night, we had the swing, when it was the celebration of Kataklysmos (a religious festival), we used to sit there to see the fireworks from Camilia (small camel like island) in the sea, they used to throw fireworks from that rocks at the celebrations... And I said to him (to the person he met in the northern side) ‘I would love to go in’... We met in Famagusta. It was about quarter to 12:00, midnight... He put a gun, a pistol on the table and said ‘I will pretend being a police officer.... I want to tell you that before we go in so if anything happens... because they patrol, there were Turkish army patrols, I am going to put this gun on your head and say I have arrested you. Because you don’t want the army to arrest you, I will arrest you like a police. So don’t be afraid if something like that happens’... I said ‘ok’... I just wanted to see my house! I did not care of anything else... my wish to see my house again was too big; it covered everything!*

He continues describing his act of trespassing in detail;

*I went there slowly slowly, I was pretending that I was fishing, after 8-10 minutes, I could hear his whistle and I went in, he was there himself, nobody was there, he was alone waiting for me there. And I was alone of course. He said, ‘you know how to go home’, I said ‘yes of course’, because I*

*remembered straight away, we were walking, when we turned right to go up, funny enough, on the right hand side, there were shops destroyed, doors open, you can go in, at that time Turkish patrol was coming down. He said 'lay in here', there was a barrel, we both hid behind the barrel, but the patrol was coming and showing the light on the area, on the shops, they turned and went away. After a while, we went out, and we went my home.*

When he started telling me about his experience of being inside, of feeling thrilled to be back home, at the place of his childhood memories, his voice was trembling, I was swallowing my own breath;

*I remember the first thing I was shocked about was the house, how small it was. Because I was very young, I thought 'God, this is too small, is this my house? I mean I knew it was my house but it was so small. The whole neighborhood was so small... I went in, he had told me not to open any light, just my mobile, go on my knees and walk because they (Turkish soldiers patrolling inside) could see the light and may come. That's what he had said and I did that. We entered the house from the kitchen, from behind because the front door was completely blocked and fell... There was the kitchen and there was the saloni (the living room), you know... when I was in the house, my adrenalin was high, I was trembling... my eyes were full of tears; I could not see anything basically. But kneeled down, I was with my mobile checking checking checking and then I have seen everything was like looted, robbed, desrtroyed...*

He then continues to narrate how he was trying to collect his family belongings thrown, torn, dusted on the floor. The man who went in with him warns him that taking anything may put them in danger on the way out of the fences but his impulse to get these personal objects from his childhood time and place was so strong;

*I have seen a couple of records broken down, the vinyl ones, my father used to listen, and when I went upstairs, I went in my room I used to stay with my brother, and there were only books from primary school left. I just looked at the books and I went to my sisters' room, there were books again, I was checking, then all of a sudden I have found my sister's book because I flipped through the pages and I have seen her drawings, so I took it, in my room I found my κουμπάρα / 'gumbara' (moneybox), that I used to keep as a kid... when the tourists came to our souvenir shop in front of our house, I used to ask for money with it... I was collecting them, putting them in my t-shirt... just before I left, I had seen the photograph of my grandfather in a broken frame on the floor, I said 'I have to take this, too', he said 'no please', I said 'I have to take it. I am not leaving it'. 'No' he said, 'it would be dangerous', I said 'no, please'... I took that picture as well and it was very difficult of course because I was full of books here and there but I did*

*not understand anything. I mean the strength I had I thought I could fly. The energy, I mean...*

Then he reflects back on his experience when I said he risked his life, “*it was the happiest time of my life... The feeling was amazing. It’s like you win the major trophy. I could not believe it*”. He carried this feeling and the mnemonic objects of his pre-1974 life placed in his life now as a bridge between the two. While he distributes the others to his family members, he places his ‘gumbara’ (see Figure 4.1) in the living room together with the family photographs and a bottle of Varosha sand in his current home in Larnaca. When I entered his office, I realized the photos of his city on his wall and photos of his house behind his chair (see Figure 4.2, left), and during the interview he showed me a file on his desk named ‘property in the occupied area’ (see Figure 4.2, right). His act of trespassing and bringing the personal belongings back with him has given him “*a little more peace*” he says. In reference to G. H. Mead’s approach to the self’s relation to physical world, McCarthy (1984) lists the functions of physical reminders of the sense of self, place and continuity (p. 116). Zeruvabel’s (2003) objects in creating an environment of



Figure 4.1: Aris’ *gumbara* from Varosha in his current home. Photo: Courtesy of Aris

constant argument on the historical continuity with relics and memorabilia as well sheds light on the displaced peoples urges to reach, touch, grasp, collect, get their personal belongings as mnemonic bridges, tangible links between life they lived and life they long to live again. Such objects<sup>32</sup> “allow us mnemonic access even to persons and places that are no longer physically accessible” (Zeruvabel, 2003, p. 43) as in the context of Varosha.

During one of my participant observations in a Famagusta charity gathering in Limassol dated on 12 July 2018, a few months later I initiated this study, I have witnessed how, although deprived of their city, the people of Varosha mentally practice being present there and how they yearn for anything tangible from the life they had in that place before the war. Resounding Aris’ act of collecting the remnants from the house during his ‘forbidden’ access, the speaker at the gathering event declared her wish to go back in search of anything tangible. In her words<sup>33</sup> she says,

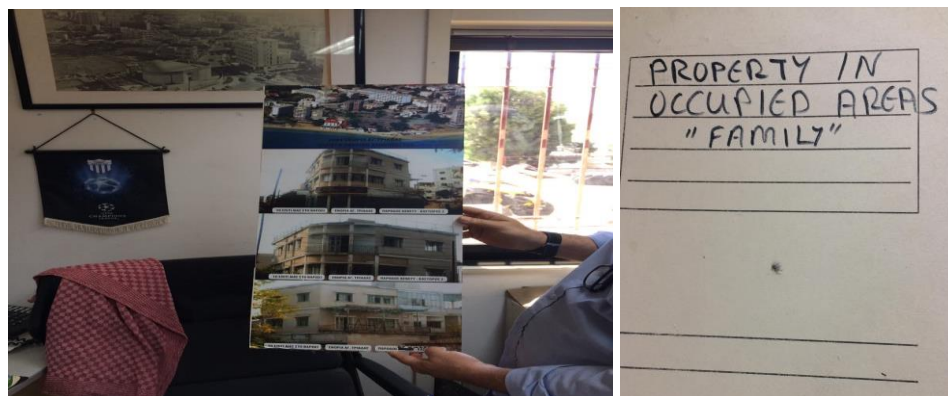


Figure 4.2: Aris’ photos of his city and his house in his office (left) and the file of family property documents on his desk (right). Photos: Nafia Akdeniz

*I want to go back to my derelict home. I want to smell the walls and kiss the soil. I want to look with a mania to find something thrown away that is*

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<sup>32</sup> For further discussions on the objects, remnants, belongings, etc. in the context of aftermath of war in Cyprus, see Bryant (2014) and Navora-Yashin (2009).

<sup>33</sup> Her speech was in Greek. She was not an interviewee in that study. That is why she is neither real named nor pseudo-named here. I *field-noted* her speech. Translation of the speech: Courtesy of Avghi Frangopoulou.

*mine. The rusty bike of my brother, an old shoe of my family, the notes with my grandmother's handwriting on the wall behind the cabinet reminding us of our birth dates, a nail on the wall that my grandfather nailed even if the frame is missing...*

To the gathered community of the displaced people of Varosha, she continues describing her mental emplacement and move in the city to claim her past and right to return;

*I often walk to my town. Depending on the season I change areas. In winter I like the center of the town. In the narrow streets of Ermou ... In front of me the shop of Yiangos Nestoras the glazing shop of Kokkinos near the Agios Nikolaos church. Moving on to Demokratias Street I remember the beautiful years when it was decorated for our parades. I also remember us walking up and down during our teens to exchange a look with a boy. That's how relationships were then...I stumble and take a look at the ads of Hatjihambi cinema...(see Figure 4.3 left) I am in and out of shops ... I turn left towards the Hraion cinema, towards the Fountain ... The 'souvlakia' places ... The Municipal Market (See Figure 4.3, right). Further down the Kontosmshoe shop, the shop of Zavos ... The pharmacy of Karoulla...*

The impulse to have intangible 'mnemonic connection' with the city and tangible 'mnemonic remnants' has become an act of preserving the place



Figure 4.3: Ads of Hatjihambi cinema (left) and the Municipal Market (right).  
Photos: Facebook page circulation.

attachment as a cultural heritage inherited from the past to be transferred to the ideal future they return home. Preserving to be transferred to the Time of Future, the place attachment narratives of the displaced people of Varosha as communicative performative acts of *mnemonic resistance* to oblivion take numerous forms created by both pre-1974 and post-1974 generations with inherited memories, inherited

attachment. Dimitra, for example has re-storied Aris' experience of trespassing in the first person to communicate how his impulse to be present in his place of childhood, to emplace himself in the memories and to re-own his personal- family belongings is a shared desire felt for the treasured objects by the members of the community. She translates her story of Aris' experience during our interview to me emphasizing how they treasure the 'things' from the life they had in Varosha. When in the house, she describes;

*I had a storm in me... the house is decomposing like a loved one's dead body... even I don't believe in God, I pray and say if I get caught, let it not be now, let me have a few minutes to live, to mend to broken parts of my life so I can go on living. So, let me find something, even a little something to take with me... let me take them with me.*

She extends Aris' experience by adding a scene of reading his sister's diary book describing the daily life in Famagusta. "This book should be published," she says, claiming it is a genuine portrayal of life fabric in Famagusta from a teenager's perspective.

While the remaining objects are valued as a 'mnemonic bridge' creating continuity between the flow of life abruptly cut and the present pregnant to the future, and while the displaced people exhibit a strong desire to emplace themselves, to be present inside the fenced off home, Katerina<sup>34</sup> (birth 1973, lives in Nicosia) has another way of encountering her city. As another displaced person from Varosha when she was a baby, the process of painting becomes the process of her 'entering' the city of military hostage;

*In a way it was like, through the brush movements, it was like walking through the city and getting to know the places... it was the process, observing the details so as to render the image, paint... that was my way of accessing the city, because the impact, it was so heartbreaking to stand there when I arrived by the barbed wire, that I just got heart broken and I felt, I needed to create new connections... I was already working a lot with*

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<sup>34</sup> Katerina Attalidou. Upon informed consent, her real name is used to protect her copyrights.



*shadows; there has always been the longing of the other side that I was trying to capture in my imagination. A lot of my work until then had been around the other side and about this need to encounter, at least take a glimpse of the other side... (see Figure 4.4).*

What Katerina refers as ‘the other side’ becomes not only the place but the time as well. Her process of painting as the process of making her city that she “*grew up connected to its memory*” is her movements on the canvas relieving her desire to move in her fenced off city. She illustrates this movement in time as well, in her two-sided painting which portrays the Asterias Hotel then, pre-1974, and now, when ‘*somehow time goes heavily, swelling, inverting in the dust*’ (see Figure 4.5).



Figure 4.4: ‘I saw my city sleeping on the shore’<sup>35</sup>, Katerina Attalidou, from exhibition catalogue entitled *Capturing the City*: Photo: Andreas Koutas.



Figure 4.5: ‘Somehow time goes heavily, swelling, inverting in the dust’, Katarina Attalidou, from exhibition catalogue entitled *Capturing the City*. Photos: Andreas Koutas.

Superimposing the current state of shadowed displaced people’s way of being present at the city’s periphery is her attempt to capture the other side; the place and

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<sup>35</sup> The paintings are entitled with verses from Kyriakos Charalambides’ poetry from the collection *Famagusta Rising*. The paintings are products of her common work with visual artist Stefanos Karababas.

the time. She defines the intention of the exhibition *Capturing the city* (March 2011, Argo Gallery) as not only her own movement in the city through the movements of her brush in the process of painting, but also the movement of the exhibition visitors; *“the main aim was to relate to the city, to find a way to walk through the city freely, thing which was impossible in any other way”* to what was abruptly cut from its flow decades ago. Her painting, she says, is her way of approaching and understanding history and *“narrating it in a new brand way”*.

Katerina left her city with no personal memory of it at the age of a few months and as a member of ‘The Generation of Postmemory’ in Marianne Hirsch’s (2012) terms, her way of ‘remembering’ / knowing her city is through the collected visual narratives as well as the oral and written ones. She explains the preceding processes of building a relationship with her place and its time in order to re-story Varosha narrative in her own new ways;

*Although my mother’s family originates from the city and I thus grew up much connected to its memory, I never had the opportunity to experience life there, since I was born a few months before the war. I visited the area many times, stood on the beachfront looking at the wrecked buildings, swam in the waters, as far as it is permitted, drove all around its periphery. I took photos secretly; I listened to the scarce sounds. This image of complete desertion crushed me each time, the barbed wire going round the city kept me at a distance; I could not capture the city, establish a relationship with it. And so I started to search for images of the time when Ammochostos (Varosha) was still a free city. Photographic albums that somehow managed to make it across the line, old family super 8 movies and old postcards (Exhibition Catalogue, 2011).*

Then came the creative products of her understanding of how her city was and how its displaced people have been experiencing it since they were forced to abandon it. Although this study illustrates a case of how her paintings function as mnemonic devices of resisting place attachment at personal level, the findings imply further research beyond the present scope of this study on how the visuals created by the members of ‘postmemory generation’ function as a new knowing / remembering

/ memorization strategy for the collective memory in the construction of the future. At a personal level, I have observed how her paintings are placed in current lives as reminders of life lived once and how they signify the person-place bond. Maroulla (birth 1959, lives in Nicosia), for example, has one of Katerina's paintings, the one displaying the setting, the path she lived her childhood through. It is hung on the wall by the stairs in her house and she describes how she 'enters' her city of her past in her everyday life;

*when I come down the stairs every morning, I feel like I am walking on the path of my life then... the sea was coming up, we had to walk on the rocks... it was not a straight and easy access after a point so as children we were on this part and on the other part... you know the part that is open until Glossa, and from Glossa until there (indicating the places in the painting – see Figure 4.6). My life was here and I walk by it every day... I have this sense... but if you notice, the painting has this white cloudy drawing... so you see it's like behind the clouds, it's blurred. It is not a clear picture... not clear colors, even though they are, it has this... veil... I cannot touch. I cannot be there... It's like kissing someone with a veil... if I want to take the veil and see it as I used to remember it, again I won't see it. It's in my past. I will see something else... It won't be the same, but I would love it the same.*

While this ethnographic study discloses the multi-layered functions of the visual narratives as a form of mnemonic resistance of memory and 'postmemory', the geographical *realia* have also been discovered as functional objects of resistance to oblivion. Besides the urge to have the remnants of personal belongings as in the



Figure 4.6: Maroulla's walk by the painting. Photo: Nafia Akdeniz

case of Aris elaborated above, the sand and the seashells have also been illustrative geographical textures of the city reminding the fabric of the daily life experienced there. Like visuals, these geographical *realia* too have multi-layered forms in practice. They function as both mnemonic and post-mnemonic interactive devices to narrate place attachment. Adonis shares his embodied encounter with the sand at the Glossa beach during his first visit to Famagusta after 2003 checkpoint openings. He was with his son who was 7 years old, at the age he had to leave his city;

*I remember I used to get out of the sea and until I reach the towel, my feet were dry. Because there was no sand on them... Because the sand was so pure, the golden sand we say, very thin. It was not mud, not dirt. I remember I had this feeling... no sand was stuck on my feet... I left Famagusta when I was 7 and I went back to Famagusta for the first time when my son was 7 years old in 2003... I had a flashback memory and I wanted to test it... I said to my son, 'take off your shoes, go to the sea and then come and find me after you get wet' ... he did so and his feet were dry... It was like... It was a part of wound being closed at the very moment because my son was taking over my life... it was like a continuation, there was still something that did not change... As I said I left when I was 7 and my son was there when he was 7, it was like he was continuing my journey in Famagusta... And that's one of my prayers to God; when I am older and have grandkids, to raise my*

*grandkids on that beach, having my oozo and octopus and watching my son's kids doing what I was doing when I was at their age.*

The healing impact of this transgenerational encounter with the sand and the feeling of its touch do not only create mnemonic connection with the past in the present, they also generate future dreams emplaced *there*. Adonis emphasizes the continuation of his journey, which was cut by the barbed fence in time and place. Sensing the sand in the way in his flashback memory and seeing his son sensing it in the same way testify and secure his attachment to his place. His son inherits the geographical textures of the stories of his parental place through his own experience with the sand. The unchanged element, the textural feeling that the sand gives to him and to his son repairs Adonis' open wound partially and he feels strengthened to endure the resistance. His son, too, has the same place memory now granting him the status of a torchbearer for the post-generation's place attachment.

The sand has immediately become the most recurring geographical element in the displaced peoples' Varosha narratives during my interviews and observations. I have seen people kissing it to mean kissing their land, their homeland. I have seen people carrying it back in their current life after their visit to Famagusta and using it as *relia* in various decorative ways constantly functioning as a mnemonic resistance to oblivion, reminding what not to forget: their place and their attachment to it. Aris, for example, has Varosha sand in a small bottle next to his 'gumbara' in her current house in Larnaca with a little note having the name of the football team of Famagusta, Anorthosis (see previous Figure 4.1). Maroulla keeps it in a much bigger bowl (see Figure 4.7, left) while Vasso (birth 1948, lives in Larnaca) has candles made of Varosha sand (see Figure 4.7, right).

Another function of this multilayered ways of using the sand as mnemonic geographical texture of the city is educational. Pamela<sup>36</sup> (birth 1979, lives in Limassol) is a schoolteacher teaching Varosha through how its sand feels. Activating the sense of touch, she also activates her postmemory for the city of inherited parental attachment and transfers that feeling to the second generation of post-war.



Figure 4.7: Maroulla's bowl of Varosha sand (left), Vasso's candles made of Varosha sand (right). Photo of the sand bowl: Nafia Akdeniz. Photo of the sand candle: Courtesy of Vasso.

To illustrate the children's game played at the sand of Varosha, the Glossa beach in the story of her book *Όνειρα στην άμμο*, *Dreams on the sand*, she asks her students of age 6-8 to sit in a circle as if they were on the sand and touch it, the real sand of Varosha in a bowl in the middle (see Figure 4.8, left). The book is also complemented with small jars of Varosha sand for home-readings (see Figure 4.8, right). Through sense of touch, the children learn how Famagusta felt and feels to its people during the class and home reading activities. Pamela describes how she uses her book to teach the geographical fabric of her city but without injecting any

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<sup>36</sup> Pamela Anastasiou Papaiacovou. Upon informed consent, her real name is used to protect the copyrights for her book *Όνειρα στην άμμο*, *Dreams on the sand* (2017).

nationalist, pessimist views. She aims to teach the meaning of being a refugee and longing for home as a universal struggle to contextualize the enforced displacement from Varosha. Referring to the school curriculum, she explains;

*in our schools, we have the target to speak about the war 1974, about our places, so it's one way to use this book as a tool to tell them about Famagusta and what happened but without pain, without violence, without enemy. I use my book as an educational tool for the kids to learn about our country with optimistic views.*



Figure 4.8: Pamela's classroom activity with Varosha sand (left), Pamela's book accompanied with bottled Varosha sand (right). Photos: Courtesy of Pamela.

She says the impulse she felt to write this book emerged when as a mother she wanted to narrate to her child their story of being displaced from home and how they have been longing to return for decades. Then, she starts using it as an educational tool with *geographical realia* becoming *classroom/home realia*. She describes how her little daughter keeps asking questions about Famagusta;

*To be honest, I have created this for my daughter. Because, my daughter asks 'why we are not here, why we go back...' I did not want to tell her that Turks are not good people because we want to live together. The only solution is to live together. I don't want to tell her that we would be living together with the enemy. So I created this book... something nice and we want to go back and live there...*

Pamela’s father has the map of Famagusta in his souvenir shop in Limassol with a note indicating his house on the map and saying he has been waiting to return since he was forced to leave (see Figure 4.9, left). It had been 44 years at the time I had the interview in his office with Pamela in July 2018. Changing the number of years of waiting every year on the map does not change this family’s resistance to oblivion, says Pamela. She keeps teaching of what it means to be from Varosha, to be displaced from it and to wait for return. When she took her students to Glossa Beach, the setting of the story in her book, she says the feeling of the sand was already familiar to them. On the cards they prepared in class, they left positive messages to to characters of the book, people of the city; “*Teukro and Konstantia, I wish you go home again*” (see Figure 4.9, right).



Figure 4.9: Pamela’s father’s note on the map of Famagusta (left). Pamela’s students’ handmade cards on Varosha sand (right). Photo left: Nafia Akdeniz. Photo right: Courtesy of Pamela.

The seashells are another mnemonic objects connecting the people to their place of the lived life and its memory / postmemory. The familiarity of the sand transferred to the new generation in the way Adonis experiences with his son, or Pamela’s with her daughter and students resonates with the multiple uses of the shells. The sea as the heart beating the rhythm of the life lived in Famagusta becomes one of the main reference points of longing and when Emilia says she has seawater



circulating in her veins, not blood, the people of Varosha connect and agree. When Vasso says, “*I want to be buried in the sea*”, people know why; the life lived in the sea. After the sand, the seashells are treasured, sacred, natural ‘objects’ of the bond, the attachment the people feel and resist preserving for their city. Vasso portrays the sacredness of the shells with her childhood memories;

*For me, they are sacred, yes. They are the magic shells that keep me alive. With my friends, I used to be at the beach every day... competing; who collects more shells? As I was very near the beach, I learned swimming very early and very well... And water is very deep there. I used to swim up to rocks (Camila- the camel shape rock in the sea) all around rocks, relax and come back. Seeing shells underneath, collecting from the shore... Now in my house I have lots of shells. I have little pots in the bathroom where I take shower full of shells (see Figure 4.10, left)... I look at them and I get relax, remembering... shells are my memories.*

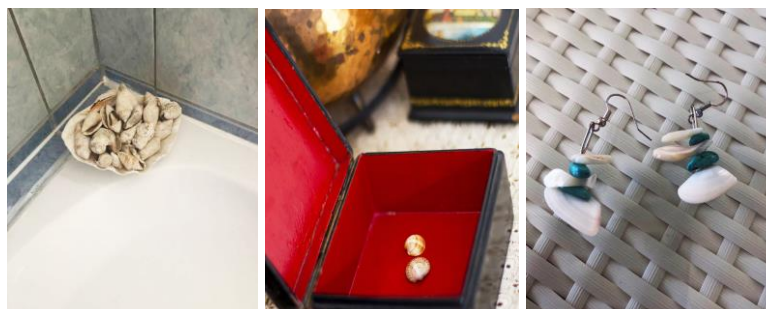


Figure 4.10: Vasso’s shells in her bathroom (left), Penelope’s shells in the box (middle), Maroulla’s shell earrings (right). Photos: Courtesy of Vasso, Penelope and Maroulla.

Vasso’s shells have a daily function in her bathroom reminding her the times she had at the seawater of Varosha. Penelope has a different way of having the shells in her current life. She keeps them in her jewelry box (see Figure 4.10, middle), like the most precious jewelry, not for daily use. Another way of keeping the shells from Varosha as mnemonic objects representing the geographical texture of their place, for Maroulla is to have the earrings made of those shells and wear them summertime. She defines her beach activity with her friends when she was a teenager in Varosha; “*we were collecting the sea shells... thin sea shells with a hole and we were making*

necklaces, bracelets, earrings... I have the earrings similar to those” (see Figure 4.10, right). Pierre’s (1989) metaphorical description of memory “like shells on the shore when the sea of living memory has receded” in *Between Memory and History: Les lieux de mémoire* is thus literal in the context of Varosha becoming its own metaphor when the people use the shells in multi-functional ways of remembering, of their mnemonic resistance to oblivion. (See also Slymovics’ reference to Pierre’s metaphor of memory in *The Object of Memory Arab and Jew narrate the Palestinian village*, 1989, p. 12).

The ‘found’ mnemonic things connecting people to the ‘lost’ city and its memory include numerous personal belongings as well as mobile geographical features such as the sand and the shells mobilizing the memory of the experience of the city (for further person-object relations in the context of absence/loss see Bille, 2010; DeSilvey, 2006; DeSilvey 2007; Kidron, 2012; Lipman, 2018; Meyer, 2012; Parkin, 2016). I have discovered an astonishing form of performance, a ritual of re-activating the use of a *thing* to preserve the memory of what this study suggests as the *intangible cultural heritage*<sup>37</sup> of Famagusta: The Orange Festival. March was the

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<sup>37</sup> UNESCO’s *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage 2003*, defines intangible cultural heritage as the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, and skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artifacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity.

(Article 2 [http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=17716&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=17716&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html))

When the orange festival was being performed in Famagusta before 1974, the ‘intangible cultural heritage’ was not a declared category by UNESCO. The findings of this study suggest it to be listed as such as it is the cultural element in the fabric of lifestyle of pre-1974 Famagusta and it still provides the displaced people of Varosha a “sense of unity and continuity”. Having shared my idea with the art historian and archaeologist Anna Marangou, a displaced Famagustian, we have agreed to initiate the stages for official applications to UNESCO together. This implies a further research to explore the processes of such an attempt that may lead to have the ‘intangible culture heritage’ of a ‘lost city’ recognized by UNESCO. It may not.

time of the festival “when the oranges are ripe” says Violenta (birth 1946, lives in Nicosia) describing Famagusta as the city of oranges;

*There were many yards, from Ayios Memnons to Ayios Lucas full of orange trees... we had this festival once in a year with all the fiestas gathering in the Γ. Σ .Ε Stadium at the time the oranges ripe... at the entrance of Famagusta from Nicosia, there was a big arch saying ΚΑΛΩΣ ΗΛΘΑΤΕ ΣΤΗ ΠΟΛΗ ΤΟΥ ΠΟΡΤΟΚΑΛΙΟΥ / ‘WELCOME TO THE CITY OF ORANGES’ (see Figure 4.11, left). The festival in Famagusta had many things, for a week I think, the municipal park is decorated, the streets were decorated with oranges here and there, and the peak was Sunday... there was this ritual, big parade like the carnival festival in Limassol. Things were decorated with oranges everywhere and there was a prize given to the best... every year we had a queen of oranges...<sup>38</sup>*

The last Orange Festival in Famagusta was in March 1974 that can be seen in the dated postcards (see Figure 4.11, right). Since then, only in 2015, the



Figure 4.11: The arch at the city entrance at the time of Orange Festival of Famagusta before 1974 (right), the postcard of the last Orange Festival of Famagusta in March, 1974. Photos: Courtesy of Violenta.

displaced Greek Cypriot Famagustians gathered with Turkish Cypriot Famagustians at the Glossa Beach to “commemorate that long - abandoned harvest festival”, writes the Guardian reporter Jonathan Gorvett<sup>39</sup> (2015). That was before I initiated this study in 2018. Having explored what inspired the idea of such a ritual to

<sup>38</sup> Many things Violenta describes can be seen in ‘Famagusta Cyprus Orange Festival’ CYBC documentary 1971: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nyLEZuNrrAU>

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/may/03/hands-across-divide-cypriots-politicians-talks-turkish-greek>

remember Famagusta Orange Festival as another performance of mnemonic resistance to oblivion, I discovered another found thing; *αψίδα*, *arch* they named it too just like the entrance to the city then. That thing, the arch was decorated with oranges during the festival in the fountain pool in the Municipal Park before 1974 (see Figure 4.12, left) and then decorated again at the Glossa Beach in 2015 for the remembrance (see Figure 4.12, right). I asked Violenta during the interview how come that arch from the Municipal Park in the fenced off Varosha ended up at the Glossa Beach;

*this was found thrown at some yard in the northern side and a Turkish Cypriot friend who knew what it meant to us took it... then called Pavlos (one of the admins of the Facebook page ‘Famagusta our city’- the Greek Cypriot initiative) and together with Turkish Cypriot friends from ‘Famagusta Initiative’ they organized this gathering... You see we started decorating it there (See Figure 4.13)... we all had our orange and put one on that arch remembering Famagusta... We had t-shirts for that day saying ‘Πορτοκάλια στην Άμμο, Kumdaki Portakallar’, Oranges in the Sand’...*



Figure 4.12: The orange arch in the Municipal Park before 1974 (left), the orange arch at the Glossa Beach in 2015 (right). Photo right: Courtesy of Violenta. Photo left: Pavlos Iacovou.

They had a photo all together at the end of the ritual with their t-shirts on in front of the orange arch, which was replaced from the Municipal Park to the beach front of the remnants of their city (see Figure 4.14). Then, Violenta says;

*we left it with oranges there, it belonged to the city, belonged to Famagusta... we left it on the beach... it was not possible to take it back to its original place in the fenced off city... The next year, it was still there but*

*then lost again... must have been thrown away by the soldiers but I am not sure.*



Figure 4.13: Decorating the orange arch, 2015, Glossa Beach. Photo: Courtesy of Violenta.



Figure 4.14: Communal photo in front of the orange arch, Glossa Beach. Photo: Courtesy of Christos Vorkas.

This found arch of orange becomes the mnemonic device the people of Varosha use to continue the *heritagizaiton* of their cultural orange festival in a different form. Then in their Facebook page they created to gather virtually as a community, they circulate collective visuals (see Figure 4.15) to narrate interactively the stories comparing the orange arches then and now to remember remembering, to continue resisting to oblivion. Hence, preserving such ‘mnemonic aids’ of their

collective place memory (Lewicka, 2008, p. 214), they preserve the place attachment.

When I smelled the oranges during the ritual of Good Friday/Epiphany Liturgy in the church of Ayios Georgios Exorinos in 2018 during my first participant observation, I was told that Famagusta was the city of oranges to my surprise seeing no orange trees in Famagusta today. However, exploring through the Orange Festival of Famagusta, this study reveals how the fenced off place has been restored as ‘smellscape’ in Porteous’ (1990) term through oranges, the fruit and its flowers.



Figure 4.15: Facebook visual comparing the orange arch then and now. Collective photo: The Facebook page circulation.

The odor memory of the ‘lost’ city resisting through such olfactory experiences has been active with communal gatherings after the enforced displacement. Rodaway (2002) in *Sensuous Geography* defines how “olfaction is generally interactive, a kind of communication with the environment—sniffing and/or giving out a smell—and fundamentally this occurs across space, hence it is geographical” (p. 68). Such olfactory, thus geographical experience created with the oranges, in the context of

Varosha, activates the memory “within a myriad of associations” (Rodaway, 2002, p. 71) as a communicative mnemonic performance of resisting oblivion.

#### **4.2.2 Resistance to oppression**

There is resistance. “Where there is power, there is resistance” Foucault (1980, p. 135) asserts and Ryan (2011), building on Foucault in *Memory, power and resistance: The anatomy of a tripartite relationship*, argues, “where there is power, there is [mnemonic] resistance” (p. 165). Drawing on my 3-year ethnographic explorations with the displaced people of Varosha, I develop the argument of memory-power-resistance relationship and argue that where there is power; there is *mnemonic narrative resistance*. The latest unilateral, non-participatory, oppressive political power practices in/of Varosha excluding the *Varosiotas* and everyone willing to be involved in the participatory empathic processes of the future revival of the city have created a narrative boom as a form of resistance. The regular, annual, usual, continual, stable, committed mnemonic narrative performances activating memory of the life lived before the involuntary displacement to sustain place attachment and dream of return have changed in intensity. Following the initial press entrance on 29 August 2019 and round-table meeting on 15 February 2020, the beachfront (the Glossa Beach extension) and the main street (Democratias and Kennedy) openings of the closed city on 8 October 2020 with ‘visiting hours’ after decades to anyone to *see* have created an impulse to intensify the countering resistance.

The previous narrative processes of mnemonic resistance to oblivion has evolved into a narrative resistance to oppression; the oppressive conflict infusing political power practices that created an environment of “*knife turning in the already bleeding wound*” says Adonis in our follow-up interview. In Constantinos

Constantinou's TV documentary- 24 Hours, *Famagusta, the hostage city in Europe – 2020*<sup>40</sup> covering the in-depth interviews *in-situ* with Varosiotis, Anna Marangou, art historian archeologist, refers to that heart-wrenching pain the displaced people of Varosha feel *sight-seeing* their city while others *sight-seeing* their pain;

*We sat on the pavement, on the ground. And in front of us English people, French, Portuguese tourists passed by. They were looking at the town, taking photos, laughing and then some settlers passed with their children and you think the children aren't to blame; they were going for a walk... And I thought is this the paranoia of today's world to trample on my pain? They reopened the city. And they said come. Come without passports this time. Come and see. To see for the last time, perhaps? Come and walk on the nails, see the proof (of power), come and hurt.*

Countering the current deserted sight to be *seen* through 'touristic' excursions, her narrative continues with a detailed description of how Famagusta was "*an avenue to progress and a pioneer*". She refers to both economical and cultural qualities of the city. While the port was the pioneer supporting the city economically, the Municipal Art Gallery and Library as well as the Greek Lyceum of Famagusta were centers of culture, the "*eye openers*" leading the progress of cultural fabric of the prosperous life they lived. "*Surreal*" is the word commonly used during their interactions on the Facebook page to refer to the current *uncanny* situation of their city. The renewed asphalt on the Demokratias street with the decomposing building of the Hatjihambi Cinema aside with fallen rope barriers recalling the ones used in museums (see Figure 4.16) has created the *sight of pain* described as "*not the one shouting, sobbing, the other pain where eyes squint, where sobs come to the throat and you bite your lips so that they don't come out...your heart breaks up to pieces.... your world falls apart and you are still standing up*". What they hold with themselves while standing is the memory of the pre-1974 city they started

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<sup>40</sup>[https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=7USpuHCNET0&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR2WPCd3auL3RTcSIAqdr3JkyMVjvOvZd997Dw3nXIIWTgXFotiRdB\\_104M\\_](https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=7USpuHCNET0&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR2WPCd3auL3RTcSIAqdr3JkyMVjvOvZd997Dw3nXIIWTgXFotiRdB_104M_)



intensifying its narrativization in depth and amount to resist the oppressing power pouring new asphalt on the city they lived, they know, they remember, they dream to return. They resist to the “mnemonic decapitation” as in Zerubavel’s terms (1997) caused by the imposed newness interrupting the mental continuity of the flow of life they were cut out forcedly. On the Facebook page, Costakis (birth 1959, lives in Larnaca) calls for strengthening communal mnemonic resistance;



Figure 4.16: The new asphalt by the old Hatjihambi cinema on the Democratias Street. Photo: Pavlos Iacovou – Facebook page circulation

*Famagusta will always carry the full weight of the return, the whole burden of the reunification of our homeland. There is no longer a vision in this place. So what's left for us? A key, a key that once secured the house - as if it was needed, will now unlock memories that will gently take us back in time when the world was beautiful and our neighborhood was a paradise. So stand high all together, since it is our duty to stay alive and together to return. Send us your own Varosian stories, messages... We are not afraid of storms anymore.*

I have observed how they still carry the keys to the houses with no doors, even with no walls anymore. Vasiliki, a post-1974 generation Famagustian told me how her mother sometimes thinks of installing the key in a kind of artwork as a memorabilia but how hesitant she is at the same time as doing this would mean

accepting that the key is not functional anymore; there may not be a door to it, a home to it. Costakis' call for unlocking the memories with those keys has reinforced the already increasing narratives on their social networking site. Writing home addresses in Varosha in detail to emplace their memories was part of such Facebook circulation.

After the openings, Yiannis Toumazis, the director/curator of NIMAC, (Nicosia Municipal Art Centre), defines his narrativization of Varosha's progressive way of life retrospectively as an anthropogeographic act of resistance identifying the place with its people and how they relate in creating a way of living. On the Facebook page, he posts sets of photographs of people and places of Varosha narrating informative stories of their relation, *naming* them one by one, both the places and the people. I have observed his way of documenting the place's past focusing on what Vivian defined as the essence of the city to be claimed; the personal and communal experiences merging in public places of culture, education, medicine, entertainment, etc. *Naming is power*, Tuan (1991) argues, "the creative power to call something into being, to render the invisible visible, to impart a certain character to things" (p. 688). I build on his assertion following his sentence structure; naming in the context of Varosha is the creative narrative power calling the city's past into being, to render what is invisible under the 'new asphalt' visible, to impart the essential character to Varosha. Having the experience and knowledge of how Varosha existed is the fuel of the narrativization processes as a performance of resistance.

Another striking image that sparked intense interactions on their social networking site belongs to Yiannis; Don Quixote painting on the wall of the painter Paul Georgiou's Blue Bungalow seen through a small window from outside (see

Figure 4.17). “*And the lonely Don Quixote...*” says Yiannis and Vivian expands; she re-posts the image with a reference to a Seferis poem “*The earth has no crickets to*



Figure 4.17: Don Quixote painting on the wall of the painter Paul Georgiou’s Blue Bungalow. Photo: Yiannis Toumazis. Facebook page circulation.

*take it and leave*”, meaning, Vivian explains to me in our follow-up inbox correspondence, “*whatever they took away, still, our precious Varosha, they cannot take with them. Nor the precious artwork of Don Quixote*”. Such heritagization of the lived experience through *naming*- naming the painter, naming the painting, naming the house, naming the remnants as “treasure”, as precious, mnemonic treasures continues intensely with Yiannis’ documentation of the past; naming the places and people of the city. While the people of Varosha continue their mnemonic socialization on their social networking site, the media show interest in these flourishing narratives and channel their expansion and distribution. Beside Constantinos Constantinou’s TV documentary, *Famagusta, the hostage city in*

*Europe – 2020* elaborated before with Anna Marangou’s interview, the Famagusta Municipality of the south starts the campaign “*Αμμόχωστος, Δεν Ξοφλήσαμε – Famagusta, this is not the end*”<sup>41</sup> to collect narratives telling short personal stories of what it means to be a *Varosiotas*, a person of Varosha. The municipality shares Emilia’s narrative on their Facebook page on 23 December 2020 telling them as well as she told everyone and me how the seawater of Famagusta flows through her veins and “holds unquenchable memory and desire for return”. Referring to Roland Barthes, “our homeland is our childhood”, the campaign finishes every narrative with, “46 years of absence: We hope - We insist - We claim”.

While *Yeniduzen* newspaper of the north starts publishing such stories as illustrated before with Emilia and Vivian’s narratives of personal experiences, the *Politis* newspaper of the south covers such personal ones as well as narratives of the public place experiences. The in-depth informative *naming* of public places, which are the iconic cultural characteristics of the city, Yiannis argues in his Facebook posts receive a comment appreciating his documentation as “*valuable and unprecedented. It is not just tribute to standing memory. It is a spiritual excavation*”. The *Politis* newspaper covers Yiannis’ creation of memory content, the anthropogeography of the city through his narrativization of iconic place-people relations. The Famagusta Municipal Library and Gallery (see Figure 4.18) is one of the intellectual institutions of the city, Yiannis states on the Facebook page and the pages of the *Politis* newspaper<sup>42</sup>.

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<sup>41</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/TheFamagustaMunicipality/posts/2494031347569645>

<sup>42</sup> Municipal Library and Municipal Gallery:  
[http://parathyro.politis.com.cy/2020/10/dimotiki-vivliothiki-kai-dimotiki-pinakothiki-ammochoistou-46-chronia-meta/?fbclid=IwAR025NLmleh9QmgfrpVwZl\\_LqQz5ERcUp4ip3SWxS0SyLFHIV-sY918dwvs](http://parathyro.politis.com.cy/2020/10/dimotiki-vivliothiki-kai-dimotiki-pinakothiki-ammochoistou-46-chronia-meta/?fbclid=IwAR025NLmleh9QmgfrpVwZl_LqQz5ERcUp4ip3SWxS0SyLFHIV-sY918dwvs)

At the corner of the Democratias Street, the building is in silence now, then it was a center of attraction for enlightened and passionate people of Famagusta he says and then starts *naming*: Adam Adamantos, the Mayor started the project in 1952,



Figure 4.18: The Famagusta Municipal Library and Gallery, 2020. Photo: The Politis Newspaper, Eleni Pappadapoulou.

then it continued by Andreas Pougouros who won the municipal elections in 1953. George Philippou-Pierides was appointed in 1954 as the director and that is how history is made, states Yiannis and posts a photo from the director's archive (see Figure 4.19 left) where he welcomes foreign visitors to the library. On the right was a well-known educator Micheal Koumas from Varosha. The railings of the gallery balcony seen in this archival photo then can also be seen in today's photo now (see Figure 4.19, right). Counter to the recent plundered landscape of the library, it was full of thousands of volumes of books and magazines, rare editions and newspapers. Yiannis continues his narrative with *naming* the content of the gallery library upstairs listing the painters and their paintings mainly from Cyprus and Greece including 35 watercolor paintings of old Famagusta by Theophilos Mogapgap and 380 drawings and paintings, mainly portraits of prominent people of Famagusta by Michalis Hadjidimitriou. This was the place, which hosted the famous lectures of



Figure 4.19: Archival photo of the director welcoming foreign visitor to the library with a Famagustian educator (left), the gallery balcony, 2020 (right). Photo left: Courtesy of Yiannis Toumazis, photo right: The Politis newspaper, Eleni Pappadapoulou.

*Επιστημονικός Φιλολογικός Σύλλογος Αμμοχώστου (ΕΦΣΑ)*<sup>43</sup>, the *Scientific and Philological Association of Famagusta (EFSA)* before 1974. Yiannis complements that with their method, knowledge and passion, Filippou-Pieridis and the Advisory Committee enriched the collection with works by renowned, contemporary, pioneering artists, such as Adamantios Diamantis, Telemachos Kanthos, Viktoras Ioannidis, Ioannis Kissonergis, Solomos Frangoulidis, Stelios Votsis, Christoforos Savvas, Stas Paraskou, George Skotinos and others. Fortunately, in the midst of all this disaster, Yiannis states, there were some people who cared and preserved these cultural heritages. As part of the confidence-building measures, the Turkish Cypriot community returned some great artworks, 140 of them from the Municipal Gallery of Famagusta to the Greek Cypriot community<sup>44</sup>. They are part of the exhibition at the State Gallery of Contemporary Art SPEL, entitled, *Ξαναγέννηση, Yeniden Doğuş, Rebirth*.

Another intellectual institution is *Λύκειο Ελληνίδων Αμμοχώστου, Greek Lyceum of Famagusta* (see Figure 4.20 left) for women on the Demokratias Street.

<sup>43</sup> <http://www.polignosi.com/cgi-bin/hweb?-A=3710&-V=limmata>

<sup>44</sup> <https://www.pio.gov.cy/en/press-releases-article.html?id=14141#flat>

This high school was perhaps the most influential cultural lung in the city along with the Municipal Library-Gallery for women's intellectual, spiritual and social development, Yiannis claims in his Facebook post and starts *naming* the founder and the other contributors referring to an accompanying archival photo (see Figure 4.20 right): On the steps in the middle is the pioneer Maria P. Ioannou, who founded the Greek Lyceum of Famagusta for women in 1930 following the inspirational Kalliroe Parren. Parren was the first Greek feminist, publisher and director of the weekly *Ladies Newspaper* (1887) which was drawn exclusively by women and addressed women mainly in Athens and Piraeus. She was also the founder of the Greek Lyceum of Athens in 1911. Yiannis continues narrating the story of the contributors and mentions Maritsa Petridou, the vice president of the high school. For the people in the back row of the photograph, he refers to his aunt Katina Toumazis and states that the architect of the building, which is one of the wonderful examples of modernism in Varosha, is his uncle Dionysis Toumazis.



Figure 4.20: Greek Lyceum of Famagusta for women (left), collective photo of the founder and contributors (right). Photo left: Courtesy of Avghi Frangopoulou. Photo right: Courtesy of Yiannis Toumazis.

The pages of the newspaper *Politis* as well covers the story of this intellectual institution<sup>45</sup> where beside the educational curriculum, most of the children of

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<sup>45</sup> Greek Lyceum of Famagusta for women:

Famagusta, boys and girls went to this school to learn about music, ballet and theater. The Lyceum is the characteristic of the cultural creation of Famagusta. However, it is also a reference point in the education, culture and arts of the whole of Cyprus, *Politis* states. After publication and circulations of some shocking photos of the school's indoors reveal another story; the sea of clothes mainly for women and children (see Figure 4.21) were collected by the people of Varosha to help the displaced people of Kyrenia after the first phase of the war in 1974, before they became displaced themselves. The scene of clothes becomes the monument of tragedy of war, of Famagusta.



Figure 4.21: Sea of clothes in the Greek Lyceum of Famagusta for women, 2020.  
Photo: The *Politis* newspaper, Costas Constantinos.

Walking together with Emilia on the Democratias Street and then with Violenta, listening to them every time we stopped around the Hatjihambi Cinema telling me the high amount of options they had for cultural activities from libraries to galleries, from markets to cinemas, to theaters, I imagine each and every one of them active. Thinking of the proximity of the city center of culture to the sea and all the relaxation, water sports and entertainment the sea afforded for them, I imagine the flow and merge of the the two; the city and the sea life. Heavenly. Their narrative

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[https://politis.com.cy/politis-news/kypros/apothiki-ton-klemmenon-roychon-to-lykeio-ellinidon-toy-kosta-konstantinoy-sygklonistikes-fotografies/?fbclid=IwAR2DmbUkfDZQb77BT45A\\_z7Va8S0IT\\_77oOOCqffo0VIHWgNwBD46phXdOI](https://politis.com.cy/politis-news/kypros/apothiki-ton-klemmenon-roychon-to-lykeio-ellinidon-toy-kosta-konstantinoy-sygklonistikes-fotografies/?fbclid=IwAR2DmbUkfDZQb77BT45A_z7Va8S0IT_77oOOCqffo0VIHWgNwBD46phXdOI)



mnemonic resistance to oblivion and oppression, their struggle to preserve both the memory of the past and dream of the future find reference in their portrayal of the heavenly. Yiannis, as part of his anthropogeographic record of the place-person relationship to define the way of life in Varosha and to entail its people's attachment to it, he keeps generating informative narratives resisting to oppressive decapitation of the *essential* memory; the *essence* of the city to be claimed as 'property' in Vivan's sense.

Last but not least public place this study covers as one of the cultural, iconic characteristics of the city is the Hraion Cinema. Another wonderful example of modernism in Famagusta with its architectural features that can be still seen today (see Figure 4.22 left, before 1974, right, today) with its impressive entrance, foyer, ground floor and the balcony (see Figure 4.23) Yiannis says. The *Politis* newspaper covers the details of Yiannis' naming of its founders, contributors and activities, which made Hraion more than a cinema<sup>46</sup>. The huge posters hanging outside were



Figure 4.22: The Hraion Cinema before 1974 (left), The Hraion Cinema, 2020 (right): Photos: The *Politis* Newspaper, Eleni Pappadapoulou.

impressive for the people of Varosha as well, hand-painted by artists of the time. The wood merchant George Papageorgiou created this cinema in November 1944 on the

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<sup>46</sup> The Hraion Cinema:  
[http://parathyro.politis.com.cy/2020/11/iraion-epistofi-ston-eksosti/?fbclid=IwAR092K9ix2ookIaCRD1nrCC351GI49Hk7U2D\\_IWQxw1oND7tZZqWn0DEhQA](http://parathyro.politis.com.cy/2020/11/iraion-epistofi-ston-eksosti/?fbclid=IwAR092K9ix2ookIaCRD1nrCC351GI49Hk7U2D_IWQxw1oND7tZZqWn0DEhQA)



Figure 4.23: The Hraion Cinema inside, 2020 (right). Photo: The Politis Newspaper, Eleni Pappadapoulou.

corner of Grigori Afxentiou and Aeschylus streets and he was its permanent resident having his living space in that building. Just behind the winter one, the summer Hraion was located and apart from the screening of films of the time from all over the world, theatrical performances and concerts, gatherings and dances were also hosted both in the winter and the summer Hraion. Yiannis posts some remnants from the cinema like a poster of a German music comedy of 1958 *Two Hearts in May* and Vivian's comment hits the nail on the head, the nail holding the mnemonic resistance: "*All of this and whatever else is found in our places, it would be great to gather in a specialist museum. We will call it To Βαρώσι που αντιστάθηκε, Varosiotēs who resisted*".

## Chapter 5

### CONCLUSION

Grounded in Fisher's (1984, 1985, 1989) narrative theory of communication defining humans as narrators, *homo narrans*, this study have addressed the undeveloped areas in both narrative and place attachment studies through thematic and functional analysis of the place attachment narratives of the involuntarily displaced. The gap the present ethnographic case study has addressed in the narrative studies is the underdeveloped contextual processes of narrative communication, which impacts the content as well. The content analysis of the mnemonic place attachment narratives in the context of enforced displacement and longing for return revealed the geographical and cultural features of the city-sea life of pre-1974 with the future projections through a thematic typology: Loss, Threshold, Transformation and Future. Furthermore, the contextual analysis of communication processes uncovered the function of such narratives as performative mnemonic resistance: resistance to oblivion and resistance to oppression. Hence, with the thematic content and functional context grounded findings of the narrative analysis, this study has answered two primary research questions: 1. How do the displaced people of Varosha narrate their place attachment in the context of involuntary displacement and decades long deterred home returning? 2. How does place attachment narrative of the displaced people of Varosha function as a means of communication and a story telling performance?

Demonstrating how communication is fundamental to place meaning making

and how the processes of narration sustain place attachment through mnemonic communicative performances / events, this study intersected narrative, memory, place and peace studies. The typology and function of the communicated narratives of place attachment have created critical data for further research in conflict / peace studies in Cyprus and elsewhere. With the samples of communicative, dialogue-based bi-communal environments, the Narrative of Transformation in the revealed typology illustrates changes in the perception and narration of experiences of the communities in political conflict. It also reinforces Boulding's (2017) claim of peace as a process, "an action concept, involving a constant shaping and reshaping of understandings, situations, and behaviors in a constantly changing life world, to sustain well-being for all" (p. 1). The Transformation Narrative also illustrates what Korostelina (2012) emphasizes for the process of forming a culture of peace; "reflection on and critical analysis of one's own perception and practices are critical in the endeavour for peace," (p. 4) she claims. Thus, the samples in the Narrative of Transformation suggest paths on how to further use narratives transformatively communicating peace in the context of conflict.

In particularity of the Varosha context, the findings may inspire further the future oriented multi / interdisciplinary studies exploring Varosha's future revival to an environment of conflict resolution and sustainable peace. Its unique status of being a military zone and bargaining chip in the political agenda plays a catalyst role and impacts the content and context of the narrative processes constantly. The methodological approach of this study with its ground on the multi-sited ethnography illustrated a way of following up people and objects, ideas and emotions. The multi-sitedness of the study demonstrated following multi-dimensional place-time intersections as well with merging physical, virtual / digital and the *imagined* sites.

Voicing the silenced, the theoretical and methodological frameworks of this study have also shown ways of exploring processes of resistance contextualized in memory and power juncture, *remembering, naming and documenting* are shown as such processes in the context of this study.

The challenging fieldwork due to the features of the field under the scope of this study -forbidden, fenced, military, unpeopled, constantly active in the political agenda, indicated and illustrated an eventual research design, which completes when the study completes. Beside the features of the field of the fieldwork, ethnography itself has proven to be a methodological approach informing the theoretical framework in order to re-formulate the argumentation of the thesis to reflect the unprecedented changes in the field. Even when the researcher decides the collected data has reached its saturation with no new data emerging, this ethnographic study exemplified how a sudden change in the field necessitates a new stage of data collection, meaning to leave the desk and go back in the field. While the new data re-formulated the argumentation of the thesis to embrace a new kind of function of mnemonic resistance – resistance to intensified oppression in addition to resistance to oblivion, going back to the field emerged new discoveries implying and inspiring further research as well. Before the ‘back-in-the-field’ implications for further studies, this present study of place attachment communication ethnography has identified its limitations and implications as it unfolded in 3 years, 2018-2021.

The first limitation that surfaced during the interviews and stayed beyond the scope of this research was a case I termed *intentional place de-attachment* defined by Lucas. He conveyed his observations of how some displaced people of Varosha, Famagusta have benefitted from the city’s captivity under military control since 1974 that resulted in flourishing of other southern coastline cities such as Ayia Napa,

Paralimni, Protaras, Larnaca, Limassol. The ‘death’ of the most culturally and economically progressive city of Cyprus, Famagusta meant the ‘birth’ of other cities and Lucas argued this was one of the reasons the UN sponsored referendum of 2004 to unite the island failed: the re-birth of Famagusta would kill the charm of the others and this was prevented with Greek Cypriot votes of *No* to unification of the island, of Famagusta. The processes of de-attaching from the city lost to re-attaching to another city gained require another study to be conducted in combination with the findings of this present one. Such an expansion in scope could offer further insights for the revival projects of Varosha as well as for the overlooked areas of narrative and place attachment studies.

Another limitation that emerged as the interviews progressed was a case of memory / postmemory. While many of the participants expressed feeling of proud in being able to transfer place attachment through mnemonic narrative communication to their children with no personal experience of Varosha, although very few, some *Varosiotēs* expressed how they avoided such narrations. They argued transferring place attachment to the forbidden, fenced city would mean transferring the pain of longing for it. For Penelope, for example, this emotional weight on her creates an abnormality, a schizophrenic situation that prevents her from building new memories in Famagusta. Her visits stay tangent to her memory; she cannot internalize and own new experiences of being present in Famagusta after 2003. She claims she needs to return in the context of unified Cyprus in peace that would allow her to stay, not to force her to leave every time she comes. She argues only then her children can learn to be a Famagustian in her *imagined* New Famagusta, in her *imagined* New Cyprus. Vasiliki is a Famagustain from the post-1974 generation who feels already in the process of attaching to the city with her post-2003 personal experiences in

combination with pre-1974 inherited experiences. A comparative further research is required to shed light on how memory / postmemory intersects with place attachment and narrative communication in the context of constant conflict and *imagined* peace.

Suggesting these limitations as new scopes of new studies, this present study has documented some implications as grounds to build on for further studies. Theoretically this study is framed in Fisher's Narrative Paradigm communication theory arguing humans communicate with narrations as *homo narrans*. To strengthen the argumentation of Narrative of Transformation, this study refers to Kirkwood's (1992) elaboration on the narrative principles. That is to say, while Fisher's Narrative Paradigm defines two narrative principles of constant communicative tests, *coherence and fidelity*, Kirkwood (1992) draws on and suggests another narrative principle; a critical frame of thinking questioning the narrative reasoning of *what rings true* – fidelity. Fisher (1984) defines narrative fidelity as a communicative test of "whether stories [people] experience ring true with the stories they know to be true in their lives" (emphasis original, p. 7). With his critical principle, Kirkwood (1992) argues narratives can function transformatively "disclosing creative possibilities of thought and action" (p. 30) and therefore showing more than what is already known with 'new and unsuspected' ways of being in the world, in Cyprus in the context of this study. Highlighting Korostelina's (2012) suggestion of critical reflections on one's perception, drawing on Kirkwood's argumentation of *narrative principle of criticism* (see also Rowland, 1987; Warnick 1987; Stroud 2002, 2016) and the illustrations in the Narrative of Transformation revealed in this study, a further study could enlighten peace-making processes.

The methodological implications this study suggests for further ones are three. One is the issue of confidentiality in the era of social media, the other is the impact

of interview place on the interview content and the third one is the researcher as an auto-ethnographic site within the framework of multi-sited ethnography. To avoid any harm to the participants, qualitative research follows the principle of confidentiality and I followed the same principle too with my ethnographic study. However, as the research progressed, I encountered surprising cases where I had interviews with a signed informed consent forms signifying the permission of data use under the rule of confidentiality. The interviewees proudly posted the data shared during the interviews on their personal Facebook pages to public exposure stating how happy they are to have the interview about the city they loved, love, will love. After a few cases as such, I started questioning the need for confidential research while interviewees exhibit tendencies of revealing the data under their real names. I continued applying the principle of confidentiality having cases with ‘trespassing’ stories as well as acknowledging the fact that digital data can be ‘deleted’ while a thesis is a permanent documentation. However, I field-noted that my experience with social media ethnography suggests an in-depth exploration of the issue of confidentiality in relation to research ethics, which requires constant update in order to be able to ethically deal with the fast changes of social media features and behaviors. Another issue with confidentiality I had to find an ethical way out occurred when some of the participants started publishing their narratives upon media requests especially after the opening for the public visits that created shock and anti-climax for its people waiting to return to stay, not to visit. To protect their copyrights of the published data, I had to prepare another informed consent form to be signed for permission of real name use. *Situational ethics* (Tracy, 2013) is what the findings of this study suggest for further methodological elaborations.

The second methodological encounter that made me realize something new



implying further research is the impact of the interview venue on the narrations exchanged during the active interviews. The ones I had with Giorgios by the barbed wire at his mobile coffee table, with Alexandra by the barbed wire in front of her house and with Vasso at the balcony of the Palm Beach Hotel facing the beachfront hotels of Varosha and the sea of course are as such. These interviews have evolved into participant observations concurrently as I was conducting the interviews while what they were always doing when in Famagusta. These *in situ* interviews have created data that would have not been created at other places. Such a methodological finding suggests a re-think of the interview places for qualitative researchers as not taking the venue for granted can change the content of the interview. That is to say, considering the impact of the place on the interview content may change the data collection processes for the qualitative researchers.

The other methodological implication worth further focus is myself. A researcher. An ethnographer. A Turkish Cypriot who believes, like Carbaugh and Cerulli (2013) do, “by seeking to know others’ places in the world, one can broaden one’s understanding and better understand one’s own” (p. 18). From the very first sentence of this study, I had to tame my tendency to narrate the story of Varosha with the first person singular, I: The way I am haunted by deserted Varosha, the way I feel vacuumed by the absence of its people, the way I seek my place in Cyprus, in the world, in the universe. Hiding myself between the lines, I have framed my ethnographic vignette to voice the *Varosiodes*. I was not aware much of the attachment I have been growing for the place at the time I was getting to know its people. I was not much aware until the press entered their city (29 August 2019) without their consent and stepped on the remnant of the life they lived in that place. Watching through the cameras showing the insides of what had been closed even to a

naked eye for decades, I felt a deep empathy for the way they felt encroachment – this is just to avoid the word rape. Accompanying theirs, I responded with my narrative for the first time telling how the ice-cream man of the Glossa Beach, *Loukata Loukata* stitching the path between my childhood memories of *Bandabuliya* in Nicosia and their childhood memories of *Αγορά* in Varosha (see Appendix C).

Months have passed, more than a year; I was walking with them in their city, 8 October 2020 and beyond. Unprecedented. Unexpected. Unbelievable. Shocking. *Nothing could have made us ready for seeing our city after half a century like ‘beggars of the pavement’,* they said. Heart-wrenching. Walking in their memory lane and mourning together, I saw something on the road, on the floor. Something felt so familiar that I was about to think it is my life’s remnant, not theirs’, not anybody else’s. Mine. A plate. An old plate with colorful flower designs on it (see Figure 5.1, right). Still bright, but old. Still colorful but rusty. Down on my knees, I got it in my hands and looked at it until I remembered that Pamela has a very similar plate. I did not see it but after our interview she shared its photograph with me (see Figure 5.1, left). I have treasured an old, rusty, mundane plate in the exact way they do with anything left from that place. That was the second time I felt I have grown an ‘empathic place attachment’ (Boğaç, 2020) for a place I have no experience of its Time of Paradise but I hope to contribute to its Time of Rebirth with the findings of my study. Yet, growing such an empathic attachment requires a further auto-ethnographic study situating the researcher as another site in the multi-sited understanding of a place.



Figure 5.1: Pamela's plate from pre-1974 Varosha (left). The plate found in Varosha, 2020 (right). Photo right: Courtesy of Pamela. Photo left: Nafia Akdeniz

On 14 November 2020, I read a Facebook post written by a Turkish Cypriot Famagustian that has opened another room in my heart; I felt, another research question in my mind. How about Turkish Cypriot Famagustians? How have they been experiencing that *forbidden half* of their city, Varosha? What do they narrate about its past? How do they imagine its future? That post was about his reflections on his visit to Varosha after the openings. His description of the place and his personal experience with it included details that I heard from the displaced people of Varosha. “A *legendary city*” he was saying, remembering its shine in his fading childhood memory. He was talking about the Orange Festival, the Camilla rock in the sea, the toyshops on the Democratias Street as his first memories of Varosha. Then he described the time when he had to be a soldier in that fenced city as part of his military service in 1990s. He defined how there was no trace of the gleam the city once had in its current looted collapsing state. Nature was covering the human-made disaster in that city with trees growing inside the living rooms, wild flowers blossoming in their ceilings out of gathered dust in years. He stated how he was wondering about the residents of the city, the owners of the houses, their memories

in that now derelict place. Referring to his third time of experiencing the city recently after his childhood before 1974 and army service in 1990s, he stated how sad it was to see that the standing buildings of 1990s now about to collapse totally. However, what he felt more devastating was to witness the ‘touristic’ road constructions going on, he said. On the sides the city was collapsing while a new asphalt road was becoming a path for, for what? For whom? An impossible co-existence was happening in front of his eyes and he said that he felt like being in a new movie set but the set for the previous war movie was still there resisting to the superimposing one. Resisting to the surreal feeling the scenery was giving to him; he dedicated a Turkish song to the people of Varosha who were forced to leave their lives in that city. His narration reveals a new case for further study. He is not only exhibiting empathy for the displaced people, he is also attached to the place through his personal experiences. In-depth elaboration of the Turkish Cypriot Famagustains and later with Turkish immigrants living in Famagusta since 1974 may enrich the narrative typology this study has already revealed and this expansion may shed light on the Time of Future in Famagusta, in Cyprus. The song he dedicated to the former residents of the place starts with an imaginary person being a cloud raining on its soil<sup>47</sup>. In the context of Varosha, the soil is the silky sand of the sea and the *Varosiodes* are a cloud of people resisting to revive and regain their city back.

On 5 January 2021, they form a new initiative, a new force aiming to win a place in decision-making circles in the next parliamentary elections to continue the fight for the salvation of their city<sup>48</sup>. They immediately created a profile on the Facebook<sup>49</sup> and the interactive narratives have started calumniating already. Besides

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<sup>47</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hMqf6aUht4Y>

<sup>48</sup> <https://cyprus-mail.com/2021/01/05/famagusta-refugees-form-initiative-to-fight-parliamentary-elections/?fbclid=IwAR3dyaSwBrDRjjCt8Ql5-6GCdfRGYwM5Q2uyOHpreYCqasXm5abMGgq28>

<sup>49</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/FamagustaforCYPRUS/>

the explanatory narratives on the vision and the mission of the initiative accompanied with relevant TV and radio programs, the first inclination I realized in the content of the narratives is the focus on the happenings in Varosha recently; shooting of wedding photographs, music videos, dance performances in the setting of war, remnants of the life they long to return. Still. *Μόνο Αμμόχωστος, Only Famagusta* is how they had *named* this new initiative first: the two words written in a letter dated 1558 by Julia Savornan, the creator of the Venetian fortification of Nicosia explaining to Venice why only Famagusta can protect Cyprus: *Solamente Famagosta* for the whole Cyprus. And they highlighted: This name of the initiative is not the *Αμμοχωστοποίηση του Κυπριακού, Famagustasation of Cyprus Problem*, which is used vulgarly by the politicians to blame the Famagustians for making Famagusta a priority for Cyprus problem.

Then, in 11 January 2021, they changed the name of the initiative and its Facebook page as *Αμμοχωστος για την ΚΥΠΡΟ, Famagusta for CYPRUS* in order to clarify the goal: Famagusta embracing all Cyprus as the forefront force. “*Although Cyprus should have been the force for Famagusta, these 46 years have left no choice apart from Famagusta being the force for Cyprus*” they declared accompanying ‘the lonely Don Quixote’ with their Scheherazadian, tenacious, narrative memory. The resistance of the displaced people of Varosha against oblivion and oppression has now evolving into a new form with their political manifesto<sup>50</sup> dated 11 February 2021 with a participatory vision of unified Famagusta leading the unification of Cyprus. As a new political party to be, they aim to raise their voice at a political level to strengthen and make the decades long neglected communal one heard. Their message to the city has persisted. On one of the notes hang on the flowered barbed

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<sup>50</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/FamagustaforCYPRUS/posts/114934270563852>

wire (see Figure 5.2) during a ritual community gathering was written: “*Αμμόχωστος, Θα επιστρέψω, Varosha, I will return*”.



Figure 5.2: Flowered barbed wire with notes written to the city. Photo: Courtesy of Pavlos Iacovou

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## **APPENDICES**

## Appendix A: First Participant Observation Photographs, Facebook

### Post



## Appendix B: Official Announcement of the Research and Consent Forms, Facebook Post



**Nafia Akdeniz** uploaded a file in the group: **ΑΜΜΟΧΩΣΤΟΣ Η ΠΟΛΗ ΜΑΣ.** ...

17 May 2018 · 🌐

Good evening everyone,

With the permission of dear **Pavlos Iacovou**, I would like to introduce myself to all the members of this group and inform you about my research on the displaced people of Varosha.

I am a senior instructor and a PhD candidate at the Eastern Mediterranean University, Faculty of Communication and Media Studies, Famagusta. I am conducting my doctoral study investigating how the displaced people of Varosha reinforce and express their place attachment and sense of belonging when returning is still not possible. My research focuses on the function of the remnants of pre-1974 life in Varosha and on the life practices of its people in the aftermath of war in relation to future orientations.

To gain grasp of your experience, I have been observing this Facebook page, attending Famagusta related events and interviewing the volunteer participants.

Please see the attached 'participant consent form' for the details of my research. In case you would like to participate in that study, please do not hesitate to ask clarification questions via my Facebook account or my e-mails:

nafia.akdeniz@emu.edu.tr  
nafia.akdeniz@gmail.com

Thank you very much in advance.

Regards,

Nafia Akdeniz



**Participant consent form.docx · version 1**  
Office Open XML word processing document

## Appendix C: ‘Loukata, Look at That’ Story of *Bandabuliya* – *Αγορά*,

### Facebook Post



Nafia Akdeniz ▶ ΑΜΜΟΧΩΣΤΟΣ Η ΠΟΛΗ ΜΑΣ

2 September 2019 · 🌐



Nafia Akdeniz

2 September 2019 · 🌐

‘Loukata Loukata!’ he shouted that night travelling in time, in place, in my half sleeping restless mind; 29 August 2019 was a difficult day in Cyprus. Heavy my head on my pillow, I was trying to make sense of it. The engines of my imagination were silently coughing to clear the voice. The ice-cream man from the silky sands of pre-1974 Varosha was pushing his ice-cream trolley in the back streets of my childhood memories in Nicosia. I was not born yet at the times he was announcing his arrival at the Glossa Beach with his peculiar accent, ‘Loukata! Loukata!’ ‘Look at that! Look at that!’ His still resonating voice was saluting the sunbathers who were embraced by the pleasantly hot, salty, turquoise particles of a heavenly life. He was offering a taste of sweet cherry ice-cream to them then and to me too now remembering myself as a child in early 1980s. Strolling through the smell of fresh local coffee and tahini halva at the street towards Bandabuliya, the Municipal Market of still divided Nicosia is my never aging memory: it stands still against the spicy smell of the street today.

I was holding my mother’s hand firmly with one hand and with the other, I was trying so hard to reach out to get the ice-cream from his hand to bridge times and places in a desperate need to arrive at a peaceful sanctuary called future. United. A sudden thunder interrupts the flow of my imagination. Dulled and darkened, I Alice-like grow up from that childhood scene and watch: the camera penetrating the memories of *Αγορά*, the Municipal Market in Varosha, was penetrating my heart too with a multi-edged broken piece of glass, a remnant of a window opening to the timeless sea in the ghost city. I heard the crackling sound of my flesh being cut. Because I know! I met them almost all. Escaping the advancing army in another August, 1974, what was left inside was not a lizard tail, they left their souls there, unrenewable. No other place has become home since then, irreplaceable. An abruptly interrupted life has been treated like a flying piece of old dated newspaper page every time they claim their corporeal fenced off existence at the barbed wire: ‘Αφήσα μέσα τη ψυχή μου, ανοίξετε!’ ‘I left my soul inside, open up!’

Even a look has confronted a military warning.

Now I am watching, she drops the ice-cream! Dare to look in the eye of a disappointed child who drops it even before the first lick. Instead of cherry, the taste of blood melts in my seeing eye. Because I know! I know watching the 'foreign' steps on the streets their existence blossomed once is their hope bleeding. Hope for homecoming is abating. Another show must go on. I promise another ice-cream to the child watching her tears joining the melting cherry sucked by the golden sand. It's not the ice-cream man, that army permitted camera was shouting now: 'Loukata, Loukata!' Look at what? The human made apocalypse? That is not new to the once inhabitants of that place. In its absence, they have been vacuumed by its dark emptiness for decades. And I have been following their traces back and forth placeless home. Because without dwellers, homes do not make sense. I write to communicate their voice to the ears of today's power practitioners: Loukata! Loukata!

My eye the barbed wire save my look save the souls of the hook.

Photo Credit : **Kyriacos Kyriacou**



## **Appendix D: Participant Consent Form**

### **Remnants of Life: Varosha with its Material and Visual Memories**

**Researcher:** Nafia Akdeniz

#### ***Focus of the Study***

You are being asked to take part in a doctoral research study investigating how people displaced from Varosha reinforce and express their place attachment and sense of belonging when returning is still not possible. The special focus of the study is on the function of the *remnants* of life in Varosha (decaying home, photographs, personal belongings, etc.) before 1974 and on the life practices of its people in the aftermath of war in relation to future orientations.

#### ***Participation***

If you agree to take part in the aforementioned study, you will be asked to take part in an in-depth semi-structured individual interview lasting about 60 minutes. The interview will include questions about your experiences of the forceful displacement from Varosha and re-settlement in your post-1974 life. The questions will also explore the meaning of whatever left from your life in Varosha as well as your views on the border opening between the northern and southern sides in 2013 in relation to Varosha with no opening yet.

If you are born after 1974, having no personal experiences of pre-1974 life, the interview will include questions about your sense of attachment to that parental city in addition to the aforementioned ones.

If you agree, we would like to tape-record the interview. In case no permission is given for tape-recording, intensive notes will be held throughout the interview. The researcher will transcribe the audio-recorded interviews.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. As a participant, you have the right to withdraw yourself and your data from the research without giving a reason.

### ***Confidentiality***

The identities of participants will be confidential and anonymous and will be known only to the researchers. Moreover, the transcribed interviews will not record speakers' identities and the research outputs will not disclose the identities of the participants and any contextual information that could potentially reveal their identities.

Enquiries about the research, and questions for clarification, can be made to:

Senior Instructor Nafia Akdeniz, PhD candidate  
Faculty of Communication and Media Studies  
Eastern Mediterranean University  
E: nafia.akdeniz@emu.edu.tr T: 630 1696

### ***Statement of Consent***

I have read and understood the above information, and have received answers to any questions I asked about the study. I consent to take part in the study.

Participant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

I also consent to having the interview tape-recorded.

Participant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the researcher: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the researcher: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix E: Photography Consent Form**

### **Remnants of Life: Varosha with its Material and Visual Memories**

I hereby grant permission to the researcher Nafia Akdeniz, PhD Candidate in the Faculty of Communication and Media Studies, Eastern Mediterranean University to use the photographs I supplied or the photographs I allowed her to take as part of her doctoral research in which I have participated. I grant her the right to reproduce the photographs in the PhD dissertation, presentations, reports, publications, books, and exhibitions arriving from this study.

Participant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the researcher: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the researcher: \_\_\_\_\_



## **Appendix F: Facebook Consent Form**

### **Remnants of Life: Varosha with its Material and Visual Memories**

I hereby grant permission to the researcher Nafia Akdeniz, PhD Candidate in the Faculty of Communication and Media Studies, Eastern Mediterranean University to reproduce my posts on Varosha Facebook page (photographs, videos, links, comments, etc.) in the PhD dissertation, presentations, reports, publications, books, and exhibitions arriving from this study.

Participant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the researcher: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the researcher: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix G: Participant Consent Form for Real Name Usage**

To protect my copyrights, I hereby grant permission to the researcher Nafia Akdeniz, PhD Candidate in the Faculty of Communication and Media Studies, Eastern Mediterranean University to use my real name in reference to my publications in her PhD dissertation and relevant studies.

Participant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix H: Semi-Structured Interview Questions for pre-1974**

### **People of Varosha**

#### **Semi-Structured Interview Questions for pre-1974 people of Varosha<sup>51</sup>**

1. What happened to your life in 1974?
2. What have you left behind in Varosha, once your home city, the military forbidden zone since 1974?
3. What have you managed to take with you? Why have you chosen those specific items?
4. Describe the process of re-settlement. How have you fit those remnants of life in Varosha into your post-1974 life?
5. Do you feel attached to that city?
6. Has the border opening between the northern and southern sides in 2003 changed anything in your life?
7. Do you visit the surroundings of the barbed wire in Famagusta? Describe your experience if you do so.
8. Do you gather with other people from Varosha online and/or offline? Why? Why not?
9. How do you feel when in various environments (political and/or social and/or academic) people talk about the future of Varosha?

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<sup>51</sup> Because interviews will be semi-structured, questions will change to reflect participants' lived experiences, however, themes will remain intact throughout the interviews.

## **Appendix I: Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Post-1974**

### **People of Varosha**

#### **Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Post-1974 people of Varosha<sup>52</sup>**



1. What do you know about pre-1974 life in Varosha?
2. Do you feel attached to that city? Why? Why not?
3. Do you own anything (objects, photographs, etc.) from pre-1974 life in Varosha?
4. If so, how do you fit those material and/or visual objects from the past into your life?
5. Has the border opening between the northern and southern sides in 2003 changed anything in your life?
6. Do you visit the surroundings of the barbed wire in Famagusta? Describe your experience if you do so.
7. Do you gather with other people from Varosha online and/or offline? Why? Why not?
8. How do you feel when in various environments (political and/or social and/or academic) people talk about the future of Varosha?

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<sup>52</sup> Because interviews will be semi-structured, questions will change to reflect participants' lived experiences, however, themes will remain intact throughout the interviews.



## Appendix K: Sample Birth Certificate

	<b>ΚΥΠΡΙΑΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ</b> <b>ΚΙΒΡΙΣ ΣΥΜΗΥΡΪΥΕΤΪ</b> <b>REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS</b>	Αριθμός Εγγράφου : 2025 Belge Numarası / Document Number
<b>Πιστοποιητικό Γέννησης</b> <b>Doğum Şahadetnamesi - Birth Certificate</b>		
Προσωπικός Αριθμός Εγγραφής Şahsi Kayıt No / Personal Identification Number		
<b>Όνομα</b> Adı / Name		
<b>Επώνυμο</b> Soyadı / Surname		
<b>Ημερομηνία Γέννησης</b> Doğum Tarihi / Date of Birth		
<b>Τόπος Γέννησης</b> Doğum Yeri / Place of Birth	<b>ΛΕΜΕΣΟΣ</b>	
<b>Τόπος Καταγωγής</b> Geldiği Yer / Place of origin	<b>ΑΜΜΟΧΩΣΤΟΣ</b>	
<b>Φύλο</b> Cinsiyeti / Sex		
<b>Όνομα Πατέρα</b> Baba Adı / Father's Name		
<b>Επώνυμο Πατέρα</b> Baba Soyadı / Father's Surname		
<b>Όνομα Μητέρας</b> Ana Adı / Mother's Name		
<b>Πατρικό Επώνυμο Μητέρας</b> Ananın Kızlık Soyadı / Maiden Name		
<b>Τόπος και Ημερομηνία Εγγραφής</b> Kayıt Yeri ve Tarihi / Place and Date of Registration		
<b>Ημερομηνία Έκδοσης</b> Verildiği Tarih / Date of Issue		
<b>Εκδίδουσα Αρχή</b> Veren Makam / Issuing Authority	<b>ΕΠΑΡΧΟΣ ΑΜΜΟΧΩΣΤΟΥ</b> FAMAGUSTA DISTRICT OFFICER	
		<b>ΧΡΙΣΤΙΑΝΑ ΤΙΜΟΘΕΟΥ</b> Υπογραφή και Σφραγίδα İmza & Mühür / Signature and Stamp
<p>Με αυτό πιστοποιείται ότι η πιο πάνω πληροφορία λήφθηκε από το Αρχείο Πληθυσμού. Για να είναι έγκυρο το παρόν πιστοποιητικό είναι απαραίτητο να φέρει τη σφραγίδα της αρμόδιας Αρχής και την υπογραφή του Λειτουργού έκδοσης. Yukarıdaki bilgilerin Nüfus Arşivinden alındığı tasdik edilir. İşbu şahadetnamenin geçerli olması için, yetkili makamin mühürünü ve şahadetnameyi veren yetkilinin imzasını taşıması şarttır.</p> <p>It is hereby certified that the above information was taken from the Registry of Population. In order for the present certificate to be valid it has to bear the stamp of the competent authority and signature of the issuing officer.</p>		

## Appendix L: Sample Interview Transcription 1

**Interviewee: C (1967)**

**Interviewer: Nafia Akdeniz**

**Place: Home for Cooperation, Nicosia**

**Date: 16.3. 2019**

**Duration: 78 minutes**

*After warm-up greetings...*

N: Thank you C for being here.

C: I am happy to be here.

N: I have been following your posts and comments, I would like to start with very specific statement you said in the documentary of V on Famagusta Eco-city project. This attracted my attention because it was kind of summarizing all the interviews I had so far, you are my 43<sup>rd</sup> interviewee. The reaction of you saying in a minute or two was this: “these people do not care of what kind of ceiling they will have, what kind of solar system they will have because their first concern is to be back home!”

C: Yes, they have an open wound. That wound needs to be closed one way or another, by returning and returning to what they left, not to something new or something different, even if it is in ruins, even it is something that cannot be lived in for a long a time, you know. But they need to return what they left behind. Otherwise it is going to be always an open wound; I mean psychologically even if somebody decides that before allowing Famagustians return, it is ok to demolish everything and to rebuilt it for free of charge, they will not like it, it is still going to leave the wound open. So the impression I get from fellow Famagustians although I was a small kid, I was 7 years old...

N: Yes, I was about to ask your experience of Famagusta...

C: I was 7 years old that I don't have many memories of my own, let's say of the city, I have my own house, of my neighborhood, I have a few bits here and there in the city, nothing concrete. The impressions that I get from Famagustians, especially from my family, especially when my father and mother were alive, Famagusta was in the daily agenda. I mean, they were always talking about it saying ‘in Famagusta, we used to have this, we used to have that’, it was in our daily conversations, literally, I am not exaggerating, especially for my mother...

N: How long have they kept talking about Famagusta?

C: Even before she left for the other world (died), she still had the keys of her house next to her, you know, next to her bed and she still had the suitcase she brought with her ready to repack it and go back. It's amazing how the psychological aspect of leaving abruptly has on the lives of these people. It's not something like ‘ok we left and that's life, let's get on with it’. It's still open in their insides. So, in order for the people to close that wound, close that period of their life, the circle needs to be closed. It can close only if we return to what we left. You cannot return to something new and expect to ok with it. You need to first return there and then... I stood up and

talked in the eco-city presentation after watching the documentary, and I don't know if you heard it, it's like the father and mother of the missing person, they know the person is dead, they know that their son is dead and buried and probably just bones and pieces of bones but they still want to see the bones. And they need to have the burial, they need to mourn, and then they get over it. Until that happens, they will never be over it. So, if we want to help the people get over it, and get on with their lives and build something new together with fellow Turkish Cypriots that are going to be in the same area at least, we need to let it happen as it stopped, with a start from where it stopped. And then life can go on. That's my opinion. I strongly believe that, I feel it myself as well even though I was just 7 years old. I need to return back to my house as it was, my neighborhood as it was, see the ruins, at some point, I wrote: maybe my door is hanging with one screw, I need to be the one unscrewing that screw and let it fell down, you know. I don't want you to pull it down because it's dangerous, I need to do that to close the gap, to close the wound. Do you understand the feeling?

N: Hmm.

C: I know people, A also said it, the minute they tell us we can go back, I am camping there. I am putting my tent, and I am staying there, I am not leaving again. Even if I cannot go into the house because it is dangerous to fall down on my head, I will stay outside of my house in a tent, until I fix it.

N: I need to hear more of this. You said you were at the age of 7, with a very little memories of 7 years old...

C... and with a very protective mother as well. So would not let me go outside on my own and play with other kids, because it was also the major street let's say. I am very protected by my mother, even at the age of 50 I was very protected by my mother.

N: and despite that?

C: Despite that, I have some memories of the street, of the church, especially of the church...

N: Which one?

C: Agias Zonis, not the one we took the photo of from the stadium, it's further than that...although I don't have a picture memory, I remember we used to go to the church with my mother. My cousins were living just nearby. So we went all together and me and my cousins, we went into the church and there was a large window with a large flat area in front of it. We could all sit there and play in the church. I remember that memory somehow, that we used to go there with my cousins, and play while the church was going on, maybe I was 5 at the time, I remember this big window thing, that we could all sit there. I have that memory.

N: During Sunday ritual or something?

C: Yes. My mother was very religious so she was going every Sunday. And of course I was going with her.

N: So you have the memory of church, of that specific window... anything else?



C: Well, I remember my house, inside the house, in the backyard of the house, I have some flashbacks, sometimes I remember I used to love walking bare foot so my feet get all dirty and all black and I remember that my daily fun routine was going to the backyard and with *lastiko*... the water hook?

N: we call it lastik as well☺

C: Ok, I used put water on my feet and rub my feet with one another, play with it...

N: How about your relationship to the sea?

C: That's a funny one. I remember very very vividly that I was playing in the sea, I was a small child, 5 years old, my mum did not like the wet sand, she was putting the towels on the dry sand which is a bit further up in the space of the beach and I used to play in the very shallow waters because I was little, could not swim but I was there until my face turn blue, you know I was always in the water. I remember I used to get out of the sea and until I reach the towel, my feet were dry. Because there was no sand on them...

N: How come?

C: Because the sand was so pure, the golden sand we say, very thin, it was not mud, it was not dirt. It was pure sand, not like Limassol and Paphos and Larnaca, even Protaras is not exactly same, it's worse. I remember I had this feeling and as soon as I went to the dry area where my mother was I feel I walked that distance for 10 meters, my feet were dry, and no sand was stack on them. I remember I left Famagusta, when I was 7 years old and I went back to Famagusta for the first time when my son was 7 years old.

N: in 2003?

C: Yes. I had a flashback memory and I said to him, take off your shoes, go to the sea and then come and find me after you get wet. I went where P' Florida Hotel is, my son went inside the beach, I went to Florida and I said to him, 'Ok, come to me now!'

N: You tested this?

C: Yes, I tested it and it was dry. It was like... It was a part of wound being closed at the very moment because my son was taking over my life, he was 7, I was 7 when I left, it was like a continuation, there is still something that did not change. (Referring to the quality to the sand and the feeling it leaves) I left when I was 7 and my son was there when he was 7, it was like he was continuing my journey in Famagusta, and it was very emotional...

N: And you feel this somehow healed your wound a little.

C: A little bit, yeah. Seeing my son experiencing what I was experiencing when I was living there healed a little bit. And that's one of my prayers to God; when I am older and have grandkids, to raise my grandkids on that beach, having my oozo and oktoporadi (octopus) and watching my son's kids doing what I was doing when I was at their age.

N: This is how you feel attached to that land, seeing that generations after generations of Famagustians will experience it, the sand, the city, and only in that way maybe we can close the wounds, we can heal the wounds?

C: yes...

N: with that eco-city project, do you see it as something far away from healing, in continuing?

C: For now, yes. It's too early talk about, I mean to the ears of the true Famagustians, because there are Famagustians that their only concern is how to establish their business again to make more money. That's one part of Famagustian behavior and mentality, let's say. There are a lot of Famagustians that they don't care about that, they just want their home back. Not their home as a building, but home as a feeling back. And the project is irrelevant for now. Eventually for sure, Famagusta needs to be not rebuilt but let's say, rejuvenated and since we have this golden opportunity to make it something better than what it was, it's a good idea to make it eco as well. It's a unique opportunity because no other city can be done from scratch, you can build an area, and you can rejuvenate an area or small part of the town but not the whole town. Famagusta is unique because the whole town is empty and it needs to be fixed when we return, if we return. So it's a golden opportunity to make it from day zero, not from day one, to make it ecological. So this project is very helpful in understanding what can be done, not what to do but what can be done, and educate people to be ready when the time comes to decide something good for the city, not for something for concrete buildings, the mistakes we have made in other places. So, in that sense, this is a very good project, it's an educational project let's say, not a direction of what we have to do, or what we will do. But it's educational to make us think in more open ways, have the options there let's say, know the options instead of learning the options when the time comes and by the time we learn the options...

N: ... you lost it anyway, again.

C: Yeah! In that sense it's a very good project. It makes people think and feel in the right directions let's say... of making something totally different.

N: It's a new paradigm.

C: Something you cannot do easily in any other city. It's a golden opportunity for Famagusta, because when the time comes you can do the whole thing, not just the part of it. The design of the city, the new Famagusta let's say, can be done in that way...

N: From your descriptions, I understand that home-returning is not returning to a specific home itself, but being back to that life style again, to that neighborhood again, to that community again?

C: Returning to the same lifestyle is impossible. I mean we cannot kid ourselves. We cannot return to 74, or 73. That's gone. The people are gone. If my father was still alive, and he would return, his friends would not be alive. Even he was alive, he would have been 80 years old, not 40, and it's not the same life style for sure. But returning to the same kind of environment, you know seeing again the same

buildings, or walking Demokradies Avenue, seeing the same shops... you will not see the same friend there who was selling clothes, he is gone..

N: But?

C: But you have that feeling of familiar place, it's not going to be new something that looks like it, it is going to be THAT something, the one that left behind. It's crucial for that to happen...

N: Familiarity is something that you want to keep?

C: Yes, at least for the short term of the return. We need to return what we left behind. You know the reconstruction/rehabilitation committee for Famagusta, with Nikos Mesaridis, you know that team, I am also participating there as the guy responsible for the technological aspect of thing, and we have some meetings and some presentations, and I said to them what I said to you early in our discussion today that we need to return what we left behind. Even the roads that are dirty and there are plants that come out of the asphalt, I don't want you to clean them for me. I want to clean them. I want to go there and see it. And feel it. Feel the devastation of 45 years and fix it. I don't want you to close the chapter. We need to close the chapter, if somebody closes it for us, we will never close it. We need to be the one that does this (showing with his hand of closing a book) to a book. Do you understand?

N: I do.

C: I don't want you to tell me the end of the story and close the book. I want to write the end of the story.

N: Eventually, you are saying, then Famagustians might be open to other kinds of constructions.

C: For sure because life goes on, we are in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, We cannot keep the city as a museum of what it used to be...

N: There are ideas like this.

C: eeeee, may be you will keep the gymnasium... even if you built skyscrapers, that building has to stay there.

N: because...

C: first of all, it is a beautiful building, for the respect of its meaning, it's important. People coming from Famagusta, the important people... they all studied there, Auxentiou, Papadopoulos.... Not the high society in money terms, but in spiritual terms. It's going to be an insult to their memory... 45 years of not being able to touch that building, and as soon as you go there, you demolish it? It is going to be an insult to their memory.

N: Is this why you are doing all these kinds of maybe photoshop or I do not know what you are using, to draw the lines on the streets and naming them, finding the houses, I have seen some photographs like these...

C: That is the job of A and F, they do the mapping, superimposing the names of the streets, because there are no maps anymore that show the Greek names of the streets, even google does not have them. All these years, outside of the closed Famagusta, even google has the new Turkish names of all the streets. The Greek presence has been deleted from everywhere. So there are a lot of people that are not computer literate, or know how to google earth and go back in time there and see, so they need to be reminded of the name of the streets. I mean they don't even recognize their own street. It's sad. Not to recognize the street you are living, may be you were 30 when you left, now you are 75, you don't remember your street name, or the next street.

N: I saw your brother's talk on this latest drone footage on Omega TV I guess...

C: Yes, Omega. Or Alpha...

N: That was the latest, closest shooting I guess to the streets. What did you think? How did you feel watching this?

C: That's the one from the guy who went all over Famagusta, a Spanish guy I guess, he went very low and you could see the houses, even inside the houses. It was very impressive because of that, he went very low. We have seen 5-6 drone footages, we have become accustomed to it by now. The first one we saw from the Russian guy around the beach area that was a shock. When I first saw that, literally I watched it 30 times may be, one after the other, a year ago. He went from where Glossa is, I think he flew it from the tennis court..

N: behind this...

C: behind Salamina Constantia, where there is a kindergarten...

N: there is a Church there...

C: from inside yes, from the outside, he flew the drone from the outside. But from Famagusta, not from the Greek side, just in front of the Constantia (Palm Beach Hotel), because he landed it there afterwards. We could see the landing. So, we don't know where he took off, but we know where he landed. He landed just next to the street that goes to Constantia, then there is a parking that you go to Glossa, there is a kindergarten school or something, and a tennis court, he landed it just there. He went up, he went to Glossa and he went across the beach until the hotels that they use for the Turkish Army. And then he returned back. So that was the first time we saw the beach that we cannot go to, in a recent imagery, not all photographs. And I was shocked. As soon as that came out and somebody posted it on the group (Amaxostos H poli mas – facebook group that I am observing) and I saw it, my first thought is to download it before it is taken off and to watch it again and again and again. After a year, people would go inside the actual town but just the beach. That was, you know I was all wet eyes and I was looking and looking may be in the corner, maybe I will see my neighborhood, because my house is inside, not by the beach. You cannot see it from the area that you can go to in the Derinya road let's say. It's inside. I have not seen my house, ever.

N: While watching it, you were just watching it to get a glimpse of, a glance of your house...?

C: or even just my neighborhood would be enough, at that point. But there was one time that drone was going like that (showing with hand gestures) then turns, and starts coming back, at the turning point, I could see my neighborhood. I freeze-framed that and I zoomed and zoomed and zoomed to be able to see the houses and maybe I could distinguish my house.

N: Is this urge of taking things closer, zooming them in, your need to see and maybe to heal your wound, to close the chapter?

C: I supposed so. I have not thought about it in that respect but it emerges from the blankness I have regarding my house. It's not just the house, as I said before, it's not the building, it does not matter the building, I don't care if the walls are trembling down... it is the place I walked the first time, it is the place where my mother was breastfeeding me, is the place that my mother had dreams of her family in that place, I don't care about the house, as a building or as a value of the property. My house is a normal house, not a very small one but not a very big one, it's in the middle of nowhere, you know, it's not in the beach that has a special value, fuck it, I don't care. I just want my place, you know.

N: So what you call your place is your memories of being alive on earth, your first memories of your relationship with your mother, now you are taking your own kid to the same place, so that you can give same memories to him... You said Famagusta was a daily speech at home, daily subject, how is it in your house now? Do your kids hear Famagusta from you a lot? Did your kid make sense of what you made him to do?

C: Yes, I have a very good relationship with my son. We are not only parent-son, we are also friends. And we talk a lot. I believe I have transferred my love for Famagusta to him but I don't expect him that he would love it in the same way I do. The same way that I don't love it in the same way that my mother did. I don't have the same feelings of my mother and my father had regarding Famagusta. They have lived their own life there. They left when they were 40 years old, 44 my father, 40 my mother... 40 years of living is your life destroyed.

N: Can you talk about the day that you left? You were talking about a suitcase.

C: I remember very vividly on the first invasion we left the house, my mother packed two suitcases and we went to Pervolia, towards Derinya, outside the main city but it was all oranges, and we used to hide behind some trees.

N: What was the name of those gardens? Percana?

C: Percana, yes. May be is little further way but I have this memory of Pervolia, there were some trees, there were leaves, branches falling like that making like a bell. We were hiding below that and aircrafts were coming, bombing, could not see that there were people there because the trees were covering us.

N: You are talking about all the other Famagustians as well?

C: yes yes, not only my family, there were a lot of Famagustians. I remember it was the first invasion, they were bombing Famagusta, I remember I used to see aircraft coming, I could almost see the pilot, it was so low, I was a kid. I remember I used to

see the figure of a person as it was approaching, let's say. I have this memory that my mother, I told you she was very religious, so she used to have the handbag and inside the handbag, she had the icon of mother of Christ, Panagia, and when she was hearing the bombers coming, she used to put the bag on my head, because Panagia was inside and would protect me (he starts crying for more than a minute long, it felt very long...)

N: I was just trying to understand your mother's relation to Famagusta because it seems that you inherited this from your mother mainly.

C: and my father as well but my father was not very outspoken, let's say. I'll tell you a story of the 'toughness' of my father, when in 2003, when cross roads were opened, on the first day, I wanted to go to Famagusta with my wife and son, then we saw the panic happening, waiting from morning until afternoon to pass because of the thousands of cars in line, so I said 'ok let them calm down first, I don't want my son and wife to go through this for hours and hours because I wanted to go', but I wanted to go with them, especially with my son, and I told my father after I went, and I had the experience of going, not shocked but psychological experience that I had, I said to my father; 'Dad, I want to take you, I know mum cannot handle it, does not want to go there, not to show the passport, because we were discussing it, but I want to go with my brother, my sister and you to Famagusta'. That was the first time I saw my father with red eyes. And he said to me 'my son, you go with your sister and brother but I will not go, because if I go, you will bring me back dead'. That was the first time I saw my father crying (and he started crying again...).

N: That's a very strong emotion... And he did not come?

C: He did not come, my 'tough' father. Strong and non-expressive of softness, let's say. And I saw my father for the first time with wet eyes, talking about the prospect of returning just for a visit to Famagusta...

N: How do you make sense of your father not going, your mother not going back to see, their reason was maybe they did not want to show the passport, maybe they could not tolerate the idea of ...

C: not staying! Of having to return back!

N: ok, how do you deal with it? You yourself?

C: it's their choice. I wanted to take my father, I wanted my father to....

N: no, I meant, the idea of returning back, you yourself, how do you deal with it?

C: visiting and coming back? It's a pain, every single time. When I approach that area of Cyprus, even Protaras, when I go from highway I turn and I could see the east side of Cyprus, I feel different. Seriously I feel my heart opening up! In Nicosia, or other part of Cyprus, it's like restricted, not restricted, it's like foreign, not foreign in the sense of foreign, but more foreign (we laugh☺) As soon as I return to the side that you can see the beach of the area of Famagusta and Protaras, I feel my heart feeling differently, seriously. I mean, I am not a great sea lover, I barely can swim let's say. And I am afraid to go to deep, I am not a sea person but somehow that sea is different than going to Limassol, going to Paphos, going to Larnaca...

N: So you feel the place? The familiarity of the place?

C: I cannot explain it. I am 51, I lived 44 years of my life on this side, in Nicosia. I left 7 years of my early days that I don't have memories of. So I cannot explain the ties that I feel to that part of Cyprus, how strong they are because they should not be strong. I don't have ties to Famagusta

N: But afterwards, with your family you kept talking about that place...

C: Yes, but I don't have my own feelings. The feelings were built into me by mother and my father and sister and brother. That can never be as strong as your own memories and your own experiences. Somehow though, that part of Cyprus, especially Famagusta, it makes me feel totally different than what I am feeling when I am sitting here (Nicosia – H4C). I don't know why. I cannot explain it, even to myself. It's like I was there for the past 50 years and I have just left.

N: You have that strong emotional attachment to it...

C: I don't not why. Strictly speaking, or let's say, scientifically speaking, I should not be having that kind of strong ties with Famagusta because I just lived 7 years of my 51 years old life. So proportionally...

N: It's not the proportion, it's maybe everything else together with that place you missed...

C: Maybe it's the fact that I am not allowed to go there. Maybe it's the fact that I was forced to leave from there. And I have that wound, but we are talking about it and it makes me feel more eager to go there. Seriously, I should not be feeling that strong about that place. Because I don't have my own experiences. I was just holding my mother's hand, walking on the Demokratias Avenue because we had a friend there, I have that memory as well. There was that place that were selling clothes to make staff, fabric, and next to it there was a tailor. That tailor was a friend of my father. So, I think I was 4 years old, I was a white baby with fat chicks, very fat, you know the *borekko*?

N: börek we say ☺

C: with milk. They were calling me *galodo borekko* ☺ And I used to go there, I was in the stroll, my mother was pushing me, I could walk but she was...

N: protective.

C: So she was strolling me. Her name was Marulla, the wife of the tailor, and she used to adore me and as soon as we approach, she used to come out of the shop, and kissing me and my mother always had a handkerchief with her, wiping my face from her saliva. ☺ ☺ from the germs and etc. ☺

N: I remember you told me a memory with your mother, at Petek, we were sitting and you were saying about your mum 'Mum how come you drink this water of baptizing staff, in the church, you always clean the staff around me...' you were talking about your mum being very protective.

C: Yes, she was scared of all the germs and because literally she (Marulla) was sucking my cheeks, after we left, she was wiping my cheeks ☺ I have that memory there...

N: very few but vivid and strong memories.

C: yes, exactly. Another memory I have in the corner near my street, there was a local *bakkali*

N: bakkal we say. Whatever we say, you put *i* after it ☺ *bakkali, maruli, karpuzi,*

C: you say, karpuz?

N: Yes, karpuz, bakkal, marul.

C: one of us took it from the other, we don't know which is which but we speak the same language ☺ Anyway, there was that *bakkal*, it's the only place that mother used to let me go alone (what a freaking mother!) because it was near my house on the same side, so I used to go alone. And I used to get, when I was a kid, there was like lucky box, inside the box, there was a lollipop, a card of a football player, or little soldiers, little things....

N: Pirilli we say.

C: we say *pirilya* ☺☺ I used to get that, and my mother used to pay afterwards every week. I have that memory of getting that lucky box, Phillipous, was the name of the bakkal...

N: So you are saying any project to do with the future of Famagusta has to include those familiarities, may be that bakkal, may be that tailor there but not specifically them, but something from their memories, that would make them feel back in what they left, not in the exact shape but...

C: Do not touch it until we come back. Don't touch, don't clean it. Just clean whatever needs to be cleaned not to be dangerous, if there is a building that may be when you have people jumping up and down next to it can fall, ok, it's for their protection, but if you can just put something to hold it, do that rather than tearing it down, so that we see it and then we put it down. That's what I feel. Of course there are buildings that are dangerous, I mean what we have been saying, a group of experts needs to go in, to check, not to change anything but to check whether there is something dangerous. And I am not talking about snakes... I think those died as well. If there is no food to eat, they would die, I don't think there are snakes in Famagusta. In order to have snakes, you need something to feed the snakes. There is nothing to feed snakes.

N: maybe they eat mice ☺

C: What do mice eat? ☺

N: the chain is broken...



C: if there is no human, no food thrown away, eventually after 10-20 years, all life would go... So, the only reason for the experts to go in is to see buildings and say if somebody goes and touches, it would fall down let's say. And do this in order to protect the people when they return not to be in danger. There were talks about having people go inside to clean the streets, I said to them no, do not touch them, leave the fucking weeds coming out of the road, we need to see that, we need to experience, we need to cry over them and then you clean it.

N: Another Famagustian suggested, an old generation, above 70, they are panicking that they are going to die before seeing it, and somebody suggested 'can we at least see and be back'... I was talking to people from Famagusta Initiative what to think of this, because from your father's reaction, I see that seeing is another trauma but being back is a bigger trauma.

C: is bigger trauma yes...

N: If we all together make this happen, like having a permission to go inside, seeing at least and going back, not staying, are we helping or are we doing harm? What would you say?

C: It's ambiguous. I would love to go there and even seeing, being able to go in my house and see my room, and see where I used to clean my feet with *lastik*....

N: but...

C: but, I don't know. I would not take my mother there, she would definably die, she would have a heart attack, right there on the spot and she would say: 'I came back God, take me.' The circle will be closed but it will be closed for good. I am thrilled about the idea of being able to experience that but even for me I don't know how I would feel when they say 'ok, guys, it's time to go back', go back and back...

N: That's the idea that we should all fight for; being back and stay, not seeing and being back, so I see the idea of seeing and leaving very problematic and when someone in his/her late 70s says 'I am dying, let me see and die there', it's a shocking idea that you need to consider your reason. I wanted to hear from you seeing that you have very strong emotions and attachment to the place but you also have the reason attached to your feelings, it's not just feelings...

C: Yes, it's a puzzling question, it's not easy to answer if it's going to be good or bad, to go and come back. We'll have, seriously, a lot of people that I personally know, will not come back, we'll fight not to come back...

N: No one would like to drag anyone away again from their houses.

C: They will not leave you drag them, you know.

N: That would create another traumatic chaos...

C: yes, I am not sure if it's a good thing or bad thing.

N: I am not either.

C: I mean, in fact it's so simple, what I am saying is that I know about Turkey and Turkey's reluctance to give anything back as Turkey, not Turkish Cypriots. And that area is occupied by Turkey, not by Turkish Cypriots. Turkey is in negotiations with Europe, with America, with Russia, with China...They are fighting and they are friends...

N: benefits.

C: yes, there is a resolution from the Security Council that all these people, Russia, America, Israel, part of, they voted for the Resolution for 589, 789 and 5 something,

N: 550...

C: and 789 that instructed Turkey to give Famagusta city back. Why does not somebody force them?

N: It seems that these resolutions work as suggestions, not as resolutions.

C: It's a resolution, not a suggestion. It's an instruction, do it! And 40 years later, they have not done anything, and nobody said anything. What is the power of Security Council if they cannot impose their own resolutions? We were talking about confidence building measures of Famagusta being part of confidence building measure, at the same time, it's a resolution, it's an instruction, it's an order: Turkey, do this! All the members in the Security Council voted yes for 550, 789... Why not they say to Turkey, follow these instructions or we are banning you from this from that, so simple...

N: But they are not doing it. I personally as a Cypriot feel that it's not about us at all.

C: I agree. We just happened to live here 😊

N: It's tragicomic of course. I don't want to tire you much but I just want to talk about more of... hearing your insights about the future and the present situation, I just want to talk more about the past. Your mother's suitcase. I know you have strong feelings for your mother. And you are still grieving it seems. Did you know what she had in that suitcase?

C: I did not finish the story of how we left...

N: So now we can combine the suitcase to your experience of leaving the town in 74.

C: so, during the first invasion we went to Pervolia, then we returned. It was when Salamina was bombed...

N: You returned after hearing the radio announcement saying that it's safe to be back?

C: yes, like everybody else, with the ceasefire, we returned. We went back home. I remember, I don't remember myself, my brother told me that he did see the Salamina bombing and the child hanging dead from it. 14<sup>th</sup> of August when the 2<sup>nd</sup> invasion happened, there was no army in the city. We, all the people, children, women... so my father was there. He was working in the bank, we heard that Turkish tanks are

coming. So we said ok, we go to Pervolia and in 2 days we would be come back, so we did not take anything. The suitcase was in the car. It was from before, from the first time, I don't know. So we went on that road and they said keep going, so we did not stop in Pervolia, we went to the British base and we went to Sotira, I think, with a thought that we are coming back in 2-3 days, we never returned. My mother did not take anything with her. Just her handbag with her Panagia inside, some old photographs, always had some photographs of us as kids inside the *sakkulli*... 10-15 photos....

N: carrying with her all the time?

C: All the time, everywhere. So she had them in the handbag as we went to escape the Turks. That's why I had something of me, something of my mother at the veranda of my house, that's the only picture I have of the house.

N: That was in your mom's bag?

C: Yes, it was safe because it was in the handbag. In Sotira, we were staying in a room, in a house, we were 14 people just lying down next to each other, like sardines. They are coming to give us lunch with bully beef, and my mother, because she did not want me to have from the metal box, she used to make *koftedes*, from the bully beef. And I still love those *koftes*.

N: Ah, my mom used to make those *bully beef koftes*, too...

C: I love those koftes! Only my mother did... She used to crash that beef with bread and whatever to make kofte, sweetest kofte ever... Anyway, we were lucky because a year before 74, in 73, my mother was transferred to a bank in Nicosia, and we moved in Nicosia in 73. I went to the primary school in Nicosia for the first time, have not been in school in Famagusta. And my mother, she could now leave outside Famagusta. As soon as I finished the first grade in primary school, 74 June, she told my father, 'look, I cannot leave here, take us back to Famagusta, and you come and go, 20-minute drive'...

N: It was 20 mins then?

C: Yes, because it was directly from the old road, now we have to go around. So we went back, transferred everything back, our clothes, my mother's jewelry, she used to have some golden lira, which probably now worth a lot of money but I don't know who has them now.

N: Is it within the family?

C: No, it was left in Famagusta. We took everything from Nicosia to Famagusta, and we left Famagusta without taking anything.

N: So your mother had that *sakulli*, Panagia icon in it and some jewelry?

C: No jewelry but because we used to rent in Nicosia, we were lucky to have a house in Nicosia, we did not stay in tents in refugee camps like the other refugees for months and years... and my father had a job in Nicosia. So, we lost everything but at

least my father had a job in Nicosia, we were the lucky ones that we were not just refugees in tents with no job, no money...

N: you were saying your mother did not like you eating from that can, and instead, immediately you went to Nicosia...

C: we stayed in a few days in Sotira because we were returning back, we thought.

N: Do you still have those photographs? The icon?

C: yes, but I wonder where the icon is. I will ask my sister.

N: But it's in the family somewhere.

C: Yes. I never questioned where that Panagia was. It's a big thing in my life. When we were there, and she was putting the bag over my head, at some point, we could hear the bombs, I was asking for that icon over my head to feel the protection. Up to the minute that she died, she used to remind that I was asking for it... to bring me back to being religious. Panahia, saying, you were asking for it.

N: Because you were criticizing her being religious?

C: I am not religious, I believe in God but not in the way that she was. I am not going to church every Sunday. I only go to Agios Exorinos, that's the only church I go. (in Famagusta) nowadays. And I made a promise to myself that I will carry the Epitaphios (a representative bed of Christ decorated with flowers, they carry it around the church during the ritual to celebrate the resurrection of Christ) until I carry it in Agios Zonni (in Varosha)

N: The one that you were playing in its window.

C: Yes. When we had the first Epitaphio in Exorinos, I was in a volunteer team, Pavlos asked who is going to carry the epitaphiou when we go around the streets, outside the church.

N: Yes, I know, I go as well to observe you all...

C: As soon as he asked that question, I said me, and Pavlos said I was sure. From that day, the feeling I had on that first epitaphios 4 years ago, it was much heavier than what I expect it to be, they were offering me to rest, I was saying no I will take it out and I will bring it back in. Even though it was killing me and it was so heavy and I am not the strongest guy on earth, I don't exercise at all, so it was very stressful for me but I said I am going to do it.

N: Why? Were you connecting this to the thing (Panagia) over your head?

C: Not only that. I said I am going to carry this as many times as I need to until I carry it once in Agios Zonni. And this year, I am not going to carry it because I am going visit my son studying in England. I am not going to carry it this year. When I realized the days I booked the flights, I thought shit! I am not going to be in Epitaphios. I was nearly changing the dates...

N: What does he study?

C: Computers.

N: Ok, this will bring us to 'Ammohostos H poli mas' Facebook page and all the things you do on computer about Varosha to finish the interview.

C: Have you seen my latest picture? The brides, the couples, the newlyweds?

N: (showing the screen shot on my phone) is this the photo you are talking about? I saved it, I wanted to talk about it.

C: yes!

N: Tell me about it.

C: That was from the footage of latest drone. When I saw that it was going very low, and you can see the houses and everything...

N: What's so special about that place? Why have you chosen that spot? Is there a place here that they got married in?

C: No. Just because it's a nice shot with a road, it's an area in Ayios Memnon, somewhere. I don't even know who lived in that area. It was just a nice shot, I visualized putting people walking those streets in photoshop as if like ghosts. Then I said, hang on, I have a picture of my father and my mother when they got married, a lot of people got such wedding photos...

N: That's why you were collecting wedding photographs?

C: Yes, I said I have an idea but I need pictures of you or your parents on the day they married... and that's my father and mother (showing on the photograph).

N: Aaa you put them in the front?

C: Of course, it's my photoshop 😊😊All these people are from that album I collected from other Famagustians to put their family photographs and I specifically asked them, I want to see their whole body, even their feet, alone, not with kids... I somehow managed to crop them...

N: Why wedding photos? Because wedding dresses look like ghosts?

C: No because the thought that came to my mind to make a strong point with this photo, is that...

N: what does it say here? (Asking about the text on the photo)

C: "The newlyweds of Famagusta with their unfinished dreams, not unfinished, the dreams that have not happened". Because they were building their life, they got married to build a family, they had their dreams to have a family and to live there. And somebody just cut the line, you know. And they could not fulfilled, aha, unfulfilled dreams, that would be the exact translation. So, I wanted to make a point

that these politicians, they don't even have a clue about how they affected the whole life of these families, not just the couples, but the whole families... That was the reasoning. And I wanted to put them on the street. That's why I have chosen that shot from the footage and then put all these newlyweds in there...

N: Are you satisfied with the outcome? Was this what you were planning to have?

C: yes, sort of, more or less.

N: The reactions you get?

C: The people that reacted, not all of them have the internal understanding, let's say, the importance of certain things. I see people putting a dog, jumping up and down with hats, like a very happy day in a photo showing a personal reaction. Well, that's not a reaction to make to that photo but people do that. But there were also people emotionally triggered by it, etc. I don't care about the reactions, I don't do it for a reaction. I just wanted to express that...

N: you wanted to express your vision saying that what we left behind was an unfulfilled dream and...

C: the point is that what I say here at the bottom, I say, they started their lives with thousands dreams, they worked hard, with love, they created families. In one day they lost everything without them having anything to blame, let's say. Most of them have gone. They are dead. They went without seeing their city again, their house, they left without seeing the fruits of their labor. They went with their dreams unfulfilled. And I say after it 'who gave you the right, sirs, misters, politicians and powerful people to take away from these people their dreams? Who gave you the right to play with their lives? Who gave you the right to refuse them the life they have dreamt of? Shame on you!... Because I had this feeling of unfulfillment dreams of my parents – they have always used to say, 'we had other dreams my son, this is what we ended up with', you know... somebody else decided that they should not be living their dreams. It's more of in memoriam of the people that built Famagusta that made Famagusta what Famagusta was...

N: Is this how you connect marriage to having dreams? Newlywed people are full of dreams to live for the potential family to become in that area. I am just trying to understand why a wedding dress and not something else.

C: It's a start of dream, when you are part of your parent's family, you are living their dreams. When you start your own family, you start your dreams. We had people that the day after their marriage, they had to live their dreamland.

N: My last question then? You are a married person with a son? Do you think you have started your own dream or you have started your parental dream?

C: That's a good question! That's a good question! There are, of course I started my... not my dream but let's say I've started my own family, have a son at the age of 22. I have always tried to first of all teach him how to be a good person, not religiously sense, you know, being thoughtful, being careful, being not cautious but having over-trust for others around you because nobody is a saint. So I started living, creating a life with my family, with my son, in my own way but at the same time,

because my father's and mother's dream life for me was not fulfilled, I feel that I am still living their dream. I am trying to live according to their dream for me. That's the first time I am discussing this even with myself. Somehow, it's an awakening question. I might still be trying to fulfill their dreams by struggling to return. The first thing I want to do if we go back is to take their bone and bury them in the cemetery in Famagusta. That's the first thing I want to do...

## Appendix M : Sample Interview Transcription 2

**Interviewees: V (1979) and E (1949)**

**Interviewer: Nafia Akdeniz**

**Place: Home for Cooperation, Nicosia**

**Date: 16.3.2019**

**Duration: 80 minutes**

*After warm-up greetings...*

N: I'm trying to make sense of your project to do with the future of Famagusta, called the Famagusta Eco City Project. Correct? And you kindly accepted me to be part of private screening of your documentary. Somehow I have imposed myself I guess ☺

V: We are happy to have you there.

N: Thank you. I just want to share my reaction to it.

V: Can I write it? ☺

N: Well, yes, but I am the one interviewing ☺ ☺ I wanted to start with that because may be this will take us back to past and fro to future. After watching your documentary, I went to bed, had a good sleep and when I woke up, the only part in my mind was C's description of how the wind hurt her eyes with no eyelashes. I immediately connected this, like eyes with no eye lashes, and the pain to home with no people. This is how I comprehended an abandoned house without its people, it hurts, it is in pain, you know, it is collapsing, just like a person cannot protect the eye against the wind with no eye lashes... that is the only thing that's left with me...

V: That's beautiful, can I record this? You will end up in the film ☺

E: You should ☺

N: Of course. I can share the recording with you or I can say everything again. But the point is you did not make this connection, I did. May be I did this connection with my poetic sensibility, may be with my vision of seeing a unified Cyprus. Because I have been talking to more than 40 Famagustians, I somehow now have the sense of what they need to hear before they need to hear the beautiful, utopian, amazingly futurist project. I know that they first need to hear that their life experience is recognized, the injustice happen to them is recognized, somehow... hmmm somehow involved in this future oriented project. You started with creating awareness on politics first, then ecology... I was just taking my notes here saying (notes taken during the private screening of the documentary), you ended up promoting this new paradigm and I called it 'eco-peace'... (E laughs happily) because you have first given this political awareness and that was great, I needed to hear both sides, although I felt this is kind of too much, put us away from the real project. Then you have given this ecological awareness that the planet we are living in a world that is collapsing, so we need this project and eventually we have C, her cancer, but everything is left hanging in the air. I felt the need to connect them. You did not connect them in the documentary (E says bravo, V approves). Knowing all



the Famagutians and their needs and reactions to that project, they need their pain and their experience of injustice recognized first, then something for the future. Of course you were saying that this projects is participatory, will be participatory with the help of technology. But I know what virtual reality is, I know what augmented reality is, I know the kinds of projects that you are going to involve these people but they may not know. (V approving). So, how about including samples of how these people will be involved and how about, well, you included some experts, architects, ecology people including your mum, but having, I am not a psychologist, but how about having one, a psychologist, as an expert talking about how these people still feel connected to what they lost, the paradise lost, because you suggested paradise regained (to Va) and you are describing paradise lost (to E), but these people have no voice in it yet as if they do not exist anymore and we are going to be in this future paradise regained, back to them? How?

E: very insightful!

N: This is how I felt there but the idea, the vision, seeing it from the whole planet perspective rather than Cyprus perspective was brilliant because it gives a sense of being a human in the planet, rather than a Cypriot in Cyprus, or a Turkish Cypriot in Famagusta and a Greek Cypriot in Varosha. I loved it. I respect and I would love to contribute in any possible way if I can. But I need to hear from you. I know the spark that you had that photograph from your grandparents wedding. You somehow got the idea of working on this project physically with the opening of the gates in 2003 after seeing Famagusta with your own eyes. In between, what was happening in your life as a baby growing up, as a teenager growing up, having a mother like E, giving you that vision? Because in my case it's different. I had to struggle on my own to, you know, to break my cocoon and see the world from different perspectives. In your case, you had that support around. Is this help or may be a (E suggest the word hindrance), hindrance? How would you describe it?

V: That's a very good question.

E: (interfering and we are all laughing as it is usually the case, in the documentary as well ☺). That's very insightful because you have picked the gap that exists, I think because V was hearing the story from her mamma, she was not getting the story from the Cypriots of Famagusta, or other Cypriots, excepts these workshops. And there was that gap because I was living in the states. Therefore we have not really experienced how those people experienced it (forced displacement) expressing their pain, saying 'we want to go back'.

V: No, I will tell you.

N: you were born in States?

V: No, I was born in Cyprus, I have definitely heard a lot of what's going on. I mean, I grew up with propaganda, I went to public school here for 4 years. All we learned about was...

N: I have also heard your TED talk, you were saying your experience after 2003 was totally different from your experience in primary school.

V: Exactly. I did not grow up with parents who thought me to hate the other, 'my enemies'. But I was always living in the south and being a Greek Cypriot. You know you grow up with that; everyone you look, it is the Turk barbarian complex. Same in the north, right? The Greeks are barbarians. So, you know, we had this distorted views of each other. For me it's the personal journey started in 2003 when I crossed and started making friends. My close friends are close to me as family. So, it's like other family members are coming and saying 'wait, you've never seen this part of family history'. It really kind of just shocked me. I was painter at that time entering graduate school when I started filming when I got my camera to film the first day we crossed, cause I thought this is a pretty historic moment, and it was that moment behind the camera I started recording that kind of, I wanted to absorb as much of the story into this camera as possible, it was that unravelling and kind of recognizing we are not told everything. Coming back home, I had these conversations with my mum where I would hear about her version of Famagusta, because I got hooked to it cause it has this pull on you, you know?

N: Yes, on me as well!

V: yeah, everybody who sees it. There is something about it that sucks you in, like an energy there and you feel that emptiness, but yet that fullness at the same time, of the souls there...

E: absence yet presence.

N: And the nature reclaiming there.

V: Yes, so my biggest connections there, my personal drive beyond my mother's. I had this link to the city myself, then it made me want to hear more from her, then it's gathering and gathering, and gathering and I made my first film at the graduate school. I have moved away from my artist life and did '*Hidden in the Sand*', it's online, I will send you the link. It's 30 min film, released in 2008...

N: Αμμόχωστος means, under the sand?

V: Hidden in the sand. So it was little preliminary film about Famagusta that has a little bit of the same footage at the beginning. But for me growing up in nature, because I have grown up in Maine, I talked about in the film, so I needed to emphasize more in the film, because everyone kept telling me we wanted to hear more of personal, what is that drive that brought you. Because everyone likes to know what it is that compels us to do certain things or what excites me about her idea? I was living in cities at that time first time in my life, cars, and noise and that disconnect from what I felt primarily connected to this kind of natural world, because I grew up wandering through woods at that time, there was no plastics around, it was literally this communion with the forests, the ocean and being in Cyprus, we were going camping on the beach in Akamas, you know that was my childhood.

E: My father is from Karpasia. Both of us have had that kind of World.

V: My mother is back in 1983 for in Cyprus, she came and worked in Phillips collage for 4 years to expose us to our culture and all the relatives and we were here every summer. Because my father we well, they were both professors spending 3 months

here in summers. It was basically summer and this 4 years that I was very connected. Living in the city, I thought that absence in my life. So, I was more an idea emerging, making a city that has those elements was very exciting to me because I loved city life because of the culture and diversity, exciting art and there was something missing for me.

N: You wanted to have access to that?

V: to green, to space, to openness to the smell, to all the things that she (E) described existed in Famagusta before which is why when people say ‘we want the city we left behind’ and I tell them ‘this is exactly what we are trying to bring back because that does not exist anymore. There are parts of Nicosia that are green but it’s such a car centered community now, everywhere it’s concrete and noise pollution, you do not feel that peace you know.

N: During the movie, I did not get the sense that you aim to include the whole Famagusta

V: Yes I know, I noted that, a lot of people said that.

N: Eventually during the panel talk you and C I guess were giving the idea that this does not end at the fence of Varosha

E: (to V), you did show the UNESCO...

V: It’s not clear, it’s not clear. Everybody told me that.

N: I wonder how come that was missing. I am trying to understand your sense of that space. So, when you say I have this missing element in my life that I wanted to space up again, does that include the whole Famagusta?

V: It has to. You know in the beginning, initially we thought ‘oh there is Varosha, it has to be rebuilt, what a great opportunity’. We came in naively thinking that is the area that needs to be worked on, so that’s what we should focus on we brought this architects over and he taught he was just going to work on Varosha as well. When we came and we have started meeting, there were are actually Famagustians, most of them refugees, who had house either in Famagusta, or in Varosha, many of our panelist were not just experts. There were Famagustians, a lot of expertise that’s we wanted to involve, we wanted their input into this, how do we build that place. And so they were telling us ‘there was no way you can separate Varosha Eco City then you create another divided city.

N: I read that description that you were distributing on the day of screening and somewhere it says you do not aim to create another division with the project but a whole –space vision.

E: I talk about the bi-communalism of the space.

N: as a vision yes, but geographically space?

E: That’s in the book.

N: What book?

E: It's published.

V: You know what, you can send her the book, and you can read the book.

E: No, not yet.

V: Why?

E: It's coming up in May, it has to be published.

V: Ok.

E: It's C and I am the co-editor and we got all of the committee, the eco-city who wrote a chapter. V writes about narrative, the importance of story telling, I write about how I conceived the idea...

V: We can send you the abstracts...

E: May is not late. The book is finished for a year, then a friend of mine who is a British architect said 'E you need a visual aspect' So we know have a photograph for every page which makes it very visual.

N: Ok, I will wait it patiently.

V: So, just to give you an idea, the limitation of the film, the problem with it, well, 1. This was just a first cut, first draft, which is why I wanted to come and show, it is nice to hear people, so many people came and said you need to have Turkish Cypriots people and Greek Cypriot people working together to unite the city, create green belts and bike pulps that will link the different parts of the city so that it is one space that the communities can all interact. You have a plaza with a mosque and a church in it. There is all these ideas. I was just brainstorming yesterday and I do not know if this will happen but we have started to think about how this can become multi-platform film, where you have the film and then you send people to the website to see the specifics of the design, and then send them to another link to show them the book. So those who are interested to learn more about 'what do you mean by eco-city, what do you mean by unified city, it does not all have to be explained so that it remains that poetic personal story that can move people, inspire them without the kind of technicalities of panelists talk, 'I don't want to see students, I don't want to see workshops, that is boring to me but for other's it's interesting so how do you keep the story alive, the characters in this C, V and E dance around in the ghost town, Varosha, Famagusta as a character.

N: So, you describe your vision of how to structure it, is this exactly the same comprehension of the space itself? So that it links here and there.

V: Yes.

E: People used to call it fragmented, but in fact, it is unified.

V: It's fragmented now.

E: it's fragmented now, but we are doing a unifying project to bring all these distorted, fragmented parts together through the design. So, public transportation networks what will link the outer parts of the city to the inner city, may be to the other parts of the island, ideally right? You have that line by the water that takes you from Paralimni to Salamis, so that's one, like, you can ride you bike and go any part of the city. So, the problems and the issues that we are going to face if we were to be the actual designers, we are initially started the idea that educate people and inspire them to pursue or we are not Gods, we are not going to create ourselves and we have a lot of people and a network of amazing knowledgeable experts that we are collecting, that can help make this happen, but we need funding, we need government support, we need community support, we have a lot people excited, everyone wants to participate, others see it as a threat but the whole reason is because they do not understand what we are talking about, they think we are going to make this futuristic unfamiliar city that is nothing like Varosha they left behind but we are saying...

E: and the other threat, you are not only taking our apartment and turning them not chicken cooks, but the other threat is 'what do you mean by unifying, unifying what?' For those who are thinking they are in the north and we are in the south because of the big interest established on the separation, for those people we are an enemy because we are talking about a unified island. Not just a unified city. But the city itself becomes the symbol of we can no longer talk the Trump language, or 'let's erect the wall' and they are kept there and we are kept here and everybody will live happily ever after...

N: I remember an anecdote, I think from a scene from the first screening of the documentary, it was a reaction someone said 'I cannot accept that now the environment taking the priority over the occupation. How do you receive those reactions?

E: with tears.

N: Yes, but it's upsetting that we are stuck somewhere there but we can't move from there but it's another kind of mirror to us to say that you can't skip that part, you can't pretend that...

V: they don't exist.

N: They do, so, how would you deal with that?

V: What I see that somebody talking does not necessarily understand how we are critical the moment we are in the environmental history.

E: They don't get it V.

V: whoever understand that we are having a climate change and the degradation of climate, the water shortage problem cannot say that the environment should be secondary to anything else, in my opinion. There will be no human rights, justice without humans on this earth. You know what I mean?

N: I do. How would you give that idea to someone who does not understand what you are saying. Let's talking about the moment that you left your house behind (to

E), because you are the one who experienced it, she (V) did not, but learned that painful separation through you. Let's describe that because maybe your experience will give us the insight to understand those people who does not understand the insight of eco-friendly environment and this and that... Tell me about the day you left your house. You had to leave your house.

E: Oh, I left the house of my parents there. I was in Nicosia.

N: You talk about 74, August?

E: Yes. Because we were working, my parents...

V: Actually, no July. After the ceasefire after the first one, we thought things were going to back to normal...

E: We had to go back to States because I got married in 72 and we went to the states. By 73, I was very homesick. I told my husband 'forget it, I can't live in America. Let's go back'. So, we came back without giving up our jobs at the university. I was studying German Literature, and he was teaching and we came and we taught 'let's keep it a year and see how it goes. And by the end of the year he asked, shall we stay or shall we leave, and I said let's leave. In 73, we came back for the job. I was working at the British counsel, Griakos is doing his research in Lysi, in a village, and when the invasion happened we thought it was in Famagusta, we called our parents, they said 'no it's a sunny day, we are having our coffee, it's lovely'. Denial denial denial, they stayed, they became refugees, the next day, they all left the city. They all got scared, they left the city.

N: So you were not in Famagusta, you were in Nicosia.

E: Yes, I was in Nicosia, I did not hear the bombings of Famagusta myself no, I was asking my parents to come and join us but I could see what was happening because I was watching the BBC, we knew that it would not be so easy for them to go back. My father had the opportunity to go back. V has it in the film. But instead of taking some money, jewelry to last, he changed his nice outfit as a teacher to wear his picnic clothes. Typical teacher (we all laugh☺).

N: Or just a typical man.

V: yeah yeah ☺

E: I adore my papa. I adore him because he was my Socrates, he studies philosophy, I had a very good relationship.

N: So, you had nothing from that life with you.

E: Well, I left the wedding gifts behind, those were all gone, a lot of them were not even opened. Because we got married and left immediately to America. We came back in 73, we were in Nicosia doing research, I worked in the British counsel, and we spent weekends only in Famagusta back and forth. So, I spent a lot of my life abroad. That has to be said. I am not your typical Famagustian. I mean I do have a lot of high school friends, I finished the 3<sup>rd</sup> year in gymnasium. Because my father being a teacher in 64, he said now, let's go to England because the troubles have started,

we know that and this is not going to have a good ending. He could see ahead. He could see that EOKA is creating tremendous conflict in our lives. We went abroad. I finished my studies in English school, went to Switzerland for a year, I went to Germany for a year, learned foreign languages, and came back to Cyprus. My soul was not in Switzerland, was not in Munich, and was not in Granada, it was in Cyprus.

N: in Famagusta?

E: and in Karpazia. The scenery of my soul is in Karpazia in summer and in Famagusta of my daily life and around. And I had such a happy childhood. So, then I came back from my studies very same year I mead Griakos and went to the States. You can see that from age 15 on I lived abroad. You see I am not your typical Cypriot who settled here but again I have this passion, this great passion, because I felt uprooted. In 64, my father took me away because he saw troubles coming, and then later on it was 73 when I came back from America, again troubles continued and I refused to accept that. And I always felt, and you talked about eco-peace, I am known at the university for my eco-peace concepts. Because I created an organization, it's called international eco-peace community, we had 13 conferences, I came here from the consultancy of the commonwealth created an international eco-peace village.

N: Ok, Famagusta is not the only concern of yours.

E: It's is mostly the gestalt and everything else fills the picture. You see gestalt means the main stroke of my painting that is Famagusta. Everything else that I do... Gestalt is a psychoanalytic movement whereby you have to find what is the gestalt of a course, what is the scenery of their soul, what is the essence of their soul. I think for me it has always been Famagusta. Famagusta and Rizo Karpazia, Ayfilon.

N: So, you agree with all the other Famagustians that you left a paradise, you lost a paradise.

E: Of course, of course.

V: I though you will not talk about the scenery of your soul anymore. (We all laughed ☺)

N: I did not know the meaning of the word gestalt, now I know.

E: Write it down, write it down.

N: (to V) from your reaction I understand that she should stop talking about gestalt, the scenery of her soul, but that's the first time I'm hearing it so please go ahead ☺

E: Basically I lived since the age of 15 abroad. But I feel more Cypriot when you put all this together, only I don't only feel Greek Cypriot. I feel the pain of the Turkish Cypriots as well, the pain of the refugees. I feel the pain of the Palestinians.... That's why I have created peace studies in the university. Those who lost, they work through it. I worked through the pain, I did psychology, I did psychoanalysis that's way I know. You work through the pain, you transmute it, you don't want to feel pain all your life. You don't want to feel like a disintegrated child all your life. You

want to feel that potential growth that can also help the others see that picture for God's sake. Why are we always swelling on misery when we can be dancing together? I've turned the negative into positive, I've turned the pain into joy and now so many years, and so many lost opportunities, you know they are crashing, it's like my little bones are being hit by time against the rocks and time and against the rocks and then you feel the cracks, you feel the water seeping through into your sailing boat. And I love poetry that's why I studies German and French.

N: I hear your love for poetry. More than anything else, I love poetry too, I am a poet, and I lost my interest in you (to V and we all laugh)

E: I feel so indicated that I raised my children well, and that's a huge achievement. Because we live in a world that has become like a monster that eats us up, you know it does not matter Turkish, Greek, Palestinians, Israelis, it does not matter. I am by now a citizen of the world, when you have French, Spanish, German, English, and Greek in your background, at the end, these divisions mean nothing except enriching you, giving you images that is the gestalt. Gestalt is the image, we are all sort of draw... we all have images in our minds, and we live our lives according to those images that we have. I had an image of Famagusta in my mind with its reeds (?), she (V) got it.

N: When you compare the images of Famagusta in the past and the future image that you have in your mind, and you are looking through that image to your documentary, what is the common essence that both share, past and future?

E: It think I wanted the consciousness to be the connecting factor. If you do not have the consciousness that there are 2 communities, there are Turkish Cypriots that lived all along within the walls and they felt enclaved...

V: But there was no consciousness before.

E: yes, there was no consciousness before....

V: That's is not answering Nafia's question. Nafia is asking about the common elements of Famagusta before and future Famagusta.

E: Is that the question?

N: Yes, more or less. Yes, I wondering of what is the element of that we can convince the Famagustians to say yes to such projects, because unless we connect the life they left behind, the paradise lost, to the paradise to be regained...

V: This is a very important question.

N: Because you asked the question how to communicate the gestalt to the future of Famagusta, how to communicate all these ideas to Famagustians, we have to have something to connect the past to the future, a bridge. I do not know the answer. We are just brainstorming. I know it is difficult.

V: I don't think it's... (E wanted to say something) you want to finish your thought (to E)?



E: I am just thinking for those people who do not have this paradigm, because a paradigm to happen in our heads requires a lot of explosions, it's like volcanic eruptions. Every book I read would be volcanic eruption within me, 100 years of solitude, volcanic eruption, me reading Marxism, volcanic eruption... all of those volcanic eruptions create a new paradigm within me, creates a new person, I am the E of Famagusta, yet, I have this explosions happening within me... can I convey those? Yet I do. When I meet my Famagustian friends, the high school friends, the love.... I believe I become the connecting force, I come abroad and I bring them together...

N: I hear a lot from Famagustians, once they get together, they lost the space, the place, but they have not lost the sense of community. May be that is the key.

E: You know what I teach at the university? Building sustainable communities.

N: That is the connecting factor I guess then.

V: That was mentioned in the panel, an old man said to my mum 'E, I was taking you to school by my bike in Famagusta when you were a little girl'.

E: That's what makes you kept coming.

V: I did not live in Famagusta, I heard about it, and everyone talks about the smells, the jasmine, citrus, that was nature, right? That's what I said in the TED talk, when you have all the concrete everywhere you don't have those smells. How do you bring the smells of nature? How to do you make it that people have nice balconies with trees around where they can sit and interact with their neighbors while other people walking and biking in the streets in front of them, they can interact with. That's how you built up community. Have parks where people can go with their kids. And that what Famagusta had.

E: Bi communal, it was not bi communal.

V: I know.

N: It was multi-cultural though. May be this is more important than being bi-communal because it creates larger umbrella.

V: exactly. And that's the link. This is what I said to C.V., I had a conversation with him and the question came up afterwards, someone said 'how are going to convince Famagustians for this utopia... you know that woman, A?

N: You know I say it as well, but the moment I say it, utopian, I feel I am being unfair, it's not utopian, it can be reached.

E: Utopia means no man's land. It does not exist. It's only in our imagination.

N: Well, I can only differentiate between utopia and dystopia.

E: I am giving you 'Ενδοπία / Endopia', ev – in Greek means a good place, utopia means no place. It only exists in your imagination. I got it from the book 'Gaviotas: A Village to Reinvent the World' by Alan Weisman (the writer of the book 'The

World Without Us) *Gaviotas*, a village designed by *Paula Lugari*, and he wrote about Famagusta.... 'Here you are talking about a village in the middle of nowhere' Lugari was asked 'Oh you are dreaming of making a place for us to live here?' It's a phantasy. And he said 'no, it's an endopia'.

N: So this is taken from the book 'The World Without Us'?

E: Lugari is the founder of Gaviotas. It's the name of the book. All my students love that book.

N: When I say utopia, I feel it's unfair, because I feel it's should be said for a case impossible to achieve. In our case, it's not. When I say our, I mean the eco-city project.

V: That's the vibe, that's the beauty. I love that because that's a success in my eyes. This is not something that a few people can achieve. Everybody feels ownership and wants to contribute.

E: You need to make it bi-communal.

V: bi-communal but sustainable. No, multi-communal.

N: When you say bi-communal, I am wondering, playing the devil's advocate now, just to see possible burdens that we would be facing. What if I am a Famagustian, but I am against unified Cyprus, I just want my town back? Because with this eco-city project, you are not only promoting, you are not only promising my home back, my lifestyle back, you are also imposing the idea of unified Cyprus. How are you going to win the hearts of those people?

E: you are complicating the matter even more now. It's already complicated!

N: I know some cases, some refused to shake my hand because I'm a Turkish Cypriot, on the other side, I have Famagustians, Greek Cypriots from all parts of Cyprus, hugging me, kissing, me open their homes to me... they turned my project into honeymoon, they just walk around me, checking, making sure that I have my tea warm, my stomach is happy, they write to my kid while I'm having my interview, that good! But I also had people refusing my handshake.

V: Wow!

N: I never think twice before I say I'm Turkish Cypriot.

V: Why should you?

E: Tell me what is the percentage of people refusing your shake?

N: Among Famagustians, for example in a gathering somewhere close to Limassol, Fassouri, there was a gathering by Lion's something, just to keep the sense of community, the Famagustians together, doing things together, you know. There, I was very welcomed, my seat was reserved in the front, observing everything, and they were just hugging me, kissing me, blah blah blah. Afterwards, a Famagustian was trying to keep this as a secret from me, but eventually I have learned about it,

and I wanted to talk to her, I could not yet: Another Famagustian living in London, complained about me being there, like ‘who am I to be among them as a Turkish Cypriot?’

V: wow!

N: And the organizer of the event felt so bad that somebody on Facebook said this about me. They were just trying to keep this hidden. They did not want me to know about it. And I said, I never take such things personally, this is not about me, and it’s about her vision in London seeing me as something that I should not be among Famagustians, among Greek Cypriots because I’m not a Cypriot, I am a Turk...

You were talking about gaining a paradigm. I told you about my own mother, my own father, I am now going beyond the vision that they aimed to give to me. But how am I doing this? How am I feeling interested in Famagusta? I do not have a house inside, I do not have any experience, I did not have anyone that had this injustice, but somehow, maybe because I have poetic sensibility... there was a time that I could not stop but travelled to the barbed wire almost every day hanging on them, watching the houses and imagining the life inside.

E: What C said.

V: I should interview you.

N: Yeah of course. I had enough of imagining myself the kind of life lived in those houses. I said I need to find the people, I want to hear from them to make sense of that place me imagining is not enough. You know, the way I imagined life was very similar to the life lived there because the environment says so, the kind of house says so, the sea says so...

V: Exactly. This is it!

N: You know, I needed to hear the confirmation from the people that my imagination is...

E: accurate. Endopic...

N: That’s what initiated my dissertation, my research there. As a person, I did not go through war but I had to leave houses behind for my personal choices. I know what it means to leave a house behind, your trees behind, and every time I move in a new house, the first thing I do is to plant pine trees. Somehow, I feel this is moving in. Planting pine trees (we all laugh ☺). I can show you a few houses I left behind, you’ve got to see two pine trees, they were mine... this is the way I feel attached to a place, I think I have come to a stage that I lost my sense of attachment to particular place, I’ve gained an attachment eventually to the whole island, to the whole planet. (not losing the sense of gestalt though). This is where I appreciate your paradigm of eco-peace in the planet. But at the same time, you are specifying this whole paradigm with Famagusta which is future-based. I also see this fragment will complete this wholeness. But it’s me having no experience of this actual life left behind...

E: I talked about consciousness before, how people talk differently. Those of us who worked things through gained the new paradigm. Some others stuck in the old paradigm...

V: Everyone says how you are going to convince everyone. We are not. There never be everybody in the city, every Famagustian going 'yeaaah' for this, ever, that's not going to happen. That's utopic! But if we have a democratic process, and people can vote for what they want for their neighborhood, or as an individuals, option one, this version, option 2, that version, option 3, it can look like this and you have a process that involves people directly voting for leaders and members of the community, then it does not matter if some people do not support it. You know what I mean? That's why this whole democratic planning process would be so critical to any, any future re-building of Famagusta if we do not want the developers to come in and make another Ayia Napa, Protaras, it's concrete buildings everywhere...

E: But how do you get this participatory offering, visually?

V: That's where virtual reality or the augmented reality applications where people can either on their computer click option one, 'oh this is how it looks like', or they go to the space where they are available and you put your goggles on and you are inside the landscape, you are walking down the Kennedy drive and seeing 'oh wow there is a park there', or 'there is the high rise', you know or 'there is a café there, a plaza here'... I dream that this film has an element of virtual reality exhibit, that travels with it, where people go into separate room after watching the film, or even during the film putting the goggles, and suddenly they are there.

N: Would it not be great to add such an experience into the documentary?

V: Yeah, that's what I want to do but that's where I need big funding to make that. I can't do it on my own.

N: Of course.

V: That's where I am looking... I had this great conversation last night with the producer who is like we were trying to figure out how can we sell this film to big funders so that I can get the support and how can we truly make it successful film that will go worldwide all the festivals...

E: One button, virtual reality, one button the book...

V: ... he feels the Famagusta story itself is intriguing. Even himself seeing Greek Cypriots around it, for him going to the eco-city after that was a different thing. It took him out of story he felt like he was in when we started. So it's either restructuring how I tell the story or having a multi-platform where you are watching the film and telling the story of me and mum and C, and all of a sudden options, appear 'do you want to know more of this idea, click on this site'... it's like a tree, you all have these branches.

E: 'you want to understand more, go to the book'

V: or you want to see their vision, 'let's put on your goggles', so the whole theatre will have to have that... or maybe even a part saying 'what do you think? What do

you vote? Go to that website and see which option you would like'. Or 'do you have new ideas? Fill out this form and give us some ideas about what can happen with this space' you know? So, you have this completely participatory process that the film is intriguing by guiding people and that's the new thing. The film can still remain poetic but these little offshoots that give people the full glimpse... cause everybody wants to participate, watching it, especially Cypriots, you know, at the end, they are like 'why don't you do this, why don't you do that, how about?...' They do not know that we are just 4-5 people and on the movie just me mostly, you know.

N: Just to add another piece of reality to it, my observation says some people have gained this identity of being a refugee, and once you offer something else, they do not know what to do with this identity.

E: Who am I now?

N: Who am I now if not the displaced person of Famagusta, who am I now if not a refugee, who am now, I as a victim all my life. I know you can't do everything with this movie, but this identity issue, because you are offering a new lifestyle, future based...

V: It gives them a chance to feel involved in something, 'I can be involved in the generation of my city', you know. One of the projects that's done is this memory map. I think Christos involved in it, you should talk to him, which was having everybody going and putting their specific memories into the map. 'Ok, here, I remember this and this and this' So, it's charrette....

E: It's *charrette*, it's an architectural term involving many voices, politicians, and sociologist, city planners, journalists, and everybody, so everybody contributes to the idea of the city. What V is talking about is the idea of charrette, which is now being used by modern architects to make it an all-inclusive town where everybody has a say, not just one architect. You know, I say I don't like this architecture, it's very linear, it's very male, it's squire, I like these 'skamares' (?) what I used to see in Karpazia as a child. That is the idea of charrette... what they call participatory planning... you include every voice. Do not exclude anybody. There are no experts, we are all designers. So, let's design our city together. So that nobody feels excluded.

V: It's interesting that Caroline, my brother's wife after watching the film and all the conversation afterwards about how you are going to get everyone on board, she said 'it seems like the only way to make this happen' and this is how I thought as well, 'if the city itself is returned only with the condition that it would be revived in this way... if under the UN or EU...' but everybody here knows how attached people are and how strong the emotions are saying imposing something on them will cause an uproar, you can never do that to Famagusta. Because it has to go from the bottom up.

N: But that's the idea of participatory, not from top down...

V: She thought the only way she could see it happening thinking that there is no way you can get everyone on board, how you going to get everybody to support this. It seems like it has to come from outside. But the problem is we had so many things coming from outside that everyone resists, and that woman in the meetings... I have never answered your question how I handle such reactions, you realize by the end of

the night that they just want to be involved, she was just toxic, she was just nationalist... After the woman at the end said 'I think we should say thank you, what happened here is very good, we only do whatever we can, so maybe we can go back to our city and die there one day... So you realize that there is 1 or 2 bad apples in the group and they are the loudest, then when I saw the clapping, I realized that everybody else there was supportive about it. So, if you can, don't let them poison you...

N: Yeah, this is how I survive here...

E: There is toxic things everywhere, there is toxic foods, just choose some organic ones. Don't mix with toxic people.

N: Maybe if they have the chance to see, then they will believe in the death of the past and bury it and grieve for it for a while then be ready to revive it because you are just saying it's dead. We have to give birth to another one. But they are not convinced that it's dead because they have not seen it.

V: That's what everybody said.

E: All the comments that you are hearing and they can be very discordant, a lot of voice, one says this, the other says that, yeah...

N: somewhere, you've got to shut them up and turn inside.

E: some says 'you should give up the idea of eco-city' and I say 'I beg your pardon, you give it up'. Try to get the money wherever can so that you can really reinforce this idea of virtual reality which is N' idea, he is our urban planner. He is very brilliant young man. So have N create the possibilities, yes, we kept Famagusta's cinema there, yes we do love to have the old part with the churches, the historic side, so let's make it a UNESCO inheritance side so that they can bring money in to maintain it, not to have them collapse for God's sake because it's a distraction of our heritage when you do that. So, we need to become very clever, recruit everybody, to come up with whatever money we need, to make it together a very strong tree with very strong brunches... like your doctoral work ought to be there on the website...

V: It's the way to synthesize everybody's contributions because the story itself does not include or can include everything, it's too much. Everybody was saying there are 2 separate things here. There is the film, and there is the project and it's true. We have never been able to separate the two. It was all started at the same time, and it has always been like this but as a narrative it needs to be separated. But this is the way to keep it together without interfering one over the other, you know.

E: And you know, it can become... now they are putting 40 million dollars in the old part of Nicosia, and they are bringing 5 universities putting 14 million dollars each university like UCL, one from German and then 3 open universities in Cyprus, I did not hear any Turkish Cypriot university participating but they are putting all that money to come up with a new media. This is new media and it's very best.

V: And I have a question actually for you... because another thing that we spoke about was somebody came to me and said 'we are doing this for Nicosia with the 2 divided communities, that's exciting because it's a living city, the possibility starts

today, it's not this fenced off city. Then I said listen Famagusta is not all fenced off. Then he said it's not clear in the film that you are planning to include the whole city. How do we see this as something valuable pursuing when there is this deadlock, is not it a problem?

E: Because it's a fantastic idea.

V: Yeah but a big investor will come and put a lot of money on something that is under Turkish control.

N: I have applied twice to visit the area for my academic studies. And I got refusal twice.

E: Of course.

N: I have no access to it. No one to analyze has access to it but I have students at school staying there, inside.

V: In the hotels?

N: In the hotels. Because they have relatives...

E: ...in the army.

N: yes, in the army. Rather than staying in dormitories and paying, they prefer staying there.

V: That's incredible.

E: Is it safe?

V: Mummy, of course it's safe. All the military families living in there. That would be fascinating interviewing them.

N: Well, they are just students from Turkey. They do not even...

V: They are not connected. They are lucky, they just live in a hotel by the beach.

N: Well, they don't like living among all those dead buildings, nothing fancy, you know. It's meaningless for them... it's cheap around... canteen, cafeterias, restaurant, etc. I think they also have duty frees, I don't know.

V: Interesting.

N: There is a kind of life going on inside there.

V: I wish I could get them record.

N: Well, accidently, I met someone, I'm a scuba diver as well. Someone from Turkey was at the sea at my diving school, and we were about to dive together. And we did. And had just become Facebook friends. And at night I saw him sharing Famagusta photographs, Varosha photographs, from inside. I thought, what's going

on? I did not know that he was inside. So, you do not have to be student only. Any army relative will do.

V: you can also get inside, on that one street.

N: I can't. I am told that I need to apply as an academic member from school although I have no relatives in the army. I saw him sharing the photos of Varosha, of those buildings, saying 'it's so sad to see all these buildings, but the sea is beautiful...

E: They do not even care.

V: Why would they? They have no relation to it.

E: So, tell me Nafia, how do we break through that deadlock?

N: you mean, Turkish military?

E: Yes.

V: What do you mean break through? Good luck.

N: Peace! And with this eco-city project of Famagusta, it can really be a spark of peaceful whole island once we see that we can live together. Because if we Cypriots can say yes we can be one country independent from others, then Turkey will have to fade away eventually.

E: Would you be ok to include your doctoral dissertation on the website of the eco-city if we follow this idea of multi-track, the charrette idea?

N: Of course! I would love to. But I need to just start writing, and may be my publications will also be there, but doctoral thesis would just be that huge chunk of...

V: (came back) we need to go... is that ok?

N: Oh, V! We were just about to solve the problem, Cyprus problem! 😊 😊

V: Ohhh!

E: Hade re V re! You just spoiled it! 😊 😊

V: What????

*We all laugh and laugh...*



## Appendix N: Sample Interview Transcription 3

**Interviewee: V (1989)**

**Interviewer: Nafia Akdeniz**

**Place: Buyuk Han, Nicosia**

**Date: 25. 7. 2018**

**Duration: 54 minutes**

*After warm-up greetings...*

V: Are you from Famagusta as well?

N: Ok, that's a good question... My father is from Pafos and my mother is from Mandrez, near Nicosia and I was born in Nicosia. But I spent my childhood in Dikomo... and when I was 12 I moved back in Nicosia. Since age 18, I have been studying, working and living in Famagusta. Lately I've moved in Trikomo. So, when someone asks 'are you Famagustian?', well, I drink the coffee of Famagusta wherever I go. I spent a lot of time in Famagusta compared to time I spent somewhere else on the island. I studied here, not abroad...I am a kind of Famagustian I guess ☺ How about you? In your Facebook, hometown says Limassol.

V: That's where I was born and raised. So my mum is from Famagusta. Her parents are from Famagusta, she was born and raised in Famagusta until the age 16, so she feels very intensely Famagustian, however, I was born in Limassol, my dad grew up in Limassol, he was actually born in Nicosia, lived his first 6 years in Kyrenia. Then he moved in Limassol, but that was long before 74 so he does not consider himself a refugee. My grandfather was from Kyrenia, my grandmother from father's side is also from Pafos, so I am bit from everywhere. I am Pancyprian... I feel the bond with Famagusta. I mean of course if you put aside the fact that I feel very Limassolian because that's where I spent my childhood, if you take it by percentage, the biggest percentage is Famagustian because it's like 50 percent...

N: Your mother feels as a refugee, a displaced person?

V: Yes.

N: The stories you heard about this? What do you know about the life before 74 in Famagusta? What does your mother say usually?

V: Well, given the fact that my mum left when she was 16, she is not one of those people who are going to share the stories of hatred and how they would not mingle with Turkish Cypriots. She only holds more childhood memories. Like the stories of innocence and going to the beach and having those great summers, being proud of living the most developed city of Cyprus... and things like that. So, childhood memories but they are very very intense. They feel like a whole life time to her although she has spent more than 2/3 of her life in Limassol, it still feels like she is waiting to go home and she says that if one day we find a solution and she is able to go back, she will. I am not even sure if she discussed this with my father if she is going with her, but yes, she is going definably.

N: Does this make sense to you? You mother spent her early teenage stage of her life in that beautiful developed the greatest place on the island, then displaced involuntarily and then wishing to be back. How do you feel about someone saying I want to be back, I want to live my life in Limassol and be back?

V: I think the fact that she did not live by choice, has a great effect on this. What I see is that now she is turning 60 this year, if I look at her closest friends, they are still the friends from Famagusta, from her neighborhood. That's the closest people she has. Even she meets someone new, they start talking about where they come from, it's like 'ah, you are also from Famagusta!' like it's a blood bond.

N: Blood bond! That's a great phrase to describe them. I have been observing them, every time they get together, and I am with them to observe how they continue this Famagustianess, I feel the same thing, they have a special bond among themselves and they like introducing their children to each other.

V: Yes.

N: You should be one of them.

V: I am. We actually have a little clan, they are not my closest friends, they are family friends but you still feel like oh, tonight we are going out with Famagustians.

N: It's something special, is not it?

V: yes. I am not sure if I ever saw that we, people displaced from other places, like Kyrenia, I don't know many of them, but I don't feel like other displaced cities have this same kind of enthusiasm when you meet someone who is from Famagusta.

N: How do you interpret this? Why do you think so? Any idea?

V: Frankly, I have not given it much thought, I just, I think, there is this sense of pride that you come from Famagusta and it's been passed on from our grandparents and from our parents, but it's really strong. I think that it's a sense of pride that is not in the sense of nationalism, in the sense of 'oh the Turks came', it's in the sense of 'ok, we have this bond. Famagusta is more like of a bond, it's our mecca of some sort. We all come from that sacred place. So, we have something really to be proud of'.

N: Is this an idea that you inherited from you parents or it is from your observation?

V: Both. I partly inherited this idea and I strongly developed it after I started visiting Famagusta.

N: Ok, tell me about this. We have the checkpoints opened in 2003. Were you here or abroad?

V: I was here. I will tell you a story about before the checkpoints opening. As a child, you can imagine that before 2003 I was not even 14, I was a child of 90s grew up in the very patriotic era and we were also living with my grandmother, my mother's mother...

N: ... who was also from Famagusta, yes?

V: yes. Being raised by her, she had like the whole heavy load of package of memories from Famagusta and having lost my grandfather shortly after displacement, gave her some sort of sadness that the war took away him from, broke her family apart, so, growing up in 90s and being bombed at school with all these ideas like Cyprus is Greek blah blah blah, being raised by both mother and grandmother, and my dad who was in the army, there you have pretty nice environment for child to do to be raised... (*she is sarcastic here!*)

N: Were you also being bombarded with the idea that ‘the best Turk is the dead Turk’? I heard this from many Greek Cypriots before.

V: Actually my parents and my grandmother although they were carrying this heavy baggage, they have never ever had this sort of discussion. You could feel like this bitterness of what is taken away from them, but they would never ever tell me that I should hate people because they took things away from us. Never had I ever heard this in our home. I used to hear a lot in our school of course. I remember that there were some days that with my grandmother to think of Famagusta and just to cry. Sitting on a chair and just crying. She would not say anything but I knew it was about that. I don’t know how knew, I just knew it.

N: Has she shared anything with you? Have you ever had an intimate conversation with your grandmother about Famagusta?

V: She talked about Famagusta. I have to be frank. I was 11, I don’t remember much of what he told me about Famagusta but I remember that she talked about Famagusta. I also remember my mum crying a lot when she would hear songs about Famagusta. These are the very intense childhood memories I have. Sort of very nostalgic feeling in our home about Famagusta.

N: You had a story to share before 2003?

V: Yes. I think it was in 1996-97, we went to Ayia Napa for family vacation in summer and I was 7, it must have been 96. We went to see the ghost town from above Derynea...

N: the view point?

V. yes. We got up there... my mum had a complete breakdown. My dad literally had to carry her down the stairs. She could not.

N: Was is the first time?

V: I was not even sure, I don’t know.

N: but it was your first time...

V: it was my first time. I did not even understand what we were looking at. You are 7 and you are just looking at the distance and you see buildings. It does not make sense. You’ve seen the pictures of the actual city. But for 7 year of old, looking at it from there was like a long distance. I could not understand anything but I remember

that it sort of had a reaction on me. Like I felt sort of sad and angry these would happen to my mum. Because of the situation in Cyprus. It was actually the first time I saw an actual effect on her. So, from there, I was a little like shut down, I did not want to discuss, every time they see video or on TV about Famagusta or anything I would just leave the room. I was in a bit of denial.

N: Ok, you preferred leaving the room rather than...

V: Because I felt like Famagusta had hurt my mother in some way...

N: so since 1996, you were in a kind of denial refusing to observe the negative effect of Famagusta on your mother?

V: I think I was also in denial regarding my Famagustian ID. I was born in Limassol, I live Limassol, raised here, happy here, and why should I bother myself anything that makes things complicated. I am here, it's good.

N: And then? Until when?

V: Until the check points opened. I think when I entered, my teenage years started shifting. Like going down at anger, I was like ok, it's just started cooling off no particular reason why and in 2004 with the referendum, that's when we had the big family discussions.

N: But before Referendum, have you visited Famagusta?

V: No. No. my grandmother dies in 2001. We visited for the first time in 2006.

N: Any reason for not visiting before?

V: I think it was a.... well my dad could not go because he was in the army, they were strongly advised not to go. I think it was a mix of fear of what we were going to see and mix of fear that the propaganda that going on every one who goes, recognizes the TRNC and you are traitor blah blah blah... So it took us a while.

N: So in 2004, your family had a discussion about referendum?

V: I was 15, in high school. In school, you could not say that you are in favor of referendum. It would be bad.

N: Was a private school, or governmental school?

V: governmental school. I remember having teachers sort of not forcing us but taking as in the classrooms and say getting in streets and protests in favor of rejecting the referendum. I would go noon and saying to my mum 'I went to protest in favor of rejecting the referendum, and she was like 'you know that our family is in favor'. I was like ok, but I don't want to be bullied at school. I just go you know.

N: This would give them a chance to bully you?

V: I actually never gave them a chance to discuss it, I was too afraid. That's when my parents started talking to me saying we want peace in Cyprus. We don't want to

hate anyone, we can leave with other people. We want to go back to Famagusta, we want to see the whole island unified.

N: This should have given you a huge dilemma. How were you dealing with these 2 different ideas at school and in family? Have you felt in between?

V: No actually I knew. I was not talking about it at school but I was raised in a way that I knew that I was not meant to hate anyone. I actually remember having a discussion like this. Burden lifted on me; am I supposed to be that nationalist people that hate other people? it did not feel right. Once we had that discussion, I was like ok, we have the family to have these honest discussions at home and I can go to the outside world and be a cool person who shares any idea. Because you know you are teenager, you don't want to be hated.

N: How about visiting Famagusta? That first day? Was it with your mum?

V: It was with my mum and my uncle, her elder brother.

N: Coming and visiting Famagusta was a family decision or it was just you and your mother visiting?

V: No it was a family decision. My uncle had already been once before, my mum was crying a lot, the whole trip which had a kind of boomerang effect on me because I kind of shut down, I shut the emotions out...

N: Do you remember the conversation you had in the car from Limassol to Famagusta? Your mother was crying I imagine.

V: No she started crying when we came towards Famagusta at the check point.

N: Is her house somewhere that you can see through the barbed wire?

V: No. From what she said, it's 800 meters inside. So you can't see it. But she pretty much explained how to find it if you go from the beach, Glossa Beach.

N: She was so sure that if she was allowed she could go and find?

V: Yes, absolutely.

N: can you? Would you have this mental map in your mind?

V: I know that it was right across Anorthosis Association, building, whatever, so it was very easy to find apparently. But they had no picture of the house.

N: No? Nothing?

V: They have pictures as kids standing in front of the house but you can't really see the house... the building.

N: Did your family manage to bring anything from Famagusta?

V: (nodding no) The older brothers were living in England at that time, and so, my mum told me my grandfather took them to the port, put them on ship to Athens so

that they could... My mum went to London for 3 years living with her older brother and when my grandfather was really sick, she had to come home. Someone had to quit the studies, my grandmother decided that the daughter should sacrifice the studies obviously. And mum came, it was the same time that her other brother was also finishing studies, so they moved back to Nicosia, where my grandparents were and they moved in Limassol, and my grandfather died shortly after.

N: How come you had those photographs?

V: because her oldest brother is 13 years older than her, so he was married in London. They would periodically send them pictures.

N: So they were not taken on the day that they were leaving.

V: No. Actually my grandmother took some jewelry and she locked the house.

N: The keys?

V: The keys, we have, yes.

N: Where are they?

V: My mum has them. She's saying for years that she want to some sort of art and put them somewhere. But I think, that's my assumption, she does not want to do that because if she does that, it's just like a memorabilia of another life time whereas if she has them somewhere kept, she was going to use them again actually...

N: So you are assuming that she's been postponing to put it in a kind of memorabilia of another life, because she wants to use them as a functional keys to unlock the house she left behind.

V: yes.

N: Did you talk about it with her? Did she confess such a thing?

V: yes, absolutely.

N: So it's not just your assumption.

V: I think because she does not give them to an artist whatever she wants to do about it, yes she definably wants to grab them from the drawer and just go home open the door again.

N: Apart from 2006, any other visits like is this a regular thing?

V: Yes. For the first of years what we did after the first visit, as a family, we rent a mini bus, and you would get all 4 brothers with their kids, so us, we would just go and spend the day on the beach in Famagusta as an exertion... at the Glossa Beach. And you would see actually the evolution within the years, for the first time we went, we took everything with us, sandwiches, water bottles, anything we would want to eat, drink, so we would not spent any money and bit by bit we started having a coffee

at Petek, and then may be take some sweets for my dad, and now we are like 'ok, let's go and have lunch' ☺

N: So you know within the walls as well then?

V: Yes, I am a huge huge huge fan of the bi-communal events, I try going as much as I can, even as a student, I would always try to work my Easter vacation so that I would go to events related to Famagusta. I was there at the first theater in Salamina. I was there in the second one. I am convinced that for me as a person these are the big parts of really really really developing my Famagustian identity.

N: Oh, ok. You tell me about the stage of denying that identity because it was giving you a kind of trouble, now different, since when?

V: I think it started in 2004 again with the referendum and being part of family who was actually in favor of it. And then it started really developing by visiting Famagusta. Not from the first time because it was so intense, I was not feeling anything. After that, when we started visiting as larger groups, so you would not have so much focus on you, older people watching you, you would get more time to think of how you actually feel about being there...

N: And I see that you are active in bi communal activities...

V: As much as I can... I think I developed European Cypriot identity when I was in abroad.

N: How was it looking at Cyprus, its problem, and your mother's sense of attachment to a city, which is now forbidden from abroad?

V: Once I was abroad I felt there were two ways: you can either go very Greek nationalist narrative, or you can take the opportunity that you are in a more neutral territory, actually start talking about it, reflecting on it, talking to other people about it and listening to what other people have to say about it which was the most interesting part. Not just because I was in France, talking to French people, I would also talk to Turkish people. I got to meet Turkish Cypriots later though, not in my bachelor. And you get to listen to their side of the story and if you are sober enough to be able to put yourself in their shoes, that's how you develop...

N: empathy?

V: Yes.

N: How do you see the future of Famagusta? Do you look at the buildings and imagine them being alive again? Is this something that keeps your mind busy or it's just something that suspended? I know that your mother still keeps the key to it.

V: I don't think that in a solution scenario, we would immediately pack our bags and go back to Famagusta. Never say never. But for now even though I come from Limassol, Famagusta, Pafos, whatever, my life is in Nicosia. So, there you go. But yes, I definitely have ideas about how I would like to see Famagusta develop and how I can be part of that development, even if I am not the resident of the city. I would definitely have a vacation home there, at least, or I will just visit my mum ☺

N: So you see your mum returning? That's the kind of scenario in your mind?

V: Very realistically no. No, she is 60, she has 3 brothers. So, come on. Is she going to take the house like 'it's family home, I am taking it, bye guys'. No, it's not happening. But I definitely see us demolishing what is there and building something new so what we can all go.

N: How about the idea of demolishing everything and building new? How is your mother's reaction to it, or your idea of it? Because I keep hearing people saying no, I don't want my house to be touched, I know it's too late to repair, I still want it as it is, as it was... How about your mother? Have you ever talked about it?

V: Yes.

N: Have you ever heard about this eco-city project?

V: I have.

N: What is the reaction to that?

V: I think it's a great idea! My mum thinks it's a great idea too. I mean I think her dream is to have home... a home where she left the home is, but a new building that has room for the whole family so that we can all go. May be like a small apartment, have a big building with 7 apartments or something like that.

N: So you are suggesting that her attachment to home she left is not the building itself but a kind of life that would host the whole family?

V: yes, absolutely.

N: Do you attend Famagusta related gatherings? I saw you at the charity event where we met. Is this your regular activity? Whenever something happens about Famagusta you be there?

V: I try. I also try to filter because, frankly most people that attend these events are older generation. I like a lot of them, I have very interesting discussions with them but I sometimes need to go out and have drinks with my friends as well ☺

N: Imagine me, I know them almost all, they start gossiping about each other. And I am like mediator in between taking no sides as a researcher of course, then their friends... I think you were the youngest person there?

V: Yes, my mum was one of the organizers...

N: Do you have friends attending with you... I don't remember...

V: Not in the that particular event but especially here in Nicosia when there are sort of open discussions related to unifying Cyprus, yes I have a few friends that we usually go together.

N: How about Famagusta specific?



V: I am more like a lonely rider there. Although I have friends at my age and are from Famagusta, I think I am the only one who is so strongly interested. It's also because I also have strong interest in politics in general. You can't expect the younger people to attend these events especially when they are not interested in politics.

N: Did you study politics?

V: I studied law and then I did MA in international relations so.

N: There is a Facebook page called *Ammohostos e poli mas*, I have not seen you publishing anything there. I observe this page as well. Do you know about it?

V: I am part of the group, not an admin but a member. I see what they are publishing. Sometimes I find it a bit repetitive.

N: Can you give me an example of that repetition?

V: It's 5 photos of Famagusta per day with a same caption and the same people commenting and saying the same things every day. I am like ok, we get it.

N: Do you think it serves its aim if the aim is to keep the memories of Famagusta and Famagustianess fresh and alive?

V: Yes. I definably think it brings people together, it is definitely the strongest Famagustian association right now, stronger than the Municipality. It's the first group actually that engages people in more of civic engagements approach rather than just attending an event where there is a politician speaking, listening to a couple of songs and going home. It makes them go to places where they have discussions and they meet each other and they find their old neighbors, but if there is something that I would criticize them upon, and it's not entirely their fault, but I feel that maybe they have not tried enough to engage the younger generation. I tried to suggest it once, I think it was right after I came back to Cyprus from when I was living abroad, and it was not rejected but it was pushed aside because I feel... for me I am interested in politics for Famagusta issues, ok, I am going to be there but for a person of my age who is not very interested in politics and who is proud to be from Famagusta but it's not really going to bother to visit or whatever, if they always hear the same discussions they will get bored. It's like 'oh we had the best years in Famagusta and they stole our youth blah blah blah', ok, we do not have those kind of memories. We need a different narrative. Don't really take into account the fact that we actually were in this all we knew checkpoints and barbed wires and did not choose any of these shit... We don't carry any responsibility for this and this is not taken into account and it's not taken into account generally when we talk about the Cyprus issues. And the problem is that our generation, the post-74 generation, we are not fully grown adults, it's like we are kids now.

N: But the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation is coming. I am the first generation, I was born in 1975 and I have my kid at age of 13, she is the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation. I was born into checkpoints and barbed wires. You know. And you are in the middle. And you are saying post-74 generation is not given the proper narrative saying that we don't know the past, we don't know pre-74... What do you suggest?

V: I suggest we stop the blaming game. Because it's too time consuming, trying to figure out who said what, whose fault it was... stop, let's really look at into the future.

N: Ok, this is for the general reunification approach, I would say. How about Famagusta? Opening Famagusta now? Do you see it integrated with the walls, like old town and the new town? Have you ever imagined the whole? What is Famagusta for you?

V: I think it's inevitable.

N: Varosha only?

V: No, it's the whole Famagusta. Frankly, although I come from the region of Varosha, the Famagusta that I know, and I've experienced and I have memories from is within the walls city. I feel so proud. I had friends coming last summer from Strasbourg and I would take them for a walk in Famagusta and I was like 'Ok, this is the Lion, this the Othello Tower...' Like I was so proud that I could actually give them a tour in that city. It felt like an honor ship, not in a possessive way ☺

N: With your Famagustian identity?

V: Yes. 4 years ago I had friends visiting from Brussels and I wanted to take them to see Famagusta but I took them up to Derynea, and took them to the viewpoint, I was too afraid to drive myself into Famagusta, I don't know, not comfortable doing it, last time I got to do it. Another barrier broken. It felt so good! It's so liberating, really. Just sitting there and talking is so liberating. It feels like we are doing something.

N: Yes, I feel the same... And I understand you, you understand me in that sense. And introducing the whole Famagusta to foreigners, to each other, is my dream too... Let's call the interview off unless you have anything you want to add. I see that you like to share, I like to be here, and you like to be talking about Famagusta that know you accept it as part of your identity.

V: The biggest part of my identity. My major part. There are things in life that may not take as much space, but they really define you. You may know people for your whole life but you meet someone for a few months and you feel like that person has defined many things in your life. That's how I feel about Famagusta. That's also how I feel about my 5 years in France. Like I feel the 5 years I spent in France were defining my personality and who I am as a person, which is also very Famagusta. So, yes, this does not bother me at all, I love this (*referring to ezan heard at that moment*).

N: I prefer the bells though ☺

V: 6:00 in the morning on Sunday, you might not.

N: Because it's through the microphone (*referring to ezan*), it's not quality sound, I am bothered with this only, it's a technical issue...

V: I think France has developed this very multicultural side of me. I think it was already there to be honest. This is what actually made my love my Cypriot identity so much more and I love the fact that I come from such a problematic part of Cyprus, it's so inspiring, you know.

N: I know, I know. Tell me about it 😊

V: I think you will be writing thousands of pages 😊